

City of Marco Island Florida

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



Meeting Minutes - Final

Wednesday, July 9, 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, Vice-Chair Scherzinger, Member Sepe, Member Sullivan and Chair Needles

Absent: 1 - Member Rogers

Also Present

City Councilor Deb Henry

City Councilor Bonita Schwan

CITY STAFF:

Justin Martin, Public Works Director

Martha Montgomery, Supervisor, Fleet & Facilities Department

Jose Muchati, Coordinator, Fleet & Facilities Department

Martin Luna, Audio/Visual Technician

Jim Kornas, Recording Specialist

(3) PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Led by Chair Needles.

(4) APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

Vice-Chair Scherzinger requested that time be allocated on the Agenda for her to update the Committee on her investigation into root barrier structures as promised at the Committee's June 4, 2025 meeting (see 6/4/25 Minutes of Agenda Item 8B).

[Editorial Note: Vice-Chair Scherzinger's report and the Committee's discussion on this topic is recorded in these Minutes under Agenda Item 6H (Special Discussion Item: Root Barriers)]

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

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

(5) APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

[ID 25-4507](#) Beautification Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes of June 4, 2025

Attachments: [Beautification Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes of June 4, 2025](#)

MOTION by Member Myers, seconded by Vice-Chair Scherzinger, that the Beautification Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes of June 4, 2025, be Approved. MOTION CARRIED BY THE FOLLOWING VOICE VOTE:

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

Special Introduction

Public Works Director Justin Martin reminded the Committee of the impending transition of Staff Liaison responsibility to the Fleet & Facilities Department (see Agenda Item 8C of the June 4, 2025 Beautification Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes), and he introduced Ms. Martha Montgomery, F&F Department Supervisor, and Mr. Jose Muchati, Staff Coordinator, to the members of the Committee.

Director Martin indicated that the Fleet & Facilities Department's responsibility as Staff Liaison to the Beautification Advisory Committee will likely commence with the beginning of the 2025 - 2026 Fiscal Year (October 1, 2025).

(6) OLD BUSINESS

A [ID 25-4508](#) Chair Needles' Committee Update (M. Needles)

Chair Needles advised the Committee that he will be bringing a revised concept for the current City of Marco Island "Cul-de-Sac Landscaping & Permitting Guide" to the Committee's next meeting. He also indicated his desire to have the future iteration of this information be more readily accessible and easier to find on the City's website. At the Committee's request, Chair Needles committed to make a draft of his revised concept available to members of the Committee prior to the Committee's next meeting.

Chair Needles reported on his discussion with Ms. Dolores Siegel, Chair of the City's Parks & Recreation Advisory Committee (PRAC), regarding the Beautification Advisory Committee's desire to coordinate future tree-planting priorities between the two Committees (see the Minutes of Agenda Item 7B of the BAC's June 4, 2025 meeting). Ms. Siegel committed to raise the proposal with the PRAC at its July 15, 2025 meeting.

Chair Needles shared the input that he received from former Beautification Advisory Committee Chair Shelli Connelly regarding the condition of the landscaping surrounding the Marco Island Historical Markers that were beautified by the Committee during calendar year 2024. Public Works Director Martin provided a brief recollection of the activities surrounding the renovation and landscaping of the Historical Markers by the past members of the Beautification Advisory Committee.

Committee Member Mike Cory volunteered to visit and assess the condition of the landscaping at all 13 Historical Marker locations and provide an update to the Committee at its next meeting.

Chair Needles invited City Councilor Deb Henry to address the Committee regarding the effort by the Naples residents of the Marco Shores/Mainsail Drive community (approximately 15 HOAs) to enhance the appearance of their roadway medians. Though the Beautification Advisory Committee has had no involvement in the Marco Shores/Mainsail Drive initiative, it was pleased to be in a position to offer its plant, program, and maintenance information available to members of the Marco Shores/Mainsail Drive community.

B [ID 25-4509](#) Arbor Day Plaque & Stand Procurement Update (M. Cory)

Committee Member Cory reported that the plaque and stand to commemorate the Committee's 2025 Arbor Day planting in Calusa Park had been ordered. He will update the Committee on its status at the Committee's next meeting.

C [ID 25-4510](#) Michael Collins Commemorative Tree Selection (V. Myers)

Committee Member Victoria Myers reported on her progress in: 1) obtaining American Legion Post 404 approval of the style and design of the commemorative plaque honoring former NASA astronaut Michael Collins; 2) ordering and receiving the 6" x 8" plaque, and; 3) identifying a specific Orange Geiger Tree specimen for the Committee's consideration.

Director Justin Martin confirmed receipt of the plaque (minus its stand), and he indicated that it will be directed to the Marco Island Fleet & Facilities team for eventual placement at the identified Veterans Community Park location prior to the planned recognition/dedication ceremony to be conducted in the winter/spring of 2026 (to coincide with Astronaut Collins family's seasonal presence on Marco Island).

