

City of Marco Island Florida

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



Meeting Minutes - Final

Wednesday, December 4, 2024

3:00 PM

Community Room

Beautification Advisory Committee

Chair: Shelli Connelly

Vice-Chair: TBD

*Members: Michael Cory, Marv Needles,
Dustin Nesmith, Linda Scherzinger*

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 Needles, Member Nesmith, Member Scherzinger and Chair Connelly

(Note: Member Scherzinger participated remotely via remote telephonic connection)

Also Present

- Ms. Deb Henry, City Councilor*
- Mr. Justin Martin, City of Marco Island Public Works Director*
- Mr. Jeff Poteet, City Water & Sewer General Manager (joined the meeting at 3:50 P.M.)*
- Ms. Zurima Luff, City of Marco Island Storm Water Engineer*
- Mr. Martin Luna, City of Marco Island Audio/Visual Technician*
- Mr. Jim Kornas, City of Marco Island Recording Specialist*

(3) PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Led by Chair Connelly

(4) APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

MOTION by Member Nesmith, seconded by Member Needles, that the Agenda be Approved. MOTION CARRIED BY UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Yes: 5 - Member Cory, Member Needles, Member Nesmith, Member Scherzinger and Chair Connelly

(5) APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

[ID 24-3985](#) Beautification Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes of November 13, 2024

MOTION by Member Needles, seconded by Member Nesmith, that the Beautification Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes of November 13, 2024, be Approved. MOTION CARRIED BY UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Yes: 5 - Member Cory, Member Needles, Member Nesmith, Member Scherzinger and Chair Connelly

(6) OLD BUSINESS

A. [ID 24-3986](#) Marco Nature Night - Potential Speakers & Event Leadership (S. Connelly)

Committee Chair Shelli Connelly led the Committee through a brief review of the Committee's annual Marco Nature Night Event, and she confirmed two potential dates for its 2025 implementation - Wednesday, February 19, 2025 or Wednesday, February 26, 2025. The Event typically runs from 5:00 P.M. until 7:00 P.M.

Committee Member Dustin Nesmith volunteered to coordinate and lead the implementation of the 2025 Marco Nature Night Event.

On her own behalf, and on behalf of Committee Member Sharon Watts, Chair Connelly committed to assist 2025 Marco Nature Night Event Leader Dustin Nesmith by: 1) sharing contact information for individuals and organizations who participated in past Marco Nature Night events; 2) sharing suggestions for potential presenters to "headline" the activity, and; 3) assisting with the set-up and execution of the activity on the night of the event.

B. [ID 24-3987](#) Historical Markers - Proposed Maintenance Checklist for Volunteer Organizations and Individuals (S. Connelly)

Committee Chair Shelli Connelly reminded the Committee of its approval at the November 13, 2024 meeting to fund the repair of the landscaping around a number of the Historical Markers resulting from the brackish water storm surges associated with Hurricanes Helene and Milton, and she queried Public Works Director Justin Martin on whether the invoices for the repairs had been received by the City.

She then shared the recommendation offered by Mr. Cliff Ullmann of AGG Restoration Specialists, the company that restored the Historical Markers, regarding the need to annually clean and polish the message plaques to ensure that they retain their appearance and luster into the future.

[Editorial Note: Following the Committee's meeting and discussion on this topic, Chair Connelly communicated that Mr. Ullmann proposed the month of December as an ideal month for completing the annual cleaning and polishing of the Historical Marker message plaques]

Ms. Connelly proposed that the Committee re-address this topic at its January 8, 2025 meeting.

(7) NEW BUSINESS

A. [ID 24-3988](#) 2025 Tree Fund - Proposed Areas/Projects for Committee Consideration (L. Scherzinger & D. Nesmith)

Committee Chair Shelli Connelly shared a visual presentation with the Committee outlining a potential South Heathwood Drive tree planting initiative between San Marco Road and Winterberry Drive to utilize and deploy a significant portion of the Committee's 2025 Tree Fund budget. (Note: Committee members Dustin Nesmith and Linda Scherzinger indicated that they are still independently gathering information and insight on other potential locations around the Island that may also benefit from the Committee's 2025 Tree Fund budget.)

