

City of Marco Island Florida

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



Meeting Minutes - Final

Wednesday, June 5, 2024

3:00 PM

Community Room

Beautification Advisory Committee

Chair: Shelli Connelly

Vice-Chair: TBD

*Members: Michael Cory, Julie McDonald,
Sharon Watts, Fiona Winter*

City Staff: Justin Martin, Jim Kornas, Tara Kosieracki

(1) CALL TO ORDER

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

(2) ROLL CALL

Present: 5 - Member Cory, Member McDonald, Member Watts, Member Winter and Chair Connelly

Absent: 1 - Vice-Chair Nesmith

(Note: Member Watts was present at Roll Call and monitored the meeting remotely via telephone)

Also Present

- Mr. Justin Martin, Public Works Director*
- Ms. Zurima Luff, Stormwater Engineer*
- Mr. Martin Luna, Audio/Visual Technician*
- Mr. Jim Kornas, Recording Specialist*

(3) PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Led by Chair Connelly

(4) INTRODUCTION OF NEW MEMBER

[ID 24-3470](#) New Committee Member Introduction

At Chair Connelly's request, new Committee Member Michael Cory shared a brief summary of his background and reasons for wishing to join the Committee. He was warmly welcomed by the Committee.

(5) APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

MOTION by Member McDonald, seconded by Member Winter that the Agenda be Approved. MOTION CARRIED BY UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

(6) APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

[ID 24-3576](#) Beautification Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes of April 3, 2024

MOTION by Member McDonald, seconded by Member Winter, that the Beautification Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes of April 3, 2024, be Approved. MOTION CARRIED BY UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

(7) OLD BUSINESS

A. [ID 24-3577](#) Presentation of Marco In Bloom Awards at 4/22/24 City Council Meeting (J. McDonald)

Committee Member Julie McDonald reported a successful presentation of awards to the winners of the 2024 Marco In Bloom Contest at the April 22, 2024 City Council Meeting and offered the following observations and suggestions for next year's presentation:

- 1) limit the presentation to 10 minutes or less at the City Council Meeting;*

- 2) do not invest in creating a video of the winning properties to display at the presentation and;
- 3) have at least two Committee members present to assist in announcing the winners and distributing the yard signs to the winning property owners

Additionally, Member McDonald complimented the awareness-building and post-Contest listing of winners and photos in the Marco Island Living magazine and the May 30 - June 5, 2024 edition of the Coastal Breeze newspaper. Ms. McDonald was also very appreciative of Assistant City Manager Casey Lucius's efforts to help promote the Marco In Bloom Contest via the City's social media postings on Nextdoor.com and other media outlets.

For 2025, Ms. McDonald recommended that the Committee also explore promotion of the Marco In Bloom Contest in the MICA Wave magazine, and to continue to engage all Committee members in proactively canvassing and reaching out to property owners to encourage them to self-nominate for Marco In Bloom recognition.

Ms. McDonald thanked her colleagues and all who participated in making this year's Contest a success, and Chair Connelly complimented and thanked Member McDonald for her work on this year's Marco In Bloom Contest that went "above and beyond" in ensuring a well-run and successful Contest.

Following Member McDonald's report, Chair Connelly requested that Public Works Director Martin's team update the Committee's webpage with copies of the recent local articles regarding the Marco In Bloom Contest. She also requested that all Members of the Committee receive emailed copies of the Contest's coverage.

Member McDonald volunteered to provide Recording Specialist Jim Kornas with the relevant articles to distribute to the Committee.

B. [ID 24-3578](#) April 24, 2024 Arbor Day Event Debrief (S. Connelly)

Chair Shelli Connelly provided the Committee with a brief, verbal update on the April 24th event, noting that two trees were actually planted in Calusa Park in the vicinity of the Butterfly Garden in cooperation with, and with the support of, the Calusa Garden Club, in honor of Arbor Day 2024.

Tree #1 was a Bay Cedar tree donated by Affordable Landscaping and Design, the City's landscape contractor, while Tree #2 was a Lingum Vitae tree which was purchased at a reduced cost through the assistance of Mr. Andrew Kirlin, Former Chair of the Beautification Advisory Committee.

In response to the Motion advanced regarding the purchase of the Lingum Vitae tree, Public Works Director Justin Martin provided Ms. Shelli Connelly with the steps to secure reimbursement for her expense in procuring Tree #2.

