

**Grosse Pointe Park
Beautification Commission Minutes
February 16, 2022**

Location: Council Chambers, 4th Floor, GPP City Hall

1. Call to Order: Kimberly Clextan, Chairperson, called the meeting to order at 7:10 PM.

2. Roll Call

Present: Kimberly Clextan, Carolyn Byrd, Pat Deck, Armen Gulian, Nicholas Gwozde, Alicia Klein, Lisa Kyle

City Forester: Brian Colter

City Council: Vikas Relan

Excused: Anne Billiu, Shellie Hansen, Barbara Miller, Laura Orme

Guests: None

It was noted that absent commissioners can view the meeting on Zoom but cannot participate virtually; they may text commissioners present with their comments.

3. Approval of Minutes: December 1, 2021

The motion to approve was made by Vikas Relan, second by Lisa Kyle and approved without objection.

4. Chairperson's Comments

Brian passed out copies of Robert Nye's obituary; he was a former commissioner for many years and passed away December 27, 2021.

a. Commissioner Re-Appointments and New Appointments

All commissioner appointments are current; Brad Etheridge resigned so we are down one commissioner. We currently have 12 commissioners, Brian and Vikas for a total of fourteen. Our bylaws require a minimum of 15, Kim will discuss a new appointment with Michele Hodges. If commissioners know of residents interested in serving, they should ask them to submit an application to City Hall. Brian indicated we will have trouble accommodating meetings with the full commission present in the current meeting space.

b. 2022 Commission Schedule

Commissioners previously received a preliminary schedule of meetings and events; Kim is confirming several dates and will send the final schedule soon.

c. 2022 Commission Roster

An updated roster will be sent soon, after Kim discusses a possible new appointment with the mayor.

5. Correspondence and Publicity

a. Correspondence

The Commission received a very nice thank you postcard for a beautification award. Lisa left it at home and will bring it to the next meeting.

b. Park Communicator

Brian was informed that we are returning to the normal publication and submission deadlines. The most recent issue was published early; the next issue will be out on June 1 and the deadline to submit content is May 15. Pat submitted the Holiday Award winners by the standard deadline, but it had already gone to press; the winners will be submitted for the June issue. Kim and Brian will reconfirm deadlines.

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6. Forestry Report

a. Michigan Green Communities Challenge & Future Sustainability Efforts

Brian reported that at the request of Nick Sizeland, City Manager, he submitted an application for the Michigan Green Communities Challenge (MGCC) for 2021; it was accepted, and we were awarded bronze level status. We are the first of the Grosse Pointes to be awarded, the goal for 2022 is silver status. Points are achieved by satisfying various action items that support green and sustainable communities. Brian passed out a spreadsheet of action items that were submitted as complete for 2021 and explained the program. The commission will be emailed with a link to the MGCC website so they can view the program and the list of action items. Commissioners are encouraged to submit input for 2022.

The Sustainability Committee has been dissolved; the city would like the Beautification Commission to assume a role in carrying its mission forward. Vikas explained that the prior committee had identified short- and long-term goals to achieve; Pat inquired if there was a budget for sustainability projects. Vikas indicated this decision was made recently, additional information will be provided to the commission going forward and we are asked for input on how our commission can support sustainability in the future. Kim stated we should decide how to structure our support, either creating a sustainability subcommittee or absorbing it as a commission overall.

Brian reported that Nick approached him about developing a project at the entrance to city hall; the space is currently roped off with caution tape. The underground downspout in that location had to be removed to comply with code, the result is flooding during rain to severe ice buildup in the winter. Nick would like to create a bioswale there that would mitigate stormwater and beautify the front facade of City Hall. Brian passed out photos of various bioswales and raingardens he has viewed for the commission to review. Commissioners are asked for input to develop the project. Pat reported that there is a Keep Michigan Beautiful contact that specializes in these types of projects that we can contact for assistance. Brian reported that there may be DDA or other funding available to implement the project.

Alicia asked if winter tree trimming was in progress. Brian reported that elm and oak pruning was scheduled to begin soon; the same contractor used last summer will do the work.

7. New Business

a. Arbor Week

Pat discussed dates for the event, Arbor Week is the last full week of April and Arbor Day is the last Friday of the month. The poster contest will be open to 4th graders and ¾-split classes; there are 179 students in these classes for 2022. Pat suggested that we schedule the April meeting to judge the posters on April 20, winners would be honored by the Mayor and Council at the May 9 City Council meeting. We will need to disburse posters to businesses for display soon after judging with this schedule. We will discuss where to hold the poster judging portion of the April meeting next month, keeping COVID policies in mind. Lisa and Armen volunteered to help Pat with the details and distribution of posters and seedlings. Brian reported we do not have enough Arbor Day Foundation pencils for all 4th graders, Pat would like to give a pin, stickers or something new. Brian will check the Foundation site to see what is available.

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b. Spring Plant Exchange

Alicia confirmed the date for May 21 but did not see it listed on the city website. Kim confirmed that Chris and Chad had the event on the calendar, she will ask Courtney to update the website. Alicia plans to run the event as we did last year, using an outdoor format and picnic tables. She is including houseplants, everyone enjoyed that last year. We will schedule volunteers and discuss specific details at the next March and April meetings.

c. MGCC, Sustainability & Earth Day

*The MGCC program was discussed under the Forestry report.

Vikas reported that a goal of the Sustainability Committee was to develop programming for Earth Day in addition to our annual Arbor Week celebration. Vikas is inquiring about a budget and asked commissioners for ideas. Earth Day this year is April 22 and Arbor Day is April 29; we will discuss at the March meeting, commissioners are urged to send any ideas ahead.

8. Old Business

a. Holiday Awards

Pat reported that 66 awards were given for 2021, 67 including one home with two addresses. She showed commissioners an example of the certificate she and Barb created; the awards were beautiful and well received by the commission. Winners received their certificate by mail.

b. Past Award Program Invoice

Armen inquired about payment for the award ceremony gift boxes, the vendor has not received payment. Lisa will resend the invoice to Brian, he will ask that it be processed immediately.

c. Upcoming Dates:

Pat reported that Keep Michigan Beautiful (KMB) and the Beautification Council of Southeastern Michigan will hold Celebrate Spring together on April 13, 2022, at The Gazebo in Warren. The city graciously covers the \$15 luncheon fee for commissioners to attend, the KMB Foundation subsidizes the additional costs not covered in that fee. The program includes a speaker from the Frasier Barrier Free Park and should be an informative and enjoyable event. A more formal invitation will be sent soon, commissioners should RSVP directly to Pat if they plan to attend.

9. Adjourned at: 7:59 PM

A motion was made to adjourn by Lisa Kyle, second by Armen Gulian with all in favor.