

The Town of Smithfield Appearance Commission met in regular session on Tuesday, May 15, 2018 at 5:00 in the Town Hall Conference Room located at 350 East Market Street, Smithfield, North Carolina.

Members Present

Peggy Scott –Chairperson
Alice Harris – Vice Chairperson
Perry Harris
Anita Liverman
Jeremey Pearce

Members Absent

Bryan Gibson
Regina Sanders
Councilman David Stevens

Staff Present

Lenny Branch – Public Works Director
Shannan Parrish – Town Clerk

Staff Absent

Call to Order

Chairperson Peggy Scott called the meeting to order at 5:00 pm.

Invocation

Perry Harris offered the invocation.

Approval of Meeting Minutes – April 17, 2018

Perry Harris made a motion, seconded by Vice Chairperson Alice Harris, to approve the April 17, 2018 minutes as submitted. Unanimously approved.

Financial Report

Public Works Director Lenny Branch provided the Financial Report

Appearance Commission General Fund Balance – \$7,659.87

Donate-A-Tree Account Balance – \$692.86

J. B. George Fund Balance – \$496.59

J.P. George Fund Balance – \$256.84

Chairperson Peggy Scott informed the members of the Appearance Commission the beginning balance of the J.B. George Fund had been changed from the estimated amount of \$1200.00 to the actual amount of \$934.99. There should be one more interest payment from the endowment before the end of the fiscal year.

Mrs. Scott questioned if all invoices had been paid for the completed projects. Mr. Branch responded the account balances were accurate and reflected all paid invoices. Mr. Branch explained the mulch that was supposed to be donated from Power Mulch was actually paid out of the Appearance Commission's general funds. Mr. Branch would contact the owner of Power Mulch to determine if the mulch could be donated at a later time. He suggested using that mulch for the traffic islands on Highway 301 near Carrol Pharmacy. Mrs. Scott stated there were places in the downtown area that could benefit from new mulch.

Old Business

Donate A Tree Project Update

Correction – 5 Trees have been donated this Fiscal Year **Planting of Trees from this Fund (Total of 16 to be planted)**

Chairperson Peggy Scott informed the members of the Appearance Commission that 5 trees had been donated this fiscal year bringing the total to sixteen trees needing to be planted. Mrs. Scott questioned if it would be too late in the season to plant the trees. Mr. Branch responded that the trees could be watered if they were planted soon.

Mrs. Scott asked if the nine Maple trees planted at the Miracle League Field could be counted towards the sixteen donated trees since these trees were originally donated to the Town. She added that the cost of the Crepe Myrtle tree now exceeded the \$50.00 donation. It was the consensus of the Appearance Commission to use the nine Maple Trees planted at the Miracle League Field as part of the Donate A Tree project thus leaving seven trees to be planted. Mr. Branch explained there would be insufficient funds in the Donate A Tree account to plant seven Crepe Myrtle trees. Mrs. Scott suggested using funds from the JB George account to supplement what was needed to purchase the trees. Mrs. Scott suggested the Town Hall park tree be a Maple and not a Crepe Myrtle if a Maple was less expensive. Also, the trees to be planted at Brogden Road could be removed from the list since there were only seven trees to be installed.

Mrs. Scott stated that before more Donate A Tree brochures were ordered, the Appearance Commission would have to consider increasing the donation amount or find a less expensive tree to use for the project. Perry Harris inquired as to what other trees could be planted that were less expensive. Lenny Branch replied that due to the Town's requirements, there were not a lot of inexpensive varieties. Mrs. Scott suggested that with the increase price of trees, it may be that several donations would be needed to plant one tree. Mr. Harris stated that since there hadn't been a lot of donations, maybe it was time for the Appearance Commission to investigate another project.

Mr. Scott stated there was some discussion about reviving the project. Someone had suggested putting brochures in the utility bills. The approximate cost for one billing cycle would be \$300 plus the cost of the brochure. Mr. Harris estimated that were 6500 utility billing customers. The cost to mail brochures would be an expensive endeavor. He suggested that brochures continue to be placed in prominent places throughout Town.

Anita Liverman reminded everyone that the Appearance Commission had decided to start planting Crepe Myrtle trees along Outlet Center Drive. Mr. Branch stated there were major changes proposed to that area. Mr. Harris responded there will be a lot of changes in the coming years to I-95, Highway 301 South, Booker Dairy Road, Buffalo Road and the new I-42. Mrs. Scott stated that landscape would be needed for these roadways.

DSDC Report

Vice Chairperson Alice Harris informed the members of the Appearance Commission the DSDC was moving forward with the Wayfinding Project. Locations for the gateway signs have been

identified and the property owners have agreed to give the Town the proper easements for the installation of the signs.

