

City of Marco Island Florida

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



Meeting Minutes - Final

Wednesday, April 2, 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: 5 - Member Cory, Member Myers, Member Rogers, Member Sullivan and Chair Needles

Not Present: 1 - Vice-Chair Scherzinger

(Note: Vice-Chair Scherzinger participated remotely via Zoom teleconference connection and, though not responsive during Roll Call, her confirmed connection was established at approximately 3:13 P.M. After that time, she was present and participated throughout the entire meeting.)

Also Present

City Councilor Deb Henry (present until 3:52 P.M.)

City Council Bonita Schwan (present until 3:29 P.M.)

CITY STAFF:

Justin Martin, Public Works Director

Martin Luna, Audio/Visual Technician

Jim Kornas, Recording Specialist

(3) PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Led by Chair Needles.

(4) APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

MOTION by Member Cory, seconded by Member Sullivan, that the Agenda be Approved. MOTION CARRIED BY THE FOLLOWING VOICE VOTE:

Yes: 6 - Member Cory, Member Myers, Member Rogers, Vice-Chair Scherzinger, Member Sullivan and Chair Needles

(5) APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

[ID 25-4350](#) Beautification Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes of March 5, 2025

Attachments: [Beautification Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes of March 5, 2025](#)

MOTION by Member Sullivan, seconded by Member Rogers, that the Beautification Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes of March 5, 2025, be Approved. MOTION CARRIED BY THE FOLLOWING VOICE VOTE:

Yes: 6 - Member Cory, Member Myers, Member Rogers, Vice-Chair Scherzinger, Member Sullivan and Chair Needles

(6) OLD BUSINESS

A. [ID 25-4322](#) Marco Nature Night Debrief & Improvements for Next Year (All)

Committee Chair Marv Needles voiced his appreciation for the efforts of former Beautification Advisory Committee Chair Shelli Connelly in coordinating the lineup of speakers and exhibitors for Marco Nature

Night, and he thanked all the members of the Committee who were present to assist in executing the Event.

Chair Needles solicited Committee member suggestions to improve upon the Event for next year, and the following recommendations were offered:

- 1) Assign a Committee leader by October or November to take charge of this early calendar year Event;
- 2) Target February, 2026 as the month for this Event, but avoid Presidents' Week;
- 3) Consider scheduling fewer presentations, and schedule the presentations earlier during the Event;
- 4) Provide a "countdown clock" (or a green/yellow/red visual signal) so that presenters can better manage their presentation time;
- 5) Expand the publicity channels for this Event to include: a) the Marco Review, and; b) notification on the City's Facebook page at least 30 days or more before the Event;
- 6) Invite the City Manager or Assistant City Manager to greet and welcome attendees at the start of the Event;
- 7) Develop a "run of show" schedule so that all Committee members know their roles and what to expect during the course of the Event;
- 8) Review and improve upon the plant giveaway process (feedback from Affordable Landscaping & Design)

B. [ID 25-4323](#) Marco In Bloom Contest Scoring Review (V. Myers)

Committee Member Victoria Myers shared the summary scores provided by each Committee member during the Marco In Bloom property judging activity, and Committee Vice-Chair Linda Scherzinger complimented and thanked the members of the Committee for their diligence and thoughtfulness in assessing each of the candidate properties.

Vice-Chair Scherzinger, with support from Committee Member Victoria Myers, then reviewed the presentation that she had prepared for the announcement of winning properties at the April 7th City Council Meeting, soliciting Committee member remarks and descriptive comments for each of the top-scoring properties in each judging category. She also indicated that she had: 1) ordered the award yard signs, and; 2) notified the winning property owners.

Committee Chair Marv Needles suggested that the Committee review its property categories and judging criteria for the 2026 Marco In Bloom Contest to better balance the "appearance" criteria with the "Florida-friendliness" criteria for next year's candidate properties.