Public Works Director Justin Martin noted the density of underground infrastructure lines, pipes, and drains that run under the swales along S. Heathwood Drive between San Marco Road and Winterberry Drive, and he recommended that the Committee proceed cautiously and carefully before committing to a large-scale tree planting effort alongside that roadway.

He outlined his recommended process for ensuring that each proposed tree planting location be: 1) specifically identified by the Committee; 2) communicated to City's Public Works and Water & Sewer departments for their knowledge and the City's solicitation of bids from potential landscape vendors and; 3) led by the Committee's selected landscape vendor for location marking by Sunshine 811 for potential utility/infrastructure interference prior to any digging/planting at each desired location. A Motion was put forward to initially focus this effort in the swales along S. Heathwood Drive between San Marco Road and Winterberry Drive.

At the Committee's January 8, 2025 meeting, the Committee will identify its proposed tree planting locations along S. Heathwood Drive, and Members Nesmith and Scherzinger will share their alternative tree planting areas/locations on the Island for utilization and deployment of the Committee's 2025 Tree Fund budget, should the S. Heathwood Drive effort not yield the Committee's desired result. The Committee will also discuss and determine its next steps for this initiative.

MOTION by Member Needles, seconded by Member Scherzinger, that the Beautification Advisory Committee focus the deployment of its remaining 2025 Tree Fund budget of \$29,000.00 toward the planting up to one hundred (100) 25 gallon Cassia Bakerianas trees in the swales along South Heathwood Drive between San Marco Road and Winterberry Drive, and that the City be authorized to solicit bids for the Committee to contract with a landscape contractor to coordinate the marking of potential tree planting locations with Sunshine 811, and obtain and plant the trees in each unobstructed, identified location, be Approved. MOTION CARRIED BY THE FOLLOWING COMMITTEE VOTE:

Yes: 5 - Member Cory, Member Needles, Member Nesmith, Member Scherzinger and Chair Connelly

B. [ID 24-3989](#) Review/Discussion of Out-of-Compliance Landscaping Conditions (M. Needles)

Committee Member Marv Needles reviewed his concern with out-of-compliance landscaping conditions on Marco Island, and he shared his personal experience on this topic with members of the Committee. Public Works Director Justin Martin offered several insights regarding the evolution of the City's landscaping requirements since the City was formed in 1997, and he noted that a number of commercial properties on the Island were approved under Collier County's site development requirements prior to Marco Island becoming a City. He also outlined the process that Marco Island's Code Enforcement Department undertakes when a Code Compliance complaint is registered by an individual.

Committee Member Needles asked to receive specifics regarding the State's law on registering anonymous municipal code complaints, and Chair Connelly asked him to document specific property concerns that he observed with photos for review with the Committee at its January 8, 2025 meeting.

(8) STAFF COMMUNICATIONS

A. [ID 24-3990](#) Mackle Park Tree Donation Implementation Update (S. Malloy, Parks & Recreation Department) & (S. Connelly)

Committee Chair Shelli Connelly reviewed the timeline of events between the commitment of the donors to fund the tree plantings around Mackle Park Lake in April, 2024, and the status of the project to date.

Concerned that the characterization of "high salt levels" in the soil around Marco Park Lake from the summer hurricane storm water surges may not have been a reasonable concern for a delay in initiating the planting of the desired trees until January/February 2025, Ms. Connelly reached out to Ms. Jessica Ryals, Extension Agent, and her two colleagues with the University of Florida UF/IFAS Collier County Office, on November 14, 2024 to obtain their recommendations.

Proposing that the City conduct an EC (electrical conductivity) soil sample test, Ms. Connelly shared the UF/IFAS team's recommendation via email with members of the City Staff. She received feedback from the City's Community Affairs Director with a recommendation from the City's landscape contractor that advised holding off on the planting of the desired trees under immediately before the Island's 2025 "rainy season" (mid-June). No EC soil sample test to confirm the condition of the soil around Mackle Park Lake was scheduled as of Ms. Connelly's report to the Committee.

This item will be reviewed again with the Committee during its January 8, 2025 meeting.