Chairperson Peggy Scott informed the members of the Appearance Commission that she had been attending the Wayfinding meetings. She explained that DSDC Director Sarah Edwards should receive notification by the end of July if the Town has been awarded a grant to assist with the project. She anticipated if the grant was awarded, signs would be ordered and installed possibly by the end of the year. Mrs. Scott informed Lenny Branch that the Johnston County Visitor's Bureau would like to meet with him to get his opinion on the placement of directional/informational sign and the removal of sign clutter.

Mrs. Harris also informed the members of the Appearance Commission the Parks and Recreation Department will be holding the River Rat Regatta on July 14th at the new boat ramp. Perry Harris stated that the area around the boat ramp needed to be better maintained.

Projects

Tree Plan Update

Anita Liverman informed the members of the Appearance Commission that she was tasked with investigating a tree replacement plan. Mrs. Liverman contacted an arborist and NC State. She explained this would have to be something that everyone researched. Mrs. Liverman suggested that instead of choosing certain trees, the Commission should consider choosing an area and then choose specific trees for the area. At a previous meeting, the Commission decided it would begin replacing trees on Johnston Street. Lenny Branch informed the members of the Appearance Commission that the Dogwood Trees had been removed. Since the area on Johnston Street is so narrow, Mrs. Liverman suggested using shrubs or hollies that could be pruned liked trees. Another suggestion for Johnston Street was the Kousa Dogwood. Some of Mrs. Liverman's favorite larger trees were Norwegian Sunset Maple, Freeman Maple and Lace Bark Elm.

Perry Harris questioned if the Public Works nursery could be used to grow some of these trees. Mr. Branch explained that maintaining the nursery had been difficult. The local high school was supposed to assist with the nursery, but that never happened.

Chairperson Peggy Scott asked everyone to review the lists provided by Mrs. Liverman and offer any suggestions for areas and tree types. These suggestions could be emailed to all members of the Appearance Commission.

Boat Ramp:

Perry Harris informed the members of the Appearance Commission that he and Bryan Gibson had not met with Parks and Recreation Director Gary Johnson to discuss plans for the boat ramp area. Mr. Harris and Mr. Gibson put this project on hold since funding for the project would not be included in the upcoming budget. Chairperson Peggy Scott stated Mr. Johnson was anxious to meet with Mr. Harris and Mr. Gibson to discuss a plan. Mr. Harris responded that he would meet with Mr. Johnson.

Mr. Harris questioned if the bump stops were ever installed. Mr. Branch responded that they should have already been put in place. Mr. Harris suggested that signs be installed for the boat trailer parking area designating that area for trailers only.

New projects

- **Town Hall Park needs to be refreshed**

Chairperson Peggy Scott informed the members of the Appearance Commission the Town Hall Park was in need of maintenance and landscaping because the park is very overgrown. It was suggested that a landscape plan be designed for the area to include possibly a fountain or gazebo.

Anita Liverman questioned why the park was not being maintained. Mrs. Scott responded that there are two full-time employees and one temporary employee in charge of maintaining all the landscaping in the Town. Vice Chairperson Alice Harris suggested that the Appearance Commission inquire about the areas that these employees maintain and offer a suggested upkeep and maintenance plan. Mrs. Scott suggested that new mulch be installed every year.

This fall expenditures already voted on (funds will be encumbered)

Parks & Rec

- **MLK Sign: a new sign is being made and the plantings will go in, in the fall**
- **11 New Park sign plantings will go in, in the fall**

Public Works

- **Planting of the Crepe Myrtle Trees or decide the type of tree**

Additional comments or concerns:

- **Order extra: Donate a Tree Thank you cards printed with the inside wording removed for donations. Hinson Printing will make them in increments of 25 for 50 cents each.**

It was the consensus of the Appearance Commission to order thank you cards from Hinson Printing. With the Donate-A-Tree wording removed, these cards could be used to send to those businesses, organizations or people who assist the Appearance Commission.

- **Greenway Suggestions**

Vice Chairperson Alice Harris showed the members of the Appearance Commission photos taken from the greenway in Clayton. She explained there was a tire inflation station where patrons could inflate their bicycle tires if needed while on the greenway. Ms. Harris also shared photos of benches along the greenway and paintings by school children on a bridge area.

- **Railroad Bridge on Highway 70 East**

Anita Liverman explained to the members of the Appearance Commission that the consultants who were hired for the wayfinding project informed the committee they were missing a great opportunity at the railroad bridge. Since the railroad will not allow the Town to do anything to the bridge, it was suggested that something freestanding (ornate metalwork) could be placed in front of the bridge.

- **Miracle Park Donation Tree**

Chairperson Peggy Scott informed the members of the Appearance Commission that a metal tree on a brick wall was constructed at the Miracle Park. Metal leaves will be added

with names of those that donated to the project. She suggested the Appearance Commission consider doing something similar in the future for the Donate-A-Tree Project.

Adjournment

Being no further business, Anita Liverman made a motion, seconded by Vice Chairperson Alice Harris, to adjourn the meeting. The meeting adjourned at approximately 6:03 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Shannan L. Parrish".

Shannan L. Parrish
Town Clerk