

City of Marco Island Florida

*51 Bald Eagle Drive
Marco Island, Florida
cityofmarcoisland.com*



Meeting Minutes - Final

Wednesday, May 7, 2025

3:00 PM

Community Room

Beautification Advisory Committee

Chair: Marv Needles

Vice-Chair: Linda Scherzinger

***Members: Michael Cory, Victoria Myers,
Julie Rogers, Ann Sepe, Ryan Sullivan***

City Staff: Justin Martin, Jim Kornas, Tara Kosieracki

(1) CALL TO ORDER

Chair Needles called the meeting to order at 3:00 P.M.

(2) ROLL CALL

Present: 7 - Member Cory, Member Myers, Member Rogers, Vice-Chair Scherzinger, Member Sepe, Member Sullivan and Chair Needles

Also Present

*City Councilor Deb Henry
City Councilor Bonita Schwan*

*CITY STAFF:
Justin Martin, Public Works Director
Zurima Luff, Storm Water Engineer
Rob D'Ornellas, Audio/Visual Technician
Jim Kornas, Recording Specialist*

(3) PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Led by Chair Needles.

(4) INTRODUCTION OF NEW MEMBER

Chair Needles welcomed new Member Ann Sepe to the Committee.

(5) APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

MOTION by Member Cory, seconded by Vice-Chair Scherzinger, that the Agenda be Approved. MOTION CARRIED BY THE FOLLOWING VOICE VOTE:

Yes: 7 - Member Cory, Member Myers, Member Rogers, Vice-Chair Scherzinger, Member Sepe, Member Sullivan and Chair Needles

(6) APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

[ID 25-4418](#) Beautification Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes of April 2, 2025

Attachments: [Beautification Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes of April 2, 2025](#)

MOTION by Member Myers, seconded by Vice-Chair Scherzinger, that the Beautification Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes of April 2, 2025, be Approved. MOTION CARRIED BY THE FOLLOWING VOICE VOTE:

Yes: 7 - Member Cory, Member Myers, Member Rogers, Vice-Chair Scherzinger, Member Sepe, Member Sullivan and Chair Needles

(7) OLD BUSINESS**7A** [ID 25-4419](#) Chair Needles' Committee Update (M. Needles)

Chair Needles thanked and complimented Committee Member Cory for his execution of the Committee's April 25, 2025 Arbor Day Event, and he briefly outlined the details of his 2026 Fiscal Year budget

presentation and request to the Marco Island City Council on May 5, 2025.

[Editorial Note: the outline of Chair Needles' presentation to the Marco Island City Council may be found at www.cityofmarcoisland.com > Menu > Agendas and Minutes > Beautification Advisory Committee > May 7, 2025 > Meeting Details]

Chair Needles also reminded the Committee of its responsibilities to discuss all items of Committee business during properly noticed and agendized Committee meetings as provided Florida's Sunshine Law.

Chair Needles requested that Public Works Director Martin provide insight on the removal of trees by Lee County Electric Cooperative (LCEC) along Bald Eagle Drive north of San Marco Road, and Committee Member Myers shared several photos and her understanding of LCEC's responsibilities regarding the removal and replacement of trees.

[Editorial Note: A summary of Director Martin's report on this topic is noted under Agenda Item 9D (Director Justin Martin's Report)]

7B [ID 25-4420](#) Debrief of 2025 Marco In Bloom Contest Execution & Plan for Next Year (L. Scherzinger)

Vice-Chair Linda Scherzinger named the local news media outlets to which she directed the Committee's 2025 Marco In Bloom Awards article which she authored, and she recognized and thanked the editorial staff of the Coastal Breeze News for publishing her submission on behalf of the Committee.

Vice-Chair Scherzinger also reminded the Committee of its direction at its April 2, 2025 meeting to review the property judging categories and judging criteria when it identifies its Committee leader for the 2026 Marco In Bloom Contest in the September - November timeframe.

7C [ID 25-4421](#) Debrief of Arbor Day 2025 & Recognition Plaque/Stand Procurement (M. Cory)

Committee Member Michael Cory thanked former Beautification Advisory Committee Chair Andrew Kirlin for his assistance in procuring a bridalveil (Caesalpinia granadillo) tree for this year's Arbor Day celebration, and Ms. Maria Lamb, Vice-Chair of the City's Beach & Coastal Advisory Committee, for authoring the article that appeared in the May 1 - 7, 2025 edition of the Coastal Breeze News.