Given the unique characteristics of the commemorative plaque, the Committee has requested that the plaque be tack-welded to its stand, and that the stand be securely mounted into a significant cement base when installed at Veterans Community Park.

Committee Member Myers volunteered to follow-up with the vendor on the status of the stand, and she will identify and propose a local vendor to complete the necessary tack-welding.

Committee Myers concluded her update to the Committee by presenting a photo of the proposed Orange Geiger Tree specimen, and she requested that: 1) the Committee confirm her recommended specimen selection and associated tree cost, and; 2) the tree be planted ASAP so that it will be well-established and thriving at the time of the 2026 recognition/dedication ceremony.

Editorial Notes:

1) the Committee's allocation of \$1,000.00 from the 2025 Tree Fund to fund the procurement and planting of a tree in honor of Apollo 11 Astronaut Michael Collins was Motioned and Approved by the Committee at its October 2, 2024 meeting (Agenda Item 7, ID 24-3898), and;

2) the submitted proposal and estimate from Affordable Landscaping Service & Design, LLC that was reviewed by the Committee at this meeting may be found on the City of Marco Island website at: www.cityofmarcoisland.com > Menu > Agendas and Minutes > Beautification Advisory Committee 7/9/25 > Meeting Details

MOTION by Member Myers, seconded by Member Sepe, that Affordable Landscaping Service & Design, LLC proposal and Estimate #2037402 dated 7/3/25 in the amount of \$550.00 for the plant, planting, maintenance, and labor to install and establish the Orange Geiger Tree specimen selected by the Committee to be planted in the identified location for the Michael Collins Commemorative Memorial at Veterans Community Park, be Approved. [Note: the funding for this expenditure is from the City's 2025 Fiscal Year Tree Fund]. MOTION CARRIED BY THE FOLLOWING VOICE VOTE:

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

D [ID 25-4523](#) Privately-Funded Tree Donation Program White Paper (J. Rogers)

In Member Julie Rogers' absence, the Committee briefly discussed alternatives for a potential 2026 Fiscal Year privately-funded tree donation program. Chair Needles voiced his expectations for the White Paper that Ms. Rogers is drafting for the Committee's review.

It is anticipated that Ms. Rogers' White Paper will be reviewed with the Committee at its September 3, 2025 meeting.

E [ID 25-4524](#) Privately-Funded Tree Donation News Article (R. Sullivan)

Committee Member Ryan Sullivan shared his draft of a potential news/information release to support an awareness-building campaign to encourage privately-funded donations to improve the tree canopy coverage on Marco Island.

Utilizing information provided by Committee Member Julie Rogers at the Committee's June 4, 2025

meeting, Member Sullivan's draft was shared to generate Committee discussion and direction for potential future iterations of an awareness and action-building effort by the Committee. He also reminded the Committee of the opportunity to leverage low or no cost editorial content, Committee-written "submitted by" articles, and regular social media channel posts to build awareness for the Committee's tree-donation program as was discussed at the Committee's June 4, 2025 meeting (see the 6/4/25 Minutes for Agenda Item 6B).

Member Ryan was asked to:

- 1) develop a schedule of informational sub-segments of this and other related information that could be released over a period of time;
- 2) identify a target date for the first release of the series of informational sub-segments;
- 3) propose an easily accessible, electronic pathway (e.g. landing page) on the City's website where members of the public can access additional information on the Committee's proposed privately-funded tree donation program, enhanced neighborhood cul-de-sac beautification information, and other Committee-sponsored information.

F [ID 25-4525](#) "Most UnWanted" Invasive and Noxious Plants Update (R. Sullivan)

Member Ryan Sullivan shared and displayed his "second draft" listing of potential tree, shrubs, vines, grasses, and ground cover species for inclusion on the Committee's future "Most UnWanted" poster(s), informational piece(s), and eventual Committee-recommended modifications to Marco Island Ordinance 98-19 for the City Council's consideration at a future date.

[Editorial Note: a copy of the list presented by Committee Member Sullivan may be found at www.cityofmarcoisland.com > Menu > Agendas and Minutes > Beautification Advisory Committee > July 9, 2025 > Meeting Details]

Member Sullivan indicated that the Category I list of invasive plants in Florida, as recognized by the Florida Department of Agriculture, contains over 175 named plants of concern. To assist in identifying the most concerning plant species for Marco Island, Member Sullivan indicated that he had sent the list to: 1) Ms. Lindsay Boehner, certified horticulturalist and former Chair of the City's Beach & Coastal Resources Advisory Committee, and; 2) Ms. Amber Stonik, the City's Environmental Planner, for their review and input.

