

Darlington Beautification Committee

Minutes for Wednesday, February 16, 2022

The meeting of the Beautification Board was called to order at 5:05 p.m. by Mrs. Bailey. Attending were Board members, Mrs. Ishman, Mrs. Sprott, Ms. Burns, Mrs. Martin, and Ms. Shafer.

Ms. Burns provided the opening prayer.

Mrs. Ishman made a motion to approve the minutes of the October 20, 2021, meeting as presented. Mrs. Martin made the second. The motion carried unanimously.

Financial Report: Mrs. Bailey presented the Board with the expenses paid for this fiscal year to date, and that leaves the Board \$3,973.46. The donation fund has just over \$15,000 in it, \$5,000 from a Duke Energy Foundation grant, and the other \$10,000 the Board had previously decided to use for a brick entrance sign on SC151 when the Sports Complex nears completion. Jimmy & Nancy Nichols sent a \$300 check to honor a family member with a pot on the Square with the preference being on Cashua Street. This pot, one to replace one hit on South Main Street at Hampton, and 10 additional pots to go along Cashua Street have been ordered from Smith's Concrete.

The Board expressed its desire to change the Duke grant to direct funds toward redoing the parking islands around the Square for more impact and less maintenance than more pots. The Board was willing to put \$2,500 of its funds toward the island project. Plant choices have been discussed previously with landscapers and would include low maintenance plants, ornamental grasses, and encore azaleas to add color. The Board also requested help maintaining the pots, which need to be weeded, trimmed, fertilized, and sprayed for fire ants on occasion. Mrs. Ishman and Mrs. Sprott said it took them about four hours on a Wednesday or Saturday afternoon every six weeks to keep the pots clean. The Board even suggested just doing the most visible beds first if need be.

The Board further requested Mrs. Bailey bring their concerns about the entrances to Mr. Payne as spring was quickly approaching and the beds would need attention soon.

City Administrator's Report: Mr. Payne was unable to attend. Mrs. Bailey reported that the County has moved forward in removing the Bradford pear trees around the courthouse, and the City will replace these with 14 Nellie Stevens Holly, 2 Willow oaks, and 7 Southern Sugar Maple trees. Mrs. Bailey corrected the record to reflect that (a) the funds were from the City's general funds not a grant, and (b) that the City had requested to use the CDBG streetscape funds for a full redesign of the courthouse grounds but were denied by the state agency in charge of the funds.

Pride of Darlington Awards & Certificates: The Board requested the signs be taken down prior to the next meeting when it would vote on the next recipients. Mrs. Ishman made a motion to present a certificate to Darlington Office Supply for painting its storefront and the new Counseling Center on Russell Street. Ms. Burns made the second. The motion carried unanimously. Previously, the Board voted to present the Pride Award to Carolina Bank, but Mrs. Bailey said the construction debris had not been completely cleared, so she had refrained from that presentation. Mrs. Bailey asked for Board recommendations for possible Pride Award nominees prior to the next meeting, so she could get photos of the nominees. The Board named several possibilities: Mr. Charlie Weatherford's house on West Broad Street, Sassy Girl Vintique on Pearl Street, and Lindbergh's BBQ when it's finished.

Christmas Decorations: Signs Plus Systems handled the City Christmas tree for the last time this year. We will either have to pay for the service in the future or find an alternative. The Board asked to develop a plan by September.

Garden Club Update: Ms. Burns reported that Mr. Payne made an informative presentation to the Darlington Garden Club at its last meeting. The Club did not have a list of projects together at this time.

Spring Clean Up Day: The Board selected Saturday, April 23, as the date for the spring clean up day to ensure things were tidy prior to the Mother's Day race visitors. Mrs. Bailey said she would contact the DHS Key Club who had expressed an interest in participating.

Unfinished Business: The Board asked if Mr. Isaac could pick up trash along Pearl Street, especially in front of Piggly Wiggly, once every two weeks or so.

The meeting adjourned at 6:46 p.m., and the next meeting will be at 5 p.m. March 16, 2022.