

The Town of Smithfield Appearance Commission met in regular session on Tuesday, July 14, 2020, at 5:00 in the Town Hall Conference Room located at 350 East Market Street, Smithfield, North Carolina.

Members Present

Peggy Scott – Chairperson
Robin Cook – Vice Chairperson
Connie Barbour
Stuart Lee
Julia Narron
Jeremy Pearce
MaryFoy Ragsdale

Members Absent

Councilman David Steven

Staff Present

Joey Price - Appearance Crew Leader
Shannan Parrish – Town Clerk

Staff Absent

Call to Order

Chairperson Peggy Scott called the meeting to order at 5:03 pm

Invocation

Chairperson Peggy Scott offered the invocation.

Approval of Meeting Minutes – June 16, 2020

Julia Narron made a motion, seconded by Connie Barbour, to approve the June minutes as submitted. Unanimously approved.

Financial Report

Appearance Commission General Fund Balance – \$4,747.33

Donate-A-Tree Account Balance – \$650.00

J. B. George Fund Balance – \$2,488.44

J.P. George Fund Balance – \$267.53

Chairperson Peggy Scott informed the members of the Appearance Commission funding from the Johnston County Visitor’s Bureau Grant (JCVB) has been delayed. Because of the pandemic, the JCVB has not been receiving its normal level of funding from the occupancy tax. Mrs. Scott felt assured the Appearance Commission would receive its grant funding when JCVB was able to disburse it.

DSDC Report

No report was given because the DSDC meets on Tuesday, July 21st.

Project Updates

Boat Ramp

Flag pole: installed but missing the cross bar (Brackets were left out of shipping)

Flags are ordered

Steps: Passed waiting on 3 bids for pricing

will also get pricing to add another set of steps closer to the drive way down to the boat ramp

Landscaping:

Chairperson Peggy Scott informed the members of the Appearance Commission the American flag and the North Carolina flag has been ordered. The Smithfield flag is being made. The Town received the flag pole, but it was missing the crossbar. Once the crossbar is received, the flags will be hung. Mrs. Scott asked for volunteers to develop a landscape plan for the boat ramp area. Vice Chairperson Robin Cook and Julia Narron volunteered to work on this project. Mrs. Scott will also assist as needed.

Donate-A- Tree Plaque

Chairperson Peggy Scott informed the members of the Appearance Commission the plaque had been installed in Town Hall park. The cost of the plaque was higher than anticipated because of the shipping cost.

Trees for Market Street

Chairperson Peggy Scott informed the members of the Appearance Commission the dying Paper Bark Maple trees on Market Street would need to be replaced. The Commission discussed the Upright European Hornbeam tree and the Autumn Brilliance serviceberry tree. The Upright European Hornbeam is a more columnar tree that would have to be trained (through pruning) for the first two years. They would retain their shape for five years before pruning is needed. One advantage of the Upright European Hornbeam is they do not drop leaves, berries or flowers. Mrs. Scott stated she was concerned the up-lighting would not accentuate the Upright European Hornbeam because of its density. Julia Narron stated if the lower limbs of the tree were removed, the up lighting may illuminate the tree. Stuart Lee stated someone would have to learn how to prune and shape the Upright European Hornbeam. Connie Barbour suggested the Commission choose a tree that was low maintenance because the Public Works Appearance Division has a lot of responsibilities and pruning trees would add to them.

Mrs. Barbour suggested the Commission consider the Autumn Brilliance serviceberry because those trees change with the seasons. Also, the branches are widespread and would accentuate the up lighting. Mrs. Narron stated all the Autumn Brilliance serviceberry trees would need to be single stemmed. Mr. Lee stated the berries from the Autumn Brilliance serviceberry may be harmful to dogs. Mrs. Narron questioned if the Paper Bark Maple trees would be replaced as needed. Mrs. Scott responded it would be best to have all the trees replaced at the same time so Market Street would have a uniform look. Mrs. Scott questioned if the Town could hire someone to prune the trees. Appearance Crew Leader Joey Price responded he would have to discuss that with Public Works Director Lenny Branch. Vice Chairperson Robin Cook questioned if the small Christmas lights would be removed from the trees. Mr. Price responded some of the lights have been removed and would need to be replaced. Mrs. Scott felt that the small Christmas light detracted from the up lighting. She felt the Christmas lights could be placed in other areas around Town. Mrs. Narron also suggested the Lace Bark Elm tree. These are currently planted at First Citizens Bank on Market Street.

Discussion on the next Project: Planning for 2021

Ideas:

- **Landscape standards (guide lines) Document**

Julia Narron questioned if there were landscape standards for residential areas. Landscape standards only apply to commercial properties in Smithfield. Mrs. Narron stated there was a new duplex on Fourth Street and there was no landscaping, only gravel and concrete. Mrs. Narron's

neighbors felt some type of landscaping should be required. Mrs. Barbour stated a lot of people no longer want to maintain yards so they purchase houses with small lots or with no landscaping. Mr. Lee stated that while gravel and concrete may not be an ideal look, it would be better than a yard that was not maintained. The Appearance Commission could work on residential landscape standards to present to the Council.

- **Light in the community**

Chairperson Peggy Scott questioned if the light in the community was a project the Commission wanted to do. Stuart Lee volunteered to work on the project. Mr. Lee stated he would like this project to connect with other Appearance Commission Projects. Julia Narron suggested lights be placed in the 5 large trees on South Third Street at the Courthouse. Mr. Lee stated he would drive around and get some ideas. Mrs. Scott reminded everyone that the Commission's projects do not have to be focused in the downtown area.

- **HardScapes**

Vice Chairperson Robin Cook informed the members of the Commission that she had been researching hardscapes and interactive pieces of art that could be installed in Town. Stuart Lee suggested she speak with Kelly Johnson at the Innovation Academy about getting the students involved with this project. He explained the students work on community-based projects and they may be able to develop an overall plan for the creation and installation of public art (hardscapes or murals).

Adjournment

Being no further business, Julia Narron made a motion, seconded by Connie Barbour, to adjourn the meeting. The meeting adjourned at approximately 6:15 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,



Shannan L. Parrish
Town Clerk