He also thanked Marco Island City Councilors Deb Henry and Bonita Schwan along with colleague Committee Member Julie Rogers for participating in this year's Event, and he recognized the City's landscape contractor, Affordable Landscaping and Design, Inc., for working with him to prep the tree planting site and stake the tree after the event.

Member Cory also shared his insights and learning in organizing this year's Arbor Day Event, and he suggested that the Committee initiate the planning and permitting for this Event well in advance of the annual April activity.

He concluded by requesting Committee support for obtaining a plaque and stand to commemorate the Committee's 2025 Arbor Day planting.

MOTION by Member Myers, seconded by Member Ryan, that an allocation of the Beautification Advisory Committee's 2025 Fiscal Year Budget in an amount not to exceed \$280.00 to procure an identification plaque and stand for the 2025 Arbor Day tree, be Approved. MOTION CARRIED BY THE FOLLOWING VOICE VOTE:

Yes: 7 - Member Cory, Member Myers, Member Rogers, Vice-Chair Scherzinger, Member Sepe, Member Sullivan and Chair Needles

7D [ID 25-4422](#) Future Tree Donation Program & Donation Website (J. Rogers)

Committee Member Julie Rogers reported that she received the list of past donors to the Committee's Ten Thousand Trees in Ten Years Pilot Program, and that four (4) donors' donations had not yet been honored with a planted tree. She noted some past conflicting information regarding the cost of procuring and planting a tree, and Public Works Director Justin Martin offered to: 1) receive Member Rogers' list of the desired tree sizes and planting locations, and; 2) obtain an up-to-date quote from the City's landscaping contractor on the cost to procure and plant the desired trees.

Member Rogers next discussed her desire to execute a community-wide outreach initiative to drive awareness and action in soliciting future tree donations.

Chair Needles suggested that Member Rogers author an informational newspaper article and come prepared to share it with the Committee at its June 4, 2025 meeting. (Note: there was no discussion of the re-activation of a webpage/website to promote and accept monetary donations for future tree plantings on the Island).

7E [ID 25-4423](#) Michael Collins Commemorative Tree Initiative Update (V. Myers)

Committee Member Victoria Myers briefly reviewed the action by the Committee on this topic at its April 2, 2025 meeting, and she advised the Committee of a likely revised location at Veterans Community Park for the planting of a tree in memory of former NASA Apollo Program Astronaut Michael Collins.

(Note: the City of Marco Island Fleet & Facilities Department approval of Member Myers' proposed alternate location was still pending as of the Committee's May 7th meeting)

In reviewing her original selection of a Pink Trumpet tree as proposed at the Committee's April 2, 2025 meeting (see the Minutes of Agenda Item 7C of the 4/2/25 meeting), Committee Member Myers advised the Committee that she is now evaluating other more visually-appealing specimen trees for this commemorative planting, including:

- 1) Orange Geiger*
- 2) Sweetbay Magnolia*
- 3) Hong Kong Orchid*

Public Works Director Martin suggested that the tree selection also be considerate of specimen availability in the immediate South/Southwest Florida area.

Noting that the City of Marco Island Parks & Recreation Tree Donation Form provides size guidelines for tree plantings in the City's public parks, Member Myers recommended that:

- 1) the Committee continue to support the procurement of a larger, more impressively-sized tree as already approved in its 2025 Fiscal Year Budget allocation (see the 10/2/24 Minutes of Agenda Item 7B (Special New Business Item - Commemorative Tree in Honor of Astronaut Michael Collins);*
- 2) the tree be planted ASAP to take advantage of this year's "rainy season" and;*
- 3) the ceremony to officially commemorate Astronaut Collins be planned for and conducted in the winter/spring of 2026 to coincide with his family's seasonal presence on the Island.*

Member Myers requested Committee approval empowering her to select an appropriate tree within the already-approved 2025 Fiscal Year Budget allocation for this project.

