

**Beautification Commission Minutes**  
**Wednesday, February 21, 2024**  
**6:00 pm**  
**Novi Civic Center**  
**45175 10 Mile Rd.**  
**Mayor's Conference Room**

**Call to Order:** 6:06 pm

**Roll Call:** Jan Lach, Cindy Lang, Christen Pietraz, Laura Williams, Torry Yu

**Present:** Jan Lach, Cindy Lang, Christen Pietraz, Laura Williams, Torry Yu

**Absent Excused:** none

**Approval of Minutes – January 10, 2024:** Moved: Lach, Seconded: Yu, Approved 5:0

**Approval of Agenda:**

An amendment to the agenda to add “Gardening Program for an Elementary School” by Commissioner Pietraz was made.

Moved: Lach, Seconded: Yu, Approved 5:0

**New Business:**

City Manager Check-In

City Manager Victor Cardenas explained that the Rules Committee and Mayor Pro Tem Casey wanted input from the Beautification Commission regarding their current role and if the group had any input to add regarding the current verbiage in the City Code of Ordinances regarding the functions of the Commission.

The Commission responded that they think the fairly wide interpretation of the Ordinance covered most of the activities the group takes part in. They spoke about how the group currently is very interested in natives, pollinators, and supporting educational efforts in the community on those and related gardening topics. The group also mentioned wanting to work in greater collaboration with Community Relations to increase the public engagement with the group as well as social media presence. An interest in potentially working with the Novi Community School District was also noted.

Mr. Cardenas thanked the group for the discussion and insight.

**2024 Neighborhood Entryway Enhancement Matching Grant Program**

The Commission reviewed the two applications submitted for the 2024 cycle of the program, as well as comments from staff regarding the applications. Following this, the Commission determined to make the following recommendations to City Council:

To recommend approval for Village Oaks to be granted the requested \$5,000.00 with the explicit condition that all required permits be issued, and work approved by the appropriate City inspectors.

To recommend approval for Walden Woods to be granted the requested \$2,526.50 with the suggestion that they consider adding additional native plants to their plan, particularly ground cover (to reduce need for mulch) and for added drought tolerance.

Motion: Williams, Seconded: Pietraz, Approved 5:0

#### Gardening Book Display

The Commission will be reviewing the Novi Public Library's current books available on plants/gardening/etc. and making any recommendations they might have for the Library to purchase for their collection. There will also be a planned display in July or August to feature pollinators and Bee City USA information. The Commission also wants to consider having a presentation to tie into the display.

#### Gardening Program for an Elementary School

Commissioner Pietraz explained that she wished for this topic to be added to the agenda because she wanted to ask the Beautification Commissioners for advice regarding the existing garden at Deerfield Elementary School. She was previously a teacher who oversaw the garden as well as programming but they have since retired so the PTA is looking for resources. It was suggested that contacting Tollgate Farm & Education Center and the affiliated Master Gardeners would be an excellent first step. They also made recommendations for the garden to focus on pollinator plants, herbs, and either early or late blooming crops to ensure the exciting parts of gardening are occurring within the school years instead of over summer break.

#### Old Business

**Public Comment:** none

**Adjournment:** 7:16 pm

**Upcoming Meetings:** 3/13, 4/10, 5/8, 6/12, 7/10, 8/14, 9/11, 10/9, 11/13, 12/11