

MINUTES

BEAUTIFICATION AND TREE COMMITTEE MEETING

June 16, 2025

VIA ZOOM/IN PERSON

PRESIDING: John Nelson

MEMBERS PRESENT: John Nelson, Chuck Gomez, Jann Oldenburg

ABSENT: Debi Ferrer

Staff Liaison: Abby Jara, Staff Liaison

Also in attendance:

CALL TO ORDER

Nelson called the meeting to order at 4:02pm.

ROLL CALL

Executive Assistant Abigail Jara conducted roll call, Nelson, Gomez, Oldenburg present Ferrer absent

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Nelson noted the addition of two discussion items to the agenda, Accommodation on City Projects and Business Shade Tree Request.

It was moved by Gomez and seconded by Oldenburg to approve the agenda as amended. The motion carried 3 to 0; Gomez, Oldenburg, Nelson voting in favor; none opposed; Ferrer absent

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

It was moved by Oldenburg and seconded by Gomez to approve the June 2, 2025 minutes as presented. The motion carried 3 to 0; Gomez, Oldenburg, Nelson voting in favor; none opposed; Ferrer absent

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COMMITTEE REPORTS

Nelson initiated a discussion on improving adherence to Robert's Rules of Order in preparation for the City's potential transition to live-streamed committee meetings.

Key expectations were clarified:

- Members must be recognized by the Chair before speaking
- Avoid interruptions and stay on topic
- Ensure motions are clearly stated and properly seconded
- Staff will present first; committee members may ask questions when recognized

Members agreed to begin practicing these procedures.

Nelson acknowledged the recent mulching work completed at Trevitt Triangle, noting the improved appearance and health of the plants. He expressed appreciation for Public Works' efforts and encouraged recognition of their work. He also reported delivering trash grabbers for the second Saturday Clean Up.

DISCUSSION

Hillside by Dock

Nelson reported near Lewis and Clark Park and docking area, noting it was mostly free of litter and showed no visible signs of recent transient activity. He noted the Port had recently cleared brush and removed items left by homeless individuals. However, he later observed a homeless person's cart, sleeping bag, and trash on the sidewalk, confirming ongoing issues in the area. He referenced prior comments about the challenges of investing in beautification efforts given such conditions. Oldenburg mentioned seeing two homeless individuals near the building at Lewis and Clark Park the previous week, with no visible trash.

Nelson also mentioned the west hillside is covered with native *Spiraea douglasii*, while the east side remains weedy and in need of restoration. He stated the hillside is owned by ODOT and suggested initiating contact for project approval. He planned to contact the appropriate ODOT representative. Oldenburg is in support of using low-maintenance plants and suggested incorporating rocks for landscaping. Nelson suggested consulting with native plant experts, such as Humble Roots, to identify low-water plants and supported adding rocks for year-round landscaping.

Oldenburg asked Nelson to speak with Cindy Kever, Public Works Department Secretary, about prior discussions on placing rocks in the area before contacting ODOT. She emphasized the

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importance of clarifying costs, responsibilities, and approval procedures. Oldenburg and Nelson asked who is responsible for weeding the area.

Gomez expressed concern about homeless individuals and trash near the dock and viaduct area negatively impact riverboat tourists' experience and urged the Council to address the issue as it affects the city's image. He emphasized that beautifying the area and addressing homelessness are interconnected issues and noted that despite efforts to improve the area, trash and encampments deter senior visitors.

Nelson supported moving forward with hillside plantings, stating the presence of homeless individuals should not prevent beautification efforts, as the area is unlikely to be impacted. He acknowledged the concern but stated addressing homelessness is the City Council's responsibility. He noted the issue is likely being considered and encouraged citizens to raise it with the Council.

Sculpture Placement

Nelson noted a previous lack of clarity on sculpture placement and proposed two committee members survey the community to identify potential sculpture sites. They would report back on both positive and negative impacts of each location. He asked for volunteers to assist with this task. Oldenburg volunteered and emphasized the importance of avoiding traffic visibility issues. She suggested creating a checklist of criteria and conducting site visits with Nelson, similar to the garden beautification process.

Gomez cautioned against overly restrictive sculpture placement rules, noting artwork is often less obstructive than permitted commercial buildings. Nelson agreed but emphasized Public Works must approve any placement to ensure compliance with visibility standards. He noted prior designs, like the Trevitt Triangle, required careful coordination. Both agreed to develop a plan for evaluating potential sculpture sites.

Oldenburg asked if a sculpture had been selected; Nelson confirmed it would be designed for the chosen site. Oldenburg noted the need to find a designer. Nelson and Jara discussed prior successful collaborations with the community college, which produced three sculptures—two by students—at lower cost and higher quality than purchased pieces. Nelson supported continuing the partnership.

Accommodation on City Projects & Business Shade Tree Request

Gomez noted several private businesses had enhanced the appearance of their properties but overgrown weeds along curbs and sidewalks had previously obstructed the view. He commended City staff for recent curb, sidewalk, and weed maintenance, noting the cleanup improved visibility of landscaping at local businesses. He requested consideration of planting additional trees on Washington Street near the Granada, suggesting the city explore adding trees to side

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streets not currently included in broader redevelopment plans. Jara acknowledged the idea and said she would gather the necessary information and consult with appropriate departments.

Other

Oldenburg asked if all flower receipts had been submitted, noting one company was outstanding. Jara confirmed the receipt had not been received and offered to follow up with the company to request submission within the week.

Gomez shared positive feedback from a sidewalk flower grant recipient who successfully used the funds to enhance her storefront with planters and flowers. He expressed appreciation for the program and hoped it would continue annually. He also relayed a suggestion from Jacob Anderson, Economic Development, to test hanging flower baskets on streetlight poles at four downtown corners, with support from council members to explore the idea further at a future meeting. Oldenburg noted a concern raised by a resident about the extreme heat affecting plant survival and emphasized the need for daily watering. Nelson stated the pilot project would focus on testing soil, plant selection, and watering schedules. Gomez shared insights from a landscaper about using water-retaining additives and enclosed planters to reduce evaporation. Members agreed to revisit the topic at a future meeting and gather feedback from local businesses already using hanging baskets.

Next Meeting: July 7, 2025

Items for Next Meeting:

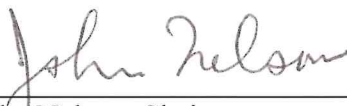
ADJOURNMENT

Being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 4:58 pm.

Submitted by/

Abigail Jara, Executive Assistant

SIGNED:


John Nelson, Chair

ATTEST:


Abigail Jara, Executive Assistant

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