

# City of Marco Island Florida

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



## Meeting Minutes - Draft

**Wednesday, September 3, 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:** 6 - Member Cory, Member Myers, Member Rogers, Vice-Chair Scherzinger, Member Sepe and Chair Needles

**Absent:** 1 - Member Sullivan

***Also Present******CITY COUNCILORS***

*Stephen Gray*

*Bonita Schwan*

***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**

*Committee Chair Marv Needles requested that Agenda Item 6B (2025 Collier Boulevard Christmas Decorations) be advanced in the Agenda to be discussed prior to Agenda Item 6A (Chair Needles' Committee Update & Cul-de-Sac Guide Changes).*

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

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

**(5) APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES**

[ID 25-4584](#) Beautification Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes of July 9, 2025

**Attachments:** [Beautification Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes of July 9, 2025](#)

**MOTION by Member Myers, seconded by Vice-Chair Scherzinger, that the Beautification Advisory Committee Minutes of July 9, 2025, be Approved. MOTION CARRIED BY THE FOLLOWING VOICE VOTE:**

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

**SPECIAL UPDATE: 2026 FISCAL YEAR COMMITTEE BUDGET OUTLOOK**

[ID 25-4680](#) Direction from August 25, 2025 City Council Special-Called Meeting (J. Martin/J. Parrilli)

**Attachments:** [2026 Fiscal Year Budget Reductions as of 8-25-25](#)

Public Works Director Justin Martin confirmed that, as of the City Council's August 25, 2025 Special-Called Meeting regarding the City's Fiscal Year 2026 Budget and supporting property tax millage rate, the Committee's Fiscal Year 2026 budget request to:

1) receive \$15,000 in funding to hire an outside contractor to provide, install, and remove Holiday decorations along Collier Boulevard from the base of the Judge SS Jolley Bridge to North Barfield Drive, and;

2) receive \$30,000.00 for a City-wide 2026 Tree Fund to meet the funding requirements of the National Arbor Day Foundation's Tree City USA annual designation,

were NOT approved by the City Council for Fiscal Year 2026.

Director Martin noted that further deliberations by the City Council regarding the City's Fiscal Year 2026 property tax millage rate and corresponding budget would be addressed again at the City Council's September 8, 2025 1st Meeting/Hearing, and finalized at the City Council's September 22, 2025 2nd Meeting/Hearing.

Director Martin confirmed that, as of his report to the Committee on September 3, 2025, a \$10,000 Committee discretionary budget remained in place for Fiscal Year 2026.

**(6) OLD BUSINESS****6A**     [ID 25-4585](#)     Chair Needles' Committee Update & Cul-de-Sac Guide Changes (M. Needles)

**Attachments:**   [Current City Cul-de-Sac Landscaping & Permitting Guide 090125](#)  
                         [M. Needles - Cul-de-Sac Guide & Website Proposal 090325](#)

Chair Needles briefly outlined the progression of his desire to improve the availability of information for residents who wish to beautify their neighborhood cul-de-sacs, to rethinking the way that all Beautification Advisory Committee information could be much more visible and accessible for all members of the community to access.

He proposed a stand-alone Committee website that could be accessed from the City's website by a single hyperlink, and offered his concept of how the Committee's information could be laid out in a document entitled "M. Needles - Cul-de-Sac Guide & Website Proposal 090325" which was attached to the meeting Agenda.

The Committee discussed Chair Needles' concept and the informational elements included in it.

**Next Steps**

Members of the Committee were asked to: 1) further review and provide input on the concept through the City Staff, and; 2) be prepared to discuss stand-alone website alternatives and related promotional "get the word out" initiatives at the Committee's October 1, 2025 meeting.

**6B**     [ID 25-4621](#)     2025 Collier Boulevard Christmas Decorations - M. Needles

**Attachments:**   [M. Needles Requests to City Council - 2025](#)

Mr. Eric Condee, accompanied by Ms. Wanda Day Burson and Ms. Barbara Dasti, briefly outlined the

work of the Christmas Island Style volunteer Committee/Club on Marco Island, annually preparing and decorating the large Christmas tree and wreath at the entrance to the Island at the base of the Judge SS Jolley Bridge, and the similarly large Christmas tree (and 18 nearby light poles) at Veterans' Community Park.