MOTION by Member Sepe, seconded by Member Sullivan, that Member Myers be authorized to identify and select an appropriate specimen tree, in an appropriate

size, for procurement and planting in an appropriate location in Veterans Community Park during the 2025 budget year in honor of former NASA Apollo Astronaut Michael Collins, and within the Committee's October 2, 2024 \$1,000.00 budget allocation, be Approved. MOTION CARRIED BY THE FOLLOWING VOICE VOTE:

Yes: 7 - Member Cory, Member Myers, Member Rogers, Vice-Chair Scherzinger, Member Sepe, Member Sullivan and Chair Needles

(8) NEW BUSINESS

[ID 25-4424](#) Tree Planting Master Plan Development (All)

Attachments: [Tree-Planting Master Plan Background 030125](#)
[Calusa Garden Club Tree Plan for Calusa Park 030525](#)

*Committee Vice-Chair Linda Scherzinger led the Committee through a brief review of the seven proposed Marco Island locations that she proposed for consideration after the completion of the Committee's December, 4, 2024 approved South Heathwood Drive tree planting initiative.**

*Noting that the first alternative location voted upon and approved by the Committee at the January 8, 2025 meeting was to then plant a number of Orange Geiger trees on Swallow Avenue, Vice-Chair Scherzinger reminded the Committee that its 2025 Fiscal Year Tree Fund allocation was fully subscribed with the execution of these first two projects.***

*Vice-Chair Scherzinger next reviewed the City Staff's February 5, 2025 recommendation to consider tree plantings along San Marco Road heading east toward Goodland.****

Displaying a color-coded map of Marco Island estimating its approximate tree coverage percentages, Vice-Chair Scherzinger noted that the coverage along San Marco Road east toward Goodland is relatively well covered as compared to other areas on the Island. She recommended that this area not be assigned a high priority within the Committee's Tree Planting Master Plan.

* See the Minutes of Agenda Item 7a of the Committee's 1/8/25 meeting

** See the Minutes of Agenda Item 8A of the Committee's 4/2/25 meeting

*** See the Minutes of Agenda Item 8C of the Committee's 2/5/25 meeting

MOTION by Vice-Chair Scherzinger, seconded by Member Rogers, that the next two priority tree planting locations under the Beautification Advisory Committee's Tree Planting Master Plan be: 1) the swales along East Elkcarn Circle between Bald Eagle Drive and Collier Boulevard, and; 2) the swales along Winterberry Drive bordering Calusa Park, be Approved. MOTION CARRIED BY THE FOLLOWING VOICE VOTE:

Yes: 7 - Member Cory, Member Myers, Member Rogers, Vice-Chair Scherzinger, Member Sepe, Member Sullivan and Chair Needles

Public Works Director Martin clarified for the Committee that only one tree will be planted in the swale for each identified lot, and he volunteered to assess and comprehend potential overhead obstructions (e.g. power lines) on behalf of the Committee when the selected trees are to be planted.

(9) STAFF COMMUNICATIONS

9A [ID 25-4342](#) Mid-Fiscal Year Committee Budget Review & Outlook for 2026 (All)

Public Works Director Justin Martin reported that, prior to any budget allocations approved by the

Committee at this meeting, the Committee's 2025 Fiscal Year Discretionary Budget balance stood at \$9,694.00.

For the 2026 Fiscal Year, Director Martin noted that a request for \$34,000.00 for the Tree City USA Tree Fund, along with an additional \$15,000.00 request (over an above the 2025 Fiscal Year \$15,000.00 budget for Holiday light pole decorations) for contracting for the installation and removal of Christmas Holiday decorations along Collier Boulevard between North Barfield Drive and, possibly as far as the Herb Savage (formerly Smokehouse Bay) Bridge, will be in the Committee's proposed budget allocation as it comes before the Marco Island City Council at the Council's scheduled July 21, 2025 Operating Budget Workshop.

Additionally, the Public Works Department will be soliciting capital funding for a significant Collier Boulevard irrigation and median restoration project during the City Council's scheduled June 16, 2025 Capital Budget Workshop.

Also, during Agenda Item 7A (Chair Needles' Committee Update), Director Martin reminded the Committee that the Committee's City Council-approved fiscal year budget is recorded and managed under the City's Public Works Department.

9B [ID 25-4437](#) South Heathwood Drive Tree Planting Update (J. Martin)

Attachments: [Excerpt from Tree City USA 2025 Planting Project - Lindas Ideas 010825](#)

During the Committee's discussion of its Tree Planting Master Plan (Agenda Item 8), Public Works Director Justin Martin shared and presented a series of Google Earth photos of the area along South Heathwood Drive, south of Lily Court, and Winterberry Drive east of South Heathwood Drive, that identified swale locations which the Marco Island Water & Sewer Department determined to be sufficiently free of underground utility impediments to the planting of new trees.

[Editorial Note: the presented Google Earth photos may be found at www.cityofmarcoisland.com > Menu > Agendas and Minutes > Beautification Advisory Committee > May 7, 2025 > Meeting Details]

Director Martin also displayed other swale areas available for tree planting along Collingswood Avenue, Cutler Court, Salvadore Court, Quintara Court, Forest Court, Arcadia Court, and South Heathwood Avenue south of Forest Court.