Member Sullivan received the following inputs from the Committee:

- 1) Identify and narrow the list to a manageable number of the most invasive/noxious species in each of the three categories specified;
- 2) add the Earleaf Acacia tree (*Acacia auriculiformis*) to the list of unwanted trees;
- 3) confirm the shorter, refined list with the contact(s) from the University of Florida IFAS (Institute of Food and Agricultural Science) that will be made available following the meeting**, and;
- 4) use QR codes on future awareness-building / information pieces to direct interested citizens to the comprehensive list of "Most UnWanted" plant species for Marco Island

A further update from Member Sullivan will be scheduled for a future meeting of the Committee.

[** Editorial Note: the University of Florida IFAS list of contacts was provided to Member Sullivan on July 10, 2025]

G [ID 25-4526](#) Unsupported Tree at Mackle Park Update (R. Sullivan)

Member Ryan Sullivan reported that the repair to the unsupported tree that he reported to the Committee at its June meeting was corrected.

H. Special Discussion Item: Root Barriers (L. Scherzinger)

In follow-up to the Committee's discussion with Mr. Bart Bradshaw of the City of Marco Island's Water & Sewer Department at its June 4, 2025 meeting (Agenda Item 8B), Vice-Chair Scherzinger provided a report to the Committee on her investigation into reasonably cost-effective "root barrier" structures that can be deployed around new tree plantings to help protect underground infrastructure elements (e.g. water lines, etc.) from tree roots.

Vice-Chair Scherzinger reported that she had established contact with the Naples Botanical Garden on her inquiry, and that she had been advised to reach out to representatives from the University of Florida Collier County extension. She also obtained insight from Master Gardener and former Beautification Advisory Committee Chair Andrew Kirlin on several low-cost ways to help mitigate the spread of tree roots over underground infrastructure elements.

Vice-Chair Scherzinger volunteered to bring an update on the availability and likely costs of installing root barriers to the Committee's next meeting.

(7) NEW BUSINESS[ID 25-4527](#) Review of Proposed Policy for Banners on City Light Poles (All)

Public Works Director Justin Martin distributed copies of the proposed City of Marco Island policy to manage the requests for deployment of banners on the City's light poles. He provided background on the impetus for the proposed policy, highlighted the proposed fee structure, and responded to a number of questions from members of the Committee.

Director Martin requested that the Committee review his draft, provide input via direct email to him prior to the Committee's next meeting, and conduct a formal vote of the Committee on this policy when the Committee next meets.

(8) STAFF COMMUNICATIONS[ID 23-3274](#) Director Justin Martin's Report

At the request of Chair Needles during the Committee's discussion of Agenda Item 6E (Tree-Donation News Article), Director Martin updated the Committee on the selection of the City's landscape contractors for Fiscal Year 2026 (beginning October 1, 2025).

For Public Rights of Way (e.g. swales) and the grounds around the City's water treatment facilities, Juniper Landscaping will become the City's landscape contractor of record.

For the City's park areas, Superior Landscaping Services of Naples LLC will become the City's landscape contractor of record.

Both landscape contracts were awarded by the City for three years, with an option for additional, future, three-year renewals.

Chair Needles requested that Director Martin invite representatives from both of the newly-confirmed landscape contractors to address and have dialogue with the Committee in the October/November

timeframe.

(9) CITY COUNCIL COMMUNICATION

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

City Councilor Bonita Schwan reminded the Committee of the City Council's upcoming Operating Budget Workshop on July 21st, and she requested that a representative of the Committee attend the Workshop. Chair Marv Needles indicated his intention to attend the Workshop.

Councilor Schwan also advised the Committee that the Marco Island City Council, at its July 7th meeting, placed a discussion of potentially consolidating the number of volunteer City Committees onto its Future Agenda (no specific date identified).

(10) PUBLIC COMMENT

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

(11) NEXT MEETING: CONFIRMATION & ATTENDANCE

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

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

MOTION by Member Sullivan, seconded by Vice-Chair Scherzinger, that the Committee's next meeting be postponed until the Committee's next scheduled meeting date of Wednesday, September 3, 2025. MOTION CARRIED BY THE FOLLOWING VOICE VOTE:

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

All six members of the Committee present indicated their availability to be present for the Committee's September 3rd 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](#)

Committee Member Victoria Myers proposed bringing forward a discussion of new ideas for the Committee's 2026 Marco In Bloom Contest to the Committee's September meeting.

In reviewing the Committee's "Proposed Beautification Advisory Committee Future Agenda Items" list, Chair Needles requested that Committee members provide feedback to Recording Specialist Jim Kornas on any "October/November/December" items that they may wish to have placed on the Committee's September 3rd Agenda.

(13) OTHER COMMITTEE COMMUNICATIONS

No other Committee Communications were brought forward by members of the Committee at this meeting.

(14) ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business before the Committee, Chair Needles adjourned the meeting at 4:18 P.M.

Jim Kornas, Recording Specialist