Mr. Condee described the Club's outreach to the Marco Island City Council and members of the City Staff during calendar year 2024 offering to collaborate together in purchasing a larger-than-usual quantity of lights for Christmas 2024, a portion with which the Christmas Island Style volunteer Committee/Club could utilize for the annual decoration of its Christmas trees, and a separate portion that the City could own and install (rather than rent) for its annual decoration of light poles along Collier Boulevard. The Club was unsuccessful in achieving its proposed 2024 collaboration.

Mr. Condee's appearance before the Beautification Advisory Committee at this meeting was initiated to convey the Club's offer to donate two pallets of new, unused Christmas lights to the City for decorating the light poles along Collier Boulevard without monetary reimbursement to the Club, if the City is willing to commit to: 1) provide the labor to install and remove the lighting along Collier Boulevard for 2025, and; 2) assume responsibility for storing the removed lights at the end of the 2025 Holiday season.

Public Works Director Justin Martin noted the significant manpower shortage that exists in his department, and the lack of expected budget allocation available in the 2026 Fiscal Year (beginning October 1, 2025) to source outside resources to install and remove Christmas lights along Collier Boulevard.

The Committee engaged in dialogue with Messrs. Condee and Martin on potential ways to: 1) generate the funding to hire contract manpower for this effort; 2) ensure that all affected Collier Boulevard light poles have active electric outlets, and; 3) facilitate the City's future storage of the lighting material proposed to be donated by the Christmas Island Style Committee/Club.

Next Steps:

Chair Needles requested that Public Works Director Martin obtain estimates from outside vendors on the cost to install and remove Christmas lights for 40 street light poles along Collier Boulevard for review with the Committee at its October 1, 2025 meeting.

The Committee will also identify and propose alternatives to fund the expected manpower expense for this effort, as well as explore potential post-Holiday storage alternatives for any donated lighting (if received from the Christmas Island Style Committee/Club).

**6C**      [ID 25-4592](#)      Collaboration with the Parks & Recreation Advisory Committee (L. Scherzinger)

Vice-Chair Linda Scherzinger briefly summarized the Committee's intentions in collaborating with the Parks & Recreation Advisory Committee (PRAC), and she shared the results of her initial discussions with the PRAC and its Committee representative Mr. Darin Spindler.

## **(7) NEW BUSINESS**

**7A**      [ID 25-4623](#)      Committee Response to Councilor Champagne's Requests (All)

The Committee discussed its alternative approaches to defining and implementing a privately-funded tree donation program (see the summary of Agenda Item 7B below) as requested by City Councilor Rene Champagne at the Committee's June 4, 2025 meeting, and Committee Member Victoria Myers volunteered to be the Committee's representative to the Marco Island Community Parks Foundation in the Foundation's efforts to install/plant additional shade structures and/or trees at Veterans Community Park.

**7B**     [ID 25-4600](#)     Privately-Funded Tree Donation Program White Paper (J. Rogers)

**Attachments:**   [J. Rogers White Paper Draft 082825](#)

*Committee Member Julie Rogers outlined the three alternative approaches (Options 1, 2, & 3) for a Committee-sponsored, privately-funded tree donation program for Committee consideration for Fiscal Year 2026. She also reviewed potential tree-planting project guidelines that could be applied to any of the three alternatives that she outlined.*

*The Committee discussed elements of Member Rogers' three alternative options and her tree-planting project guidelines. Public Works Director Justin Martin provided implementation insights for the Committee's consideration, including: 1) the tree's location (swale vs. park); 2) the presence (or lack) of existing irrigation, and; 3) the number of trees planted as part of a tree-planting project.*

*The Committee endorsed the following direction:*

*1) propose the implementation of a named, privately-funded tree donation program for Fiscal Year 2026 (note: could potentially be "Ten Thousand Trees in Ten Years Program" or another descriptive program name);*

*2) include Option 1 and Option 2 in the first year of the Program, with the consideration of adding Option 3 to the Program's alternatives in the second year (or beyond), and;*