Committee member Victoria Myers confirmed her intention to assist Vice-Chair Scherzinger in the presentation of the award yard signs at the April 7th City Council Meeting.

C. [ID 25-4324](#) Review of Potential "Out-of-Compliance" Property Conditions (All)

A brief visual presentation of the potential "out-of-compliance" conditions that several Beautification Advisory Committee members submitted in response to Committee Chair Marv Needles' March 14, 2025 request was reviewed with the Committee. Public Works Director Justin Martin provided insight on existing City processes and procedures that encourage property owners to bring "out-of-compliance" property conditions up to current City code.

D. [ID 25-4325](#) 2025 Arbor Day Celebration Plan (M. Cory)

Attachments: [History - 2024 Arbor Day Actions 031725](#)

Committee Member Mike Cory reviewed the Committee's tree planting activities for Arbor Day 2024, and he advised the Committee of the 2025 Arbor Day Proclamation that was announced at the April 7, 2025 City Council Meeting.

With the recommendation of Master Gardener, and former Beautification Advisory Committee Chair, Andrew Kirlin, Member Cory proposed the planting of a Bridalveil tree (*Caesalpinia granadillo*) in Calusa Park in honor of Arbor Day 2025. As a drought-tolerant tree which blooms with yellow flowers in summer and fall, Member Cory noted that the Bridalveil is an excellent shade tree to complement the Committee's previous Arbor Day plantings in Calusa Park. Member Cory recommended that a six-foot, 25 gallon tree be procured at a cost not to exceed \$250.00. He indicated his willingness and availability to water the tree regularly to ensure that it becomes established in its planted location.

Member Cory also indicated that the required: 1) Community and Special Event Permit; 2) City Parks & Recreation Tree Donation Form, and; 3) Facility Request Form (to hold the Committee's Event in a City park) had all been applied for with the assistance of Ms. Samantha Malloy, City of Marco Island Manager of Parks, Culture & Recreation. No permit fees were required.

The Committee's Arbor Day celebration will be held on Friday, April 25, 2025 at Calusa Park beginning at 11:00 A.M. Member Cory will invite members of the City Council, City's Staff, Calusa Garden Club and other supporters of the Committee to attend the brief ceremony which will include a reading of the history of Arbor Day and the Proclamation from the April 7th City Council Meeting.

Public Works Director Justin Martin provided guidance on the placement of the selected tree in relation to its distance to the shared use path to minimized the need to trim any branch overhang over the shared use path as the tree matures. He also offered other insights related to: 1) the permitting and fees related to tree planting in public rights of way, and; 2) the utilization of the City's water truck and operator.

[Editorial Note: Director Martin expanded on this topic during his monthly Committee report (Agenda Item 8b)]

MOTION by Member Myers, seconded by Vice-Chair Scherzinger, that an allocation of the Committee's 2025 Fiscal Year budget in an amount not to exceed \$250.00 to procure a Bridalveil Tree (*Caesalpinia granadillo*) for planting in Calusa Park in celebration of Arbor Day 2025, be Approved. MOTION CARRIED BY THE FOLLOWING COMMITTEE VOTE:

Yes: 6 - Member Cory, Member Myers, Member Rogers, Vice-Chair Scherzinger, Member Sullivan and Chair Needles

Member Cory noted last year's cost to procure two plaques and stands to commemorate the Committee's two tree plantings in honor of Arbor Day 2024. He volunteered to investigate, and to bring to a future meeting of the Committee, a recommendation for the procurement of an appropriate recognition of the tree planted in honor of Arbor Day 2025.