MOTION by Member McDonald, seconded by Member Cory, that Reimbursement of the \$100.00 Out-of- Pocket Cost to Chair Shelli Connelly to Procure the Committee's Desired Lingum Vitae tree for the 2024 Arbor Day Event, be Approved. MOTION CARRIED BY UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

The Committee next discussed obtaining identification plaques and stands to identify the donor, event, and date of the two trees planted for Arbor Day 2024. Member Sharon Watts volunteered to investigate the current cost for procuring and inscribing the proposed plaques.

MOTION by Chair Connelly, seconded by Member McDonald, that an Allocation of the Beautification Advisory Committee's 2024 Fiscal Year Budget in an Amount Not To Exceed \$400.00 to Procure Two Identification Plaques and Stands for the 2024 Arbor Day Trees, be Approved. MOTION CARRIED BY UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Chair Connelly concluded her report and discussion with the Committee on Arbor Day, Calusa Park, and

the Calusa Garden Club by advising the Committee that the collaborative effort between the Committee and the Calusa Garden Club to relocate the irrigation water spigot to enhance the convenience of maintaining the Butterfly Garden at Calusa Park was completed by Affordable Landscaping and Design to the satisfaction of the Calusa Garden Club members. [Note: see Agenda Item 8C (Calusa Park Butterfly Garden Irrigation Status Update) of the April 3, 2024 Minutes of the Beautification Advisory Committee Meeting]

C. [ID 24-3646](#) Ten Thousand Trees in Ten Years Forward Plan (S. Connelly)

Chair Connelly advised the Committee of a generous donation of 100 trees by a local Marco Island couple for placement around Mackle Park Lake. With the participation of the donating couple, City representatives from the Fleet & Facilities Department and the Parks & Recreation Staff, Committee Chair Connelly, and former Committee Chair David Leaser, a plan for planting the donated trees during the rainy season was confirmed.

Chair Connelly also announced that new Beautification Advisory Committee Member Michael Cory volunteered to lead the ongoing Ten Thousand Trees in Ten Years pilot program going forward.

Next Steps:

With the participation of Affordable Landscaping, the City's landscaping contractor, former Committee Chair David Leaser, and Brian Galligan, Vice President of Horticulture with the Naples Botanical Garden, a site plan will be developed for the planting of the 100 donated trees that will take into consideration open space opportunities, tree growth characteristics, color display, tree canopy coverage, and maintenance expectations for review with the leadership of the City of Marco Island Growth Management Department. It is anticipated that the completion of the site plan review and the planting of the trees will be completed during the Island's current rainy season.

Public Works Director Justin Martin offered several suggestions to facilitate the successful establishment of the newly planted trees, and Committee Members McDonald and Winter recommended that the Island's local media publications (i.e. Coastal Breeze, Marco Eagle, Marco Island Living, and M.I.C.A Wave) and the City Council be advised of the planting to raise awareness with full-time and seasonal residents during the off-season summer months. Committee Member Cory agreed to spearhead the publicity effort on behalf of the Committee.

D. [ID 24-3579](#) First Responder Park Donation Status and Historical Marker Completion Status (S. Connelly/J. McDonald)

Chair Shelli Connelly briefly outlined the Committee's desires for the property parcel at the intersection of San Marco Road and Heathwood Drive (referred to as "First Responders Park" by the Committee), for the benefit of new Committee Member Michael Cory, and she deferred to Committee Member Julie McDonald to report on her progress with the Marco Island Chamber of Commerce regarding its "Chamber After Five" initiative (see the report under Agenda Item 7E).

Ms. Connelly also updated the Committee on the plant procurement and installation status for the completion of the Historical Marker beautification effort, and she pledged to share photos of the individually-completed sites with the Committee as soon as they are completed.

E. [ID 24-3634](#) Chamber of Commerce "Chamber After Five" Opportunity (J. McDonald)

Committee Member Julie McDonald reported on her success in obtaining support from the leadership of the Marco Island Chamber of Commerce to schedule and bring forward a brief presentation to the Chamber's "Chamber After Five" attendees to solicit Marco Island business community interest and participation in generating public and business community awareness and donations to enhance the beauty of the property parcel (tentatively referred to as "First Responders Park" by the Beautification

Advisory Committee) at the southeast corner of San Marco Road and Heathwood Drive.