*3) craft a letter to the Marco Island City Council outlining the Committee's proposed direction on this privately-funded tree donation Program, and request that a Committee presentation requesting approval to implement the proposed privately-funded tree donation Program for Fiscal Year 2026 be placed on the Council's near-term Future Agenda.*

*Chair Needles volunteered to draft the letter to the Marco Island City Council on behalf of the Committee.*

*The Committee will revisit this topic and its preparation for a City Council review of this Program at its October 1, 2025 meeting.*

**7C**     [ID 25-4601](#)     Discussion: Potential New Ideas for the 2026 Marco-in-Bloom Program (V. Myers)

*Committee Member Victoria Myers noted the Committee's allocation from its 2025 discretionary budget (around \$850) to fund the printing of yard signs for last year's Marco In Bloom Contest winners, and she proposed that the Committee consider modifications that may be appropriate under a "low" or "no" budget environment for Fiscal Year 2026.*

*The Committee discussed the impact of the Contest as it had been communicated and administered in recent years.*

*Chair Needles requested that Member Myers consider the various ideas and alternatives offered by the members of the Committee during this discussion, and he asked that she draft a proposal for the Committee's review at its October 1, 2025 meeting.*

**(8) STAFF COMMUNICATIONS****8A**     [ID 25-4602](#)     Street Light Banner Policy Review & Approval (All)

*Public Works Director Justin Martin acknowledged and thanked the Committee members who provided input to his draft of the Street Light Banner Policy, and he committed to share a revised draft of this Policy*

with the members of the Committee prior to the Committee's October 1st meeting.

**8B**     [ID 25-4603](#)     Introduction to New City Landscape Contractors (J. Martin)

*Public Works Director Justin Martin briefly re-confirmed the identity of the two landscaping firms that will be servicing the City of Marco Island for the 2026 Fiscal Year (beginning October 1, 2025).*

*With the endorsement of the Committee, Director Martin committed to extend an invitation to the landscaping firm (Juniper Landscaping) that will handle the public rights of way and the Water & Sewer Department properties, to attend and address the Committee at its October 1, 2025 meeting.*

**8C**     [ID 25-4604](#)     Tree-Planting Plans for Swallow Avenue & Bald Eagle Drive (J. Martin)

*Public Works Director Justin Martin noted the success of the Committee in applying its full 2025 Tree Fund budget in getting 66 Pink Tabebuia (aka Pink Trumpet) trees planted along South Heathwood Avenue between Lily Court and the South Heathwood Avenue "curve". No 2025 Tree Fund budget remains to apply to the Committee's identified next Tree-Planting Master Plan priorities.*

## **(9) CITY COUNCIL COMMUNICATION**

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

*City Councilor Bonita Schwan advised the Committee that the Home Depot Volunteer Corps has contacted the City of Marco Island to offer to help "spruce up" certain public facilities and grounds for the benefit of Marco Island and its citizens. She expressed her intention to speak with City Manager Mike McNees about asking this Volunteer Corps group to check the status of the street light pole electrical outlets along Collier Boulevard in anticipation of this Holiday Season's Christmas Light display along that route.*

*Councilor Schwan also applauded the Committee's plan to bring forward a privately-funded tree donation program (see the Minutes for Agenda Item 7B) for the City Council's review and direction. She indicated that she (or Councilor Champagne) would gladly "sponsor" having that presentation placed on the City Council's Future Agenda on behalf of the Committee.*

*Councilor Schwan concluded by soliciting the Committee's interest in, potentially, foregoing its annual \$10,000 discretionary budget allocation for Fiscal Year 2026 in favor of receiving a \$25,000 - \$30,000 budget allocation exclusively devoted to its 2026 Tree Fund for tree procurement and planting in the upcoming year.*

## **Special Motion & Vote - 2026 Fiscal Year Committee Budget**

*Chair Needles solicited the Committee's endorsement of City Councilor Bonita Schwan's proposal (see Minutes of Agenda Item 9) regarding offsetting the funding of the 2026 Tree Fund by forfeiting its 2026 Beautification Advisory Committee discretionary budget.*