(7) NEW BUSINESS**A. [ID 25-4326](#) Chair Needles' Committee Update (M. Needles)**

Chair Needles provided an update to the Committee on the following:

1) Marco Island Code Compliance Department's action during March, 2025 to address 35 out-of-compliance flags and signs displayed at various locations around the Island;

2) his one-on-one outreach to Marco Island's City Councilors since the Committee's last meeting, and their high degree of support for: a) addressing and improving the appearance and condition of the Island's medians, and; b) helping advance the successful implementation of the Beautification Advisory Committee's initiatives to beautify the Island;

3) a favorable response and intention by the local management of 5th/3rd Bank on East Elkcarn Circle to request 2026 budget year funding from their corporate parent to support the planting of trees (no number specified) along East Elkcarn Circle between Bald Eagle Drive and Collier Boulevard, and;

4) continuing citizen interest in donating toward the Committee's efforts to improve the tree coverage on the Island

B. [ID 25-4327](#) Ten Thousand Trees Update (J. Rogers)

Committee Member Julie Rogers updated the Committee on her discussions with former Committee Chair David Leaser, City Councilor Deb Henry, and Public Works Director Justin Martin regarding recent past activities under the Ten Thousand Trees in Ten Years Pilot Program.

Member Rogers reported that: 1) the website that was created to accept citizen donations toward the planting of trees under this Pilot Program was closed, and; 2) that City resources (water truck and manpower) do not currently exist to support undertaking the watering of an increased number of trees should a donation program like the Ten Thousand Trees in Ten Years Pilot Program be re-activated.

Noting that some past citizen donations for tree plantings have yet to be applied, Member Rogers indicated her intention to obtain a list of donor names and desired tree planting locations so that the Committee can prioritize those projects going forward in the context of its City Council-approved plans for the 2026 Fiscal Year.

The Committee will also address supporting the establishment or continuation of a tree donation website at its May 7, 2025 meeting.

C. [ID 25-4328](#) Castaways Park Memorial Tree Project (V. Myers)

Committee Member Victoria Myers shared the results of her investigation and her alternative proposal for the planting of a tree commemorating former NASA astronaut and Marco Island resident (deceased) Michael Collins.

On the advice of Marco Island Community Affairs Director Daniel Smith, and given: 1) the already-established landscaping at Castaways Park, and; 2) the recognition of the U.S. Space Force already in place at Veterans Community Park, Member Myers proposed the planting of a Pink Trumpet tree (*Handroanthus heterophylla*) immediately behind an existing bench in view of the Veterans memorial at Veterans Community Park.

MOTION by Member Myers, seconded by Member Cory, that the Memorial Tree Project honoring former NASA Astronaut Michael Collins be placed at Veterans' Community Park. MOTION CARRIED BY THE FOLLOWING COMMITTEE VOTE:

Yes: 6 - Member Cory, Member Myers, Member Rogers, Vice-Chair Scherzinger, Member Sullivan and Chair Needles

Member Myers submitted the required Parks & Recreation Tree Donation Form on behalf of the Committee.

Further Committee update and discussion regarding an appropriate recognition plaque and commemorative message will be taken up at future meeting of the Committee.

D. [ID 25-4329](#) Committee Presentation at the May 5, 2025 City Council Meeting (All)

Chair Needles requested Committee support to solicit the City Council's consideration in providing funding in the 2026 Fiscal Year Budget to expand the application of decorative Christmas Holiday lamp post lighting along Collier Boulevard from the base of the Judge SS Jolley Bridge to the Herb R. Savage (formerly Smokehouse Bay) Bridge.

MOTION by Chair Needles, seconded by Member Myers, that the solicitation of Marco Island City Council support and 2026 Fiscal Year funding to extend seasonal Christmas Holiday lighting along Collier Boulevard from the base of the Judge SS Jolley Bridge to the Herb R. Savage (formerly Smokehouse Bay) Bridge, be Approved. MOTION CARRIED BY THE FOLLOWING COMMITTEE VOTE:

Yes: 6 - Member Cory, Member Myers, Member Rogers, Vice-Chair Scherzinger, Member Sullivan and Chair Needles

(8) STAFF COMMUNICATIONS**A. [ID 25-4330](#) Tree Planting "Map" for South Heathwood Drive (J. Martin)**

Public Works Director Justin Martin reported that the City's Water & Sewer Department had completed its underground survey and had identified 25 potential swale locations along South Heathwood Drive where new trees may be planted without undue risk to existing water and sewer utility infrastructure.