In line with the Committee's direction at its April 2, 2025 meeting (see the Minutes of Agenda Item 8A), Director Martin advised the Committee that the City had obtained a quote and selected a landscape contractor for the procurement and planting of twenty-five (25) Pink Tabebuia (aka Pink Trumpet) trees in the 25-gallon size along South Heathwood Drive south of Lily Court and continuing south of Winterberry Drive.

To complete the Committee's 2025 Fiscal Year plan for tree planting within the constraints of its 2025 Tree Fund Budget, Director Martin presented the "map" of available tree planting locations along the south side of Swallow Avenue between Seagrape Drive and South Collier Boulevard/Collier Court.

Landscape contractor quotes to procure and plant approximately thirty-six (36) trees in the 25-gallon size in those identified locations along Swallow Avenue are expected to be received by the City on or before May 17, 2025. A purchase order will be issued following the receipt of the landscape contractor quotes.

Director Martin concluded his report by indicating that he will request a similar "map" of available tree planting areas in the swales along East Elkcarn Circle between Bald Eagle Drive and Collier Boulevard.

9C [ID 25-4438](#) Discussion with Water & Sewer General Manager Jeff Poteet (All)

The Committee's discussion with Water & Sewer General Manager Jeff Poteet will be rescheduled for a future meeting date.

9D [ID 23-3274](#) Director Justin Martin's Report

During Agenda Item 7A (Chair Needles' Committee Update), Public Works Director Justin Martin outlined the recent action by Lee County Electric Cooperative (LCEC) to remove eleven trees along Bald Eagle Drive, north of San Marco Road. He noted LCEC's easement and right to remove trees to accomplish electric power pole replacements, and he indicated that the City will replace those trees with "powerline friendly" varieties of trees that do not exceed 14 feet in height when matured.

The Beautification Advisory Committee will be consulted at a forthcoming Committee meeting on its selection/recommendation of appropriate tree species that will fit that criteria.

At Chair Needles request, Director Martin also expanded upon recent efforts by contractors engaged by LCEC to install redundant /resilient underground power supply lines along certain major roadways on the Island.

(10) CITY COUNCIL COMMUNICATION

[ID 23-3296](#) "City Council Communication" Agenda Topic

Marco Island City Councilor Bonita Schwan thanked Committee Chair Marv Needles for his presentation on behalf of the Committee at the Council's May 5th meeting, and she indicated her desire to have the Committee come before the Council with an update on its activities and accomplishments later in the 2025 calendar year.

(11) PUBLIC COMMENT

No members of the public came forward to offer comment at this meeting.

(12) NEXT MEETING: CONFIRMATION & ATTENDANCE

[ID 23-3293](#) Next Meeting: Confirmation & Attendance

Attachments: [BAC 2025 Meeting Schedule - with logo](#)

Committee members Victoria Myers and Ann Sepe communicated their inability to be physically present for the Committee's June 4th meeting. Otherwise, a quorum of seated members is expected for the Committee's June meeting.

(13) FUTURE AGENDA REVIEW & AGENDA TOPICS FOR NEXT MEETING

[ID 24-3992](#) 2025 Committee "Open Items" for Future Follow-Up (All)

Attachments: [Future Agenda - Beautification Advisory Committee – Portrait Orientation 060125](#)

The Committee reviewed its potential Future Agenda items and recommended that several items be added to the June Agenda.

(14) OTHER COMMITTEE COMMUNICATIONS

Committee Member Victoria Myers communicated a request by Beach & Coastal Resources Advisory

Committee Vice-Chair Maria Lamb for the two Committees to collaborate on the creation and distribution of a "Most UnWanted" poster identifying invasive species of plants that should be discouraged for planting on Marco Island.

Vice-Chair Scherzinger indicated that a poster of this nature already exists and was distributed among members of the Marco Island Calusa Garden Club.

Committee Member Ryan Sullivan volunteered to develop a new creative concept for this "Most UnWanted" poster for presentation and discussion at the Committee's June 4, 2025 meeting.

Member Myers requested that, once an updated version of this poster is developed, it should be added to the Committee's webpage under a more accessible click-thru pathway.

(15) ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business before the Committee, Chair Needles adjourned the meeting at 4:10 P.M.

Jim Kornas, Recording Specialist