**MOTION by Chair Needles, seconded by Vice-Chair Scherzinger that, the forfeiture of the Committee's 2026 discretionary budget in favor of receiving a \$25,000 - \$30,000 budget exclusively dedicated to the 2026 Tree Fund, be Approved if Offered. MOTION CARRIED BY UNANIMOUS COMMITTEE CONSENT:**

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

## **(10) PUBLIC COMMENT**

*Ms. Rhonda Gloodt (Vernon Place) conveyed her interest in assuming responsibility for the landscape care of the immediate area around two of the Historical Markers that the Committee had restored during*

late 2024 - early 2025. Those being:

- 1) the Captain William "Bill" Collier Homesite (Marker 3)\*\*; and;
- 2) the Cushing Archeological Site (Marker 4)\*\*

**\*\*[Editorial Note: Historical Marker locations and numbers as noted on page 78 of the 2025 Marco Island Chamber of Commerce Annual Publication and Destination Guide]**

Ms. Gloodt also proposed that the Committee consider organizing and publicizing the opportunity for members of the community to volunteer to take on the responsibility to monitor and maintain (e.g. trim and shape) the plantings around the other eleven (11) Historical Markers on behalf of the Committee.

She recommended that a once-a-year Committee-sponsored "get-together" at City Hall with the awarding of simple paper recognition certificates to the volunteers, would go a long way toward rewarding those who come forward to help maintain the beauty of the Markers.

Additionally, Ms. Gloodt, as a member of the Calusa Garden Club, noted the Club's common interest with the Beautification Advisory Committee in beautifying Marco Island. She advised the Committee of the Club's upcoming 1st Annual Plant Sale & Fall Festival to be held on November 22, 2025\*\*\*.

**\*\*\*[Editorial Note: Ms. Gloodt's presented Annual Plant Sale & Fall Festival flyer may be viewed at: [www.cityofmarcoisland.com](http://www.cityofmarcoisland.com) > Menu > Agendas and Minutes > Beautification Advisory Committee > 9/3/2025 > Meeting Details]**

## **(11) NEXT MEETING: CONFIRMATION & ATTENDANCE**

[ID 25-4626](#) Next Meeting: Confirmation, Attendance, and Preliminary 2026 Meeting Schedule (All)

**Attachments:** [BAC 2025 Meeting Schedule - with logo](#)  
[2026 Proposed BAC Meeting Schedule as of 9-1-2025](#)

Four of the six members of the Committee present indicated their availability to be present for the Committee's October 1, 2025 meeting. (Vice-Chair Scherzinger and Member Rogers will be unable to attend).

The Committee requested that the review and confirmation of its 2026 meeting dates be placed as an Agenda Item at its October 1st meeting.

## **(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 090125](#)

Recording Specialist Jim Kornas advised the Committee of Councilor Deb Henry's request, on behalf of the Marco Island Noontime Rotary, to the Marco Island Community Parks Foundation at its August 31, 2025 meeting, that the Rotarians are interested in "adopting" the beautification of Founder's Memorial Park upon the completion of the North Collier Boulevard / North Barfield Drive Traffic Improvement Project.

Additionally:



- 1) Member Victoria Myers requested that a review of her "Maximum 14 foot Tree Height Requirement for Trees Planted under LCEC Power Lines" presentation be placed on the Committee's October 1st Agenda;
- 2) Member Michael Cory sought insight from Public Works Director Martin on where to direct a request by the Audubon of the Western Everglades Field Biologist;
- 3) Chair Needles sought insight from members of the Committee on advising a citizen on the proper procedure to have a tree planted at Mackle Park in memory of a loved one, and;
- 4) Vice-Chair Scherzinger advised the Committee of her desire to connect a donor of eight (8) Royal Poinciana trees to Ms. Rhonda Gloodt and the Calusa Garden Club for their consideration and potential action

### **(13) OTHER COMMITTEE COMMUNICATIONS (If Committee Time Allows)**

#### **13A     [ID 25-4624](#)     "Most UnWanted" Invasive and Noxious Plants Update (R. Sullivan)**

*Committee Member Ryan Sullivan was not present to provide his update to the Committee.*

