

MINUTES

BEAUTIFICATION AND TREE COMMITTEE MEETING

October 7, 2024

VIA ZOOM/IN PERSON

PRESIDING: Janet Kavanagh

MEMBERS PRESENT: Debi Ferrer, Janet Kavanagh, Angel Drinkwine, Chuck Gomez,  
Jon Chavers

ABSENT: John Nelson

Staff Liaison: Abby Jara, Staff Liaison

Also in attendance: Cindy Keever

CALL TO ORDER

Kavanagh called the meeting to order at 4:00 pm.

ROLL CALL

Executive Assistant Abigail Jara conducted roll call; Ferrer, Kavanagh, Drinkwine, Gomez, Chavers present; Nelson absent

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Kavanagh noted she would like to add an update regarding the rose sculpture placement under committee reports and remove Beautification Grant for downtown businesses.

It was moved by Gomez and seconded by Chavers to approve the amended as presented. The motion carried 4 to 0; Gomez, Chavers, Drinkwine, Kavanagh voting in favor; none opposed; Ferrer & Nelson absent

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Jara suggested the minutes be corrected from the last meeting, the City Park does not belong to the City of The Dalles. It is managed by Parks and Rec.

It was moved by Ferrer and seconded by Gomez to approve the September 16, 2024 minutes as amended. The motion carried 5 to 0; Ferrer, Gomez, Chavers, Ferrer, Kavanagh voting in favor; none opposed; Nelson absent

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### COMMITTEE REPORTS

#### Tree Grant Project Update

Ferrer reported 47 trees were ordered and she has contacted all tree grant recipients. She shared positive feedback about the Residential Tree Grant project, including a quote from Lorraine Umbarger: "You tell that committee that I am really pleased they are doing this for our community."

Ferrer and the committee discussed coordinating Saturday's Residential Tree pickup event, including the materials needed for the pickup.

Jara asked Ferrer if half the payment for the trees had been made and where the company would be delivering them so Facilities would know where to meet.

Ferrer stated that the company is waiting for the committee to confirm the delivery location for the trees. The remaining half of the payment is due on Friday when the trees are dropped off.

Jara asked Kassinger, Facilities Supervisor, to join the meeting to discuss details of the tree delivery.

Kavanagh spoke with Scott Baker, Executive Director of Parks & Rec, who will mark the tree planting location for the committee's demo. Unfortunately, it won't be where she hoped due to water and sewer lines. The tree will be planted near existing trees on the north side. She would like to dig the hole in advance and needs to soak it with water before planting. If the committee has 5- or 10-gallon water containers, that would be helpful.

Ferrer and Gomez said they have some of the gallon containers.

Gomez asked Kavanagh how far the water faucet is.

Kavanagh said perhaps 100 feet but she will find out beforehand.

Gomez said he will bring his portable hose but its only 75 feet.

Drinkwine has a 100 ft. hose if the committee needs it.

Gomez expressed his happiness to be on the Beautification Committee, noting that hearing people appreciate their work reinforces the partnership between the community and the government.

Ferrer also mentioned one of the tree grant recipients would like to join the Beautification & Tree Committee.

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Kavanagh suggested contacting Peterson from CCC News to cover the event.

Gomez confirmed he is doing that now.

### Update on Rose Sculpture

Kavanagh spoke with Baker about placing the sculpture in the city park. She mentioned it must go before the Parks and Rec Board at the county, and due to some constraints, its inclusion in the October or November agenda is uncertain.

### Garden Gates Invoice

Kavanagh said the cost from the invoice is too much. (see attached invoice)

Gomez said he always negotiates. He typically asks for at least a 10% reduction because it's part of doing his job. In this case, the budget looks reasonable, but he suggests asking Garden Gates if they could cut 10-15% due to budget constraints, while still maintaining a good working relationship.

Ferrer said this is the committee's entire yearly budget.

Chavers said he would be willing to sacrifice some shrubs if it meant making the site accessible. Right now, the path leads straight off the street, and he does not see how people—especially those with strollers or mobility issues—are supposed to enjoy the area. As it stands, only drivers passing by at 35-40 mph will see it. Do they want to beautify the city for people in cars, or do they want people to actually access the site. He's asking for sidewalks. (see attached design).

Ferrer said city really doesn't want people to go out there, because it's not safe. She remembered when the ribbon cutting, there was a discussion with the instructor from CGCC and they spoke about the space could use a second sculpture on the other end.

Kavanagh said she lives nearby and traffic isn't speeding through there—it's a narrow road with curves, two stop signs, and plenty of pedestrians. People coming over the West Sixth bridge can clearly see the area. She thinks the committee should ask for fewer shrubs.

Gomez said he does not see any replacements listed. If they lose shrubs like with the downtown trees, having extras from the start would save the committee from needing to fight for replacements later. It's something to consider.

Ferrer said if the shrubs need to go all the way to the edge. Could a border be left around the perimeter for safety, where people could cross if needed. It might help with snow removal, so the snow doesn't smother the shrubs.

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Gomez asked the committee how much they would like to spend. His strength is finding experts with the right skills, and this woman's superpower is design. He doesn't want to interfere with that. Instead of adjusting her plan, to decide what the committee wants to spend and communicate it to her. She might be able to work within the committee's budget without sacrificing the design.

The committee thoroughly reviewed and discussed the design rendering provided by Garden Gates.

