

CITY OF CORAL GABLES

LANDSCAPE BEAUTIFICATION ADVISORY BOARD

<https://zoom.us/j/83110285038>

THURSDAY, February 13, 2025 – 10:30 A.M.

- MEETING MINUTES -

<b>MEMBERS</b>	F 24	M 24	A 24	M 24	J 24	S 24	O 24	N 24	D 24	J 25	F 25	<b>APPOINTED BY:</b>
Carolina Estefan-Chahine	P	P	P	P	E	*	*	E	P	P	P	Mayor Lago
Anne Boynton-Trigg	P	P	P	P	P	*	*	P	P	P	P	Vice Mayor Anderson
Elizabeth Parnes	P	E	P	P	E	*	*	P	P	P	P	Commissioner Fernandez
Saralane Conde	P	P	P	P	P	*	*	E	E	E	E	Commissioner Castro
Nancy Leslie	P	P	P	P	E	*	*	E	P	P	P	Commissioner Menendez
Amy Dash	E	P	E	P	P	*	*	E	E	E	E	City Manager
Kurt Schubert	P	P	P	P	E	*	*	P	A	A	P	Board-As-A-Whole

**P – Present**  
**E – Excused Absence**  
**A – Absent**  
**(-) – No Appointment**  
**(\*) – No Meeting**

**STAFF:**

Deena Bell-Llewellyn, Assistant PW Director, Greenspace  
 Sayleen Arocha-Quian, Landscape Designer, Greenspace  
 Pilar Wiesse, Recording Secretary, Greenspace

**GUEST:**

Vice Mayor Rhonda Anderson, City of Coral Gables

**CALL TO ORDER:**

The meeting was called to order at 10:42 a.m. The roll was taken, and a quorum was present.

**MEETING MINUTES APPROVAL:**

The board reviewed the January 9<sup>th</sup>, 2025, minutes. Presentation for Farmers Market should read “Where the Grass won’t Grow.” **A motion was made to “Approve the minutes of January 9<sup>th</sup>, 2025”. The motion was seconded, voted upon, and adopted unanimously.**

## **PRESENTATIONS / DISCUSSIONS:**

- EVENT PLANNING 2025:

Arbor Day 2025 – Ms. Leslie initiated a discussion regarding the Garden Club’s offer to donate funds for a tree for Arbor Day 2025. The proposed location is Coral Way near Red Road, with the tree to be planted separate from the existing centennial tree. A local resident has applied for a grant through the Arbor Day Foundation with the anonymous idea of creating a grove of 50 trees. The goal is to cool the area while providing a space for reflection that honors the city’s rich history with trees. This grove would be located at the western entrance to the city. The project will incorporate lignum vitae trees, specifically two at the entrance to Coral Way and Red Road, as part of a community celebration for Centennial Arbor Day. The planting will be confined to the western corner behind the historical fountains, ensuring that it does not extend into the hurricane sites, preserving the open space. A concept plan for this initiative is being designed by Sayleen Arocha of the Greenspace Management division. Country Club Prado will be serving as a kickoff site for engagement with the Arbor Day Tree planting ceremony. The Garden Club traditionally donates \$1,000 yearly toward the purchase of the tree for Arbor Day. A request was made to include two substantial arborvitaes in the plant list and design, which will be incorporated by Ms. Bell, the plan reviewer. ***A motion was made to “amended the decision to plant the two lignum vitae trees at Coral Way and Red Road rather than City Hall.” The motion was seconded, voted upon, and adopted unanimously.***

Vice Mayor Anderson will serve as the speaker to discuss the significance of the lignum vitae trees for Arbor Day. Ms. Bell will present the vision and concept plan to the board, incorporating species from the oak hammock community, as there are existing oaks in the area. The singer at the event will be Nikki Bartholomew, and cookies will be delivered by the Garden Club.

Beautification Awards 2024 – The Landscape Beautification Awards for 2024 will be presented during the City Commission meeting on March 11th at 10:00 AM. A PowerPoint presentation featuring images of the winning properties will be shown, and the winners will be invited to the meeting to receive a plaque of recognition of their properties. As of now, three RSVPs have been confirmed attendance to the Greenspace Management division. Board member Kurt Schubert will present the PowerPoint and explain how the board canvassed the zones throughout the city, ultimately bringing the nominations to the board for review. The board has selected the following award recipients: 1400 S Greenway Dr., 3201 Alhambra Cir., 242 Camilo Ave., 500 Hardee