#### **13B     [ID 25-4586](#)     Review of Landscaping Condition Around the Historical Markers (M. Cory)**

*Committee Member Michael Cory reported that, though several planting areas around the Historical Markers are doing well, several have not faired well through the summer. He received the polishing materials and instructions on maintaining the Historical Marker plaques from former Beautification Advisory Committee Chair Shelli Connelly, and he committed to undertake a polishing of all thirteen (13) plaques when the weather turns cooler.*

*In light of the comments and suggestions offered during Public Comment (Agenda Item 10 earlier in the meeting), the Committee's plan for the ongoing maintenance of the Historical Markers and the surrounding plantings around them will be addressed at a future meeting of the Committee.*

#### **13C     [ID 25-4587](#)     Arbor Day Plaque & Stand Procurement Update (M. Cory)**

*Committee Member Michael Cory reported that the vendor encountered a problem with the stand for the commemorative Arbor Day plaque, and that the Committee's 2025 Arbor Day tree is still not marked as intended.*

*The Committee briefly discussed the relative cost of recent commemorative plaques. Member Victoria Myers committed to share the information that she obtained in procuring the Michael Collins Commemorative Tree plaque with Member Cory.*

#### **13D     [ID 25-4588](#)     Michael Collins Commemorative Stand Update (V. Myers)**

*Committee Member Victoria Myers noted that the commemorative plaque and stand approved by the Committee in past meetings to identify the Michael Collins Memorial Tree was carried into the meeting by Public Works Director Justin Martin, and she inquired about the status of remaining 2025 Fiscal Year Committee funds available to tack-weld the plaque and stand together.*

*Director Martin noted that the Committee still had just over \$8,000.00 in its 2025 Fiscal Year budget, and he noted the impending cut-off date for quotes and purchase orders to be submitted for the current fiscal year.*

### **Special Motion & Vote: Utilization of Remaining 2025 Fiscal Year Committee Budget**



*The Committee rallied around the opportunity to utilize its remaining 2025 Fiscal Year funds to undertake its desired Swallow Avenue tree planting priority, and Vice-Chair Linda Scherzinger volunteered to solicit a quote from the City's landscape contractor before the impending deadline.*

**MOTION by Member Myers, seconded by Vice-Chair Scherzinger, that an allocation of up to \$8,000.00 of the Committee's 2025 Fiscal Year discretionary budget be directed toward the planting of Orange Geiger trees along the south side of Swallow Avenue, be Approved. MOTION CARRIED BY THE FOLLOWING VOICE VOTE:**

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

**13E**     [ID 25-4589](#)     South Heathwood Drive "Tree Fund" Plantings (All)

*This item was briefly touched upon by Public Works Director Justin Martin during Staff Communications (Agenda Item 8), but not specifically discussed by the Committee.*

**13F**     [ID 25-4591](#)     Root Barriers - Report & Discussion (L. Scherzinger)

**Attachments:**   [L. Scherzinger - Root Barrier Sources & Recommendations 081525](#)

*Committee Vice-Chair Linda Scherzinger reported the results of her engagement with the Naples Botanical Gardens and the University of Florida IFAS Extension Office.*

*The Committee indicated its intention to continue to work with the City's Water & Sewer Department in identifying tree species that could be planted in swale areas with minimal potential intrusion into the City's water and sewer system.*

**13G**     [ID 25-4634](#)     Tree City USA Annual Application Window (All)

**Attachments:**   [Tree City USA Application Window 081225](#)

*The Committee briefly noted the impending annual application window for Tree City USA applications. Vice-Chair Linda Scherzinger volunteered to reach out to Assistant City Manager Casey Lucius to obtain the necessary background that Ms. Lucius collected on behalf of the Committee for the most recent year's Tree City USA application.*

## **(14) ADJOURNMENT**

*Public Works Director Justin Martin reminded that Committee that, effective with the Committee's October 1, 2025 meeting, the Fleet & Facilities team under Manager Joe Parrilli will be the Committee's Staff Liaison for the 2026 Fiscal Year.*

*The Committee thanked Director Martin for his guidance and support over the past several years.*

*There being no further business before the Committee, Chair Needles adjourned the meeting at 4:58 P.M.*

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*Jim Kornas, Recording Specialist*