Keever asked who will maintain the garden.

Kavanagh said the city.

Gomez clarified if there was a sprinkler system involved and transportation department would be in charge.

Keever said having someone check daily, especially during hot weather, would ensure a good start and prevent issues like vandalism, where the water gets shut off and isn't noticed until it's too late. When big jobs like paving or chip sealing take up all the manpower, smaller tasks like caring for fragile plants get pushed aside, especially in the crucial first couple of years.

Kavanagh said It's all about water. We need someone in charge of irrigation and monitoring plantings around town. Part of the downtown issue was the assumption that paying more would solve it, but we know what happened. In the short term, those of us who care will keep an eye on it, but the city needs to hire someone, whether part-time or in a department.

Ferrer asked the committee if they think \$5,000 would be a reasonable amount for this project, allowing them to fund other planned projects as well. Is it fair to ask Garden Gates to adjust the scope to fit the budget.

Gomez says he likes the \$5,000 figure. They don't know what else they might need funds for later, so it's a good working number for the corner project.

Keever said she's not sure what kind of path the contractor is planning, but it's just gravel. To reduce costs, she could see if the city can handle some of the work, like laying out the path and installing borders, to cut down on labor expenses.

The committee thoroughly explored various cost-cutting strategies. (Please see Garden Gates invoice attachment).

Ferrer said she was hoping this project would be planted this fall.

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Drinkwine said wouldn't the contractor have to plant this in the spring. They're expecting a freeze in a week or two, according to the Farmer's Almanac.

Kavanagh said she's checked the weather on various sites, and it's expected to remain mild for another month, with lows around 39. It's better to plant in the fall, but only if it's done early enough. They're not facing an early freeze this year, but they shouldn't push past the end of October.

### Staff Liaison

Jara updated the committee:

- Needing to finish by 5pm for an Urban Renewal meeting on October 21<sup>st</sup>. The committee will start at 3:30pm.
- City Council Goal setting meeting scheduled for November. If any input, please refer to the email that was sent a couple of weeks ago.
- Downtown Trees planting dates, scheduled for October 16-18.
- Tree plaques with Columbia Gorge Community College (CGCC), if interested in discussing further Jara will invite Chris Dodson, CGCC Instructor, to a meeting.

Keever said David Mills, Transportation Manager, mentioned all water for all the triangles will be shut off at the end of the month, which affects fall planting. She's unsure how long the shutdown will last, due to the weather.

### ACTION ITEMS

#### Approve Tree Grant Expenditure

The total estimate for the tree project is about \$8,800, which includes \$8,000 for the trees, approximately \$400 for delivery, and \$425 for root barriers, sprinklers, and Gator bags. Request a budget of up to \$9,000 for this year's Tree Project.

It was moved by Ferrer and seconded by Gomez to approve the Tree Grant expenditure as amended. The motion carried 5 to 0; Ferrer, Gomez, Kavanagh, Chavers, Drinkwine voting in favor; none opposed; Nelson absent.

### DISCUSSION

#### Cruise Ship Rectangular Planter

Kavanagh suggested the committee work together on the cruise ship planter area—it's small enough for them to manage. She took some pictures (please see attached photos). She suggested using wild grasses, lavender, and hardy perennial summer flowers.

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Gomez said he thinks of The Dalles as "Lavenderville." Lavender thrives here and stands out, especially for visitors at the dock. It's hardy, low-maintenance, and beautiful. If they planted a variety of lavender with some succulents like cacti or aloe for height, it would create an elegant, low-maintenance display that highlights our community.

Kavanagh agreed. She would like to wait for bulbs to go on sale at Home Depot—maybe 200 daffodils since they're beautiful and low-maintenance. For their next meeting, they'll plan how many lavender plants to use and where to place them.

### Poster Tree Recognition

Gomez said he wanted to create a poster for Facebook that honors the trees, possibly titled "City of The Dalles, Oregon: Honoring Heritage Trees." He envisioned a design featuring a large, beautiful tree and a more earthy, spring-like aesthetic.

- The concept includes elements of the heritage GPS driving tour, rather than a walking tour.
- Feature images of large trees and children playing around them.

### Photo for Beautification & Tree Committee Postcards

Gomez said he envisioned oversized postcards with a floral border that say, "In appreciation of your efforts to beautify our community." The back will have space for addresses and a thank-you note for being a good community member. He also thought about making these as refrigerator magnets, so people are reminded daily of their collective efforts.

### Beautification Award

Kavanagh said Nelson suggested skipping Beautification award for November. She believes the award is important; people appreciate it, and there will still be worthy yards in November. She would like to keep going through November.

Drinkwine said she's happy to try the beautification award this November and see how it goes. She's skeptical about finding worthy yards in November, but open to being proven wrong.

Next Meeting: October 21, 2024

Items for Next Meeting:

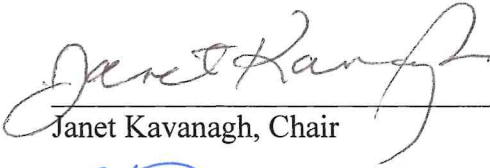
## ADJOURNMENT

Being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 5:31 pm.

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Submitted by/  
Abigail Jara, Executive Assistant

SIGNED:   
Janet Kavanagh, Chair

ATTEST:   
Abigail Jara, Executive Assistant

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