All 25 potential locations are on the east side of South Heathwood Drive, with 14 locations identified between Lily Court and Winterberry Drive, and 11 locations south of Winterberry Drive. (Note: no suitable locations along South Heathwood Drive between Lilly Court and San Marco Road were identified by the Water & Sewer Department in its survey.)

Director Martin noted that the original quote provided by the selected City landscaping contractor that met the Committee's available \$29,000.00 budget (\$30,000.00 for 2025, less \$1,000.00 already allocated for the Michael Collins Commemorative Tree Project) for South Heathwood Drive could not accommodate one hundred (100) TWENTY-FIVE (25) GALLON Cassia Bakerianas trees as approved by the Committee at its December 4, 2024 meeting. [Editorial Note: see the Minutes of Agenda Item 7A].

Director Martin noted that the landscape contractor's quote could, however, accommodate up to one hundred (100) FIFTEEN (15) GALLON Cassia Bakerianas trees desired by the Committee.

Director Martin proposed that the Committee consider planting FIFTEEN (15) GALLON Cassia Bakerianas trees in the 25 locations along the east side of South Heathwood Drive in the swale locations identified by the City's Water & Sewer Department, and direct the remaining 2025 fiscal year budget toward the planting of up to twelve (12) forty-five (45) gallon Orange Geiger (Cordia sebastena) trees on both sides of Swallow Avenue, the Committee's approved secondary/alternate location. [Editorial Note: for detail on the Swallow Avenue location, see the L. Scherzinger presentation and the Minutes of Agenda Item 7A of the Committee's January 8, 2025 Meeting].

MOTION by Member Sullivan, seconded by Member Cory, that: 1) the planting of fifteen (15) gallon Cassia Bakerianas trees in the twenty-five (25) locations identified by the Marco Island City Sewer & Water Department along the east side of South Heathwood Drive south of Lily Court, and; 2) the planting of twelve (12) forty-five gallon Orange Geiger trees along the Committee's previously-approved alternative Swallow Avenue location with the Committee's remaining 2025 Tree Fund Budget, be Approved. MOTION CARRIED BY THE FOLLOWING COMMITTEE VOTE:

Yes: 6 - Member Cory, Member Myers, Member Rogers, Vice-Chair Scherzinger, Member Sullivan and Chair Needles

B. [ID 23-3274](#) Director Justin Martin's Report

Public Works Director Justin Martin, during Committee Member Julie Rogers review of the Ten Thousand Trees Update (Agenda Item 7B), shared background with the Committee on the situation which resulted in the current fully-scheduled utilization of the City's water truck and operator.

(9) CITY COUNCIL COMMUNICATION

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

No communication or direction to the Committee from members of the Marco Island City Council was presented or discussed at this meeting.

(10) PUBLIC COMMENT

No members of the public came forward to offer comment.

(11) NEXT MEETING: CONFIRMATION & ATTENDANCE

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

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

Chair Needles confirmed with the attending members that a quorum could be seated to conduct business at its next scheduled meeting on May 7, 2025.

(12) 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 050125](#)

The following agenda topics were proposed for the Committee's next meeting:

- 1) Review & Discussion with Water & Sewer General Manager Jeff Poteet (All)*
- 2) 2025 Arbor Day Event Debrief and Recognition Plaque/Stand Procurement (M. Cory)*
- 3) Committee Tree Donation Website - Proposal & Next Steps (J. Rogers)*
- 4) Other Agenda Topics Identified on the Committee's Future Agenda*

(13) OTHER COMMITTEE COMMUNICATIONS

None.

(14) ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business before the Committee, Chair Needles adjourned the meeting at 4:59 P.M.

Jim Kornas, Recording Specialist