ID 24-3925 Off-Agenda Follow Up Item: S. Heathwood Drive / Winterberry Drive Median

During “Staff Communications” (Agenda Item 8), Committee Chair Shelli Connelly raised her concern with the condition of the Committee’s completed landscaping project of the S. Heathwood Drive median, south of the intersection of Winterberry Drive.

Noting that the City’s landscape contractor installed plants in that median that were not consistent with the proposed landscape architect’s proposed design plan, Chair Connelly assessed the current condition of that median as “... lacking a WOW factor ...”.

Ms. Connelly requested that: 1) she be allowed to review the invoices submitted by the City’s landscape contractor for the work, and; 2) the City Staff undertake the responsibility for replacing the dead and damaged plants.

Public Works Director Justin Martin volunteered to reach out to the City’s landscape contractor on the Committee’s behalf.

B. [ID 24-3991](#) Hurricane Ian Recovery Grant Opportunity

Public Works Director Justin Martin advised the Committee that a focused grant-writing resource was being contracted by the City beginning in January, and that he would present the opportunity to apply for the available Hurricane Ian grant money for tree-planting projects, structural pruning, and for developing the local municipality’s urban forestry capacity for future storm resiliency.

Chair Connelly volunteered to provide Public Works Director Martin with the name(s) of individuals from the City of Naples who were successful in obtaining post-Hurricane Ian recovery funds through this grant.

C. [ID 23-3274](#) Director Justin Martin’s Report

Director Martin had no additional items to review with the Committee at this meeting.

(9) CITY COUNCIL COMMUNICATION

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

Recently-elected City Councilor Deb Henry attended the Committee’s meeting and offered words of encouragement and thanks to the Committee for its efforts to beautify the Island.

Councilor Henry also noted her intention to nominate current Committee member Linda Scherzinger as her appointee to the Beautification Advisory Committee for the duration of Ms. Henry’s term, and she, along with Committee Chair Shelli Connelly, encouraged all Marco Island residents to consider nominating themselves to serve on a City Committee.

(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

The Committee confirmed that a quorum can likely be seated to conduct business at its next scheduled

meeting on January 8, 2025. No members asked to join the meeting remotely via Zoom teleconference connection.

(12) PROPOSED AGENDA TOPICS FOR NEXT MEETING

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

Committee Member Linda Scherzinger confirmed her readiness to bring forward her presentation regarding the Committee's 2025 Marco In Bloom Contest at the Committee's January 8, 2025 meeting.

Committee Member Mike Cory agreed to bring forward his plan and proposal(s) regarding the Committee's presentation to the Marco Island City Council on next steps and recommendations following the Committee's "Ten Thousand Trees in Ten Years" One-Year Pilot Program.

Chair Connelly requested that the identification of Committee leader(s) for the 2025 Arbor Day Event and 2025 Tree City USA application be addressed at the Committee's next meeting.

(13) OTHER COMMITTEE COMMUNICATIONS

At Chair Connelly's request, Public Works Director Justin Martin briefly described the process that the City employed to select a vendor to install (and later remove) the lamp post Christmas/Holiday lights along Collier Boulevard between North Barfield Drive and the Judge SS Jolley Bridge. He noted, in response to the Committee's questions regarding a potential increase in lighting for next year, that the 2025-2026 Fiscal Year Budget Process begins in April, 2025 for next year's Committee budget requests.

In response to Committee Member Marv Needles' request during Agenda Item 13 (Proposed Agenda Topics for Next Meeting), Public Works Director Justin Martin committed to send him information to access the City's cul-de-sac maintenance guidelines on the City's website.

Additionally, Water & Sewer Department General Manager Jeff Poteet joined Public Works Director Justin Martin in provided information regarding the "auto flushers" in certain neighborhood cul-de-sacs that periodically activate and which could provide a partial irrigation solution for neighborhoods that wish to beautify and maintain their cul-de-sac plantings.

Chair Connelly asked that this item be added to the Committee's Future Agenda.

(14) ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business before the Committee, Chair Connelly adjourned the meeting at 4:36 P.M.

Jim Kornas, Recording Specialist