

The Town of Smithfield Appearance Commission met in regular session on Tuesday, February 16, 2021, at 5:00 in the Town Hall Council Chambers located at 350 East Market Street, Smithfield, North Carolina.

Members Present

Stuart Lee – Chairperson
Robin Cook – Vice Chairperson
Julia Narron
Mary Foy Ragsdale
Peggy Scott

Members Absent

Councilman David Steven
Connie Barbour

Staff Present

Lawrence Davis – Public Works Superintendent
Shannan Parrish – Town Clerk

Staff Absent

Call to Order

Chairperson Stuart Lee called the meeting to order at 5:09 pm

Invocation

Peggy Scott offered the invocation.

Approval of Meeting Minutes – January 17, 2021

This item was not discussed

Financial Report

Appearance Commission General Fund Balance – \$ 12,037.61
Donate-A-Tree Account Balance – \$200.00
J. B. George Fund Balance – \$637.17
J.P. George Fund Balance – \$0.00

Invoice for Clayton Narron’s services – Boat ramp landscape design

Chairperson Stuart Lee explained that at the last meeting, the Commission asked Mr. Narron to provide more detailed drawings of the total landscape project for the boat ramp. Mr. Narron has provided those detailed plans. The Commission received an invoice in the amount of \$1,000 (10 hours at \$100 per hour) for Mr. Narron’s work on the project.

Peggy Scott made a motion, seconded by Julia Narron, to approve using funds from the Appearance Commission’s general fund in the amount of \$1000 to pay the invoice for Clayton Narron for the complete landscape design of the boat ramp project.

DSDC Update

Chairperson Stuart Lee informed the members of the Appearance Commission that he recently attended the DSDC meeting. At that meeting, he shared the art walk information with Executive Director Sarah Edwards who shared that information with the DSDC board. Mr. Lee will attend the next DSDC meeting to gain any feedback/ ideas about the art walk plan. He further asked if any member of the Appearance Commission could attend the DSDC’s Design Committee meeting on the 10th at 9:00 am to discuss the art walk plan. Julia Narron stated she was a member of that committee so she could speak about the art walk plan.

Recruitment – Group Discussion

Chairperson Stuart Lee informed the members of the Appearance Commission there were vacancies on the Appearance Commission and some other Town advisory boards. He questioned if anyone on the Commission had any ideas on how to recruit members and diversify the group. Peggy Scott suggested the Appearance Commission members could contact others that they felt might be interested in serving on the Commission. Mary Foy Ragsdale suggested using Facebook. Mr. Lee explained that he had spoken with some local ministers and they were interested in sharing the information with their congregations. Town Clerk Shannan Parrish stated that she would work with the Communications and Marketing Specialist to develop a flier and a social media post to attract new members to the Town Advisory Boards.

Meeting Our Mission

Chairperson Stuart Lee informed the members of the Appearance Commission that he wanted to make sure the Commission was meeting its core objectives. At the next meeting, Mr. Lee stated he would like to take those four things the Commission is supposed to be working on and try to match them with the core objectives of the Appearance Commission. Mr. Lee will develop a chart so the Commission can start aligning its projects with its core objectives.

Existing Project Updates

Market Street Trees – Final Determination

Chairperson Stuart Lee informed the members of the Appearance Commission that at the last meeting, Clayton Narron was asked if he could recommend a type of tree for the Market Street Project. Mr. Narron's suggestions were the American Elm, the Chinese Pistache and the Trident Maple. Peggy Scott stated the Chinese Pistache tree grows to 40 feet so those trees are too tall to be planted on Market Street. Mary Foy Ragsdale explained that the Trident Maple was too wide to plant on Market Street. It was determined that the trees suggested by Mr. Narron would be too large to plant along Market Street. Julia Narron stated that a landscaper told her that maple trees do not do well in this area. Mrs. Scott suggested that Lawrence Davis call a nursery and ask for a street tree suggestion that would do well in this area. Mr. Davis responded he would call Lanny at Swift Creek Nursery for a street tree suggestion.

Mr. Davis explained to the members of the Appearance Commission that he did receive the results of the soil samples. With this information, the soil can be prepared for the new trees. Mr. Lee suggested that someone on staff could determine what type of fertilizer would need to be purchased.

Boat Ramp

Parks and Recreation Director Gary Johnson informed the members of the Appearance Commission that he received cost estimates for the plantings. Landscape estimates for the shade structure area and the bank down the side of the boat ramp was \$660.00. The bank area and the drive way would cost \$1,028. The parking lot area trees and would be \$272 and the medians would be \$350 and the decorative boulders are \$200 apiece. The total cost for the first phase would be \$4,100. Mr. Lee suggested pricing the entire project so it could be completed. Mr. Johnson explained that he did not have the manpower to do the entire project. Mrs. Scott questioned if the grounds could be prepped for the new plantings. Mr. Johnson responded if the grounds are prepped then the plantings need to be installed. If they are not immediately installed, you risk erosion along the bank. Mr. Lee stated that if funds from the Johnston County Visitor's Bureau Grant (\$15,000), those funds could be used for landscaping the entire boat ramp project area.

Peggy Scott made a motion, seconded by Vice Chairperson Robin Cook, to move forward with the complete landscape plan for the boat ramp area. Unanimously approved.

Julia Narron made a motion, seconded by Mary Foy Ragsdale, to authorize the funding for phase one of the boat ramp landscape project in the amount of \$4,100. Unanimously approved.

Review if Action Items:

- Julia Narron will attend the DSDC meeting and discuss the art walk concept.
- Lawrence Davis will bring back one type of tree for the Market Street Project with a total cost of trees and preparing the soil.
- Gary Johnson is going to look at doing phase I of the boat ramp landscape project. If the \$15,000 is received from the Johnston County Visitors Bureau, the Commission will decide on how much to earmark for the remainder of the project.
- Shannan Parrish will work with the Marketing and Communications Specialist on recruitment fliers and social media posts.

Adjournment

Being no further business, Julia Narron made a motion, seconded by Mary Foy Ragsdale to adjourn the meeting. The meeting adjourned at approximately 5:59 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

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

Shannan L. Parrish
Town Clerk