With the endorsement and encouragement of the Committee, Ms. McDonald will work with the Chamber leadership in identifying a appropriate date for the Committee to make its presentation during the months of July or August, 2024.

(8) NEW BUSINESS

A. [ID 24-3581](#) Founder Memorial Park Enhancement Discussion (All)

Chair Connelly briefly summarized the genesis for the Committee's interest in reviewing the status of Founders Memorial Park at the southeast corner of Collier Boulevard and Barfield Drive, and Public Works Director Martin provided a brief description of the City's plans to improve the movement and flow of traffic at that intersection.

Noting a desire to apply the Committee's current budget year funds toward a beautification project at this Park prior to the conclusion of the current fiscal year ending September 30, 2024, Ms. Connelly indicated her intention to obtain a design concept and execution plan budget from Landert Landscape Design for sharing and review with the Committee at its next meeting.

Committee Member McDonald volunteered to inquire with the Marco Island Center for the Arts to ascertain its interest in possibly participating with artwork (e.g. statue(s)) for the Park.

B. [ID 24-3582](#) Adopt-A-Median Donation & Recognition Program Discussion (F. Winter)

Committee Member Fiona Winter summarized the results of her investigation into "Adopt A Median" programs in operation in other cities in Florida, and she proposed that the Committee consider leveraging the learning of other communities that have implemented similar programs.

Public Works Director Justin Martin highlighted several operational considerations relative to trash pickup, removal, and disposal that should be considered in the implementation of an "Adopt A Median" program, and Member Winter clarified that her proposal is to limit an "Adopt A Median" program to the solicitation and collection of donated funds from public or business entities to facilitate median beautification efforts rather than volunteer manpower activities to remove debris from the Island's medians.

Ms. Winter proposed that the Committee schedule a Workshop to more fully address and define the elements of an "Adopt A Median" program for Marco Island. Chair Connelly suggested that a date for the proposed Workshop be discussed at a future meeting of the Committee.

Chair Connelly also expanded upon the topic of medians to re-engage the Committee on the subject of the median on South Heathwood Drive, just south of Winterberry Drive (see Committee Meeting Minutes on this subject - December 6, 2023 (ID 23-3237), and January 10, 2024 (ID 23-3354)).

Ms. Connelly proposed that the Committee consider allocating a portion of its available 2024 fiscal year funds toward making the median on South Heathwood Drive, south of Winterberry Drive a visual "showcase" of what could be accomplished with a publicly-funded "Adopt A Median" program. Sharing the results of her recent conversations with Mr. Al Benarroch of Affordable Landscaping & Design, and with Ms. Leslie Landert of Landert Landscape Design on potential ideas for this median, Chair Connelly requested that the Committee consider a Motion to advance this proposal.

MOTION by Member McDonald, seconded by Member Winter, that an Allocation of the Committee's 2024 FY Budget, Not to Exceed \$3,500.00, be Directed Toward the Landscaping Restoration and Beautification of the Median on South Heathwood Drive, south of Winterberry Drive, be Approved. MOTION CARRIED BY UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Public Works Director Justin Martin recommended that the Committee allow for public input to whatever design plan is developed for the median at South Heathwood Drive and Winterberry Drive, and that the design be reviewed and approved by the Committee, prior to initiation of the restoration work.

MOTION by Chair Connelly, seconded by Member Winter, that an Allocation of the Committee's 2024 FY Budget, Not to Exceed \$500.00, be Directed Toward the Payment of Any Design Fee Charged by Landert Landscape Design, be Approved. MOTION CARRIED BY UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

C. [ID 24-3583](#) Tree City USA Budget Allocation and Application History Review (F. Winter/J. McDonald)

Committee Chair Connelly shared the results of her outreach with a representative of The Arbor Day Foundation, and she learned that the City of Marco Island had, inadvertently, failed to apply in time for its 2022 & 2023 "Tree City USA" designations. No path exists for the City to apply retroactively for those years.

Chair Connelly did, however, receive assurance from The Arbor Day Foundation representative that, if the City will submit its 2024 application on time, it could claim its 15th year designation as a "Tree City USA" city.

Member Fiona Winter shared insights from her investigation into the "Tree City USA" program, and noted that the program requires: 1) that the applying City have a "Tree Board or Department" (i.e. the Beautification Advisory Committee of Marco Island); 2) that a community tree ordinance be in effect; 3) that the City spend at least \$2.00 per capita annually on urban forestry and; 4) that the City celebrate Arbor Day annually.

Member Winter volunteered to further investigate the specifics regarding the "Tree City USA's" requirements with the Arbor Day Foundation representative that Chair Connelly had contacted. Chair Connelly agreed to share her information for that contact.

(9) STAFF COMMUNICATIONS

A. [ID 24-3584](#) Main Road Benches & Waste Receptacles

Public Works Director Justin Martin shared the results of his investigation into the cost of procuring new, tropical storm resistant benches and waste receptacles along Collier Boulevard and along Bald Eagle toward Old Marco. [Editorial Note: See Public Comment (Agenda Item 12) of the April 3, 2024 Beautification Advisory Committee Meeting for background on this topic].

The Committee discussed the opportunities to enhance the population and placement of benches and waste receptacles on the Island in light of its annual budget allocation, and Member Julie McDonald volunteered to conduct an assessment of locations along the Island's main thoroughfares most in need of bench and/or waste receptacle placement/replacement.

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

Director Martin had no further report for the Committee.

(10) CITY COUNCIL COMMUNICATION

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

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

(11) PUBLIC COMMENT

No members of the public came forward to offer comment.

(12) NEXT MEETING: CONFIRMATION & ATTENDANCE

Committee Members Winter, Cory, and Connelly confirmed their ability to be present for the Committee's July 3rd meeting. Member McDonald was uncertain of her status, and Member Watts will not be available to attend.

(13) PROPOSED AGENDA TOPICS FOR NEXT MEETING

The following topics are planned for the Committee's July meeting:

- 1) Ten Thousand Trees in Ten Years Program Update (M. Cory)*
- 2) Historical Marker Landscaping Completion Update (S. Connelly)*
- 3) "Chamber After Five" Committee Presentation Date Confirmation (J. McDonald)*
- 4) Founder Memorial Park Design Proposal & Budget Estimate (S. Connelly)*
- 5) S. Heathwood/Winterberry Dr. Median Design Proposal & Budget Estimate (S. Connelly)*
- 6) "Adopt A Median" Workshop Plan & Date (All)*

The following topics are planned for the Committee's August meeting:

- 1) Arbor Day Tree Plaques & Stands - Cost and Implementation (S. Watts)*

(14) OTHER COMMITTEE COMMUNICATIONS

Member Cory inquired as to the nature of the Land Use Public Hearing Notice that was recently posted at the corner of West Elkcam Circle and Bald Eagle Drive. Public Works Director Martin shared his insight on the proposed plan for that property parcel.

Member Winter shared a citizen email regarding a requested flag display during the month of June. Public Works Director Martin communicated the process by which citizen requests of this nature can be brought forward for consideration.

Chair Connelly alerted the Committee of the City's plan to approach the Collier County Coastal Advisory Committee on June 13, 2024 and the Tourist Development Council (TDC) on June 18, 2024 to request TDC funding for the beautification of the City's beach access pathways. Ms. Connelly encouraged the Committee to attend to demonstrate Marco Island community support.

Chair Connelly presented several photos of the trash build up at the receptacles exiting Marco's beaches over the Memorial Day Weekend. Expressing disappointment with the current situation, Ms. Connelly engaged the Committee in a brief discussion of possible actions and/or publicly-communicated beach standards that might be considered to encourage more considerate beachgoer behavior. Following the Committee's discussion of the issue, Public Works Director Martin volunteered to solicit proposed solutions from the Marco Island Fleet & Facilities Department for communication back to the Committee.

Chair Connelly concluded this portion of the agenda by describing her recent discussion with Ms. Brittany

Piersma of the Audubon Western Everglades organization regarding the detrimental impact on the burrowing owl population of the Island from the use of bait boxes to control rodents around homes and municipal/commercial buildings. Ms. Connelly proposed that the City stop contracting with pest control companies that utilize rodent bait boxes around City facilities, and she indicated her intention to recommend that Ms. Piersma request an opportunity to bring a presentation to the Marco Island City Council on this issue.

[ID 24-3635](#) Discussion - Edible Fruit at Calusa Park

Member Fiona Winter raised awareness of the Edible Fruit Garden in Calusa Park for the public's use, and the Committee discussed the potential effect of this Garden on the green iguana population on the Island.

(15) ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business before the Committee, Chair Connelly adjourned the meeting at 4:55 P.M.

Jim Kornas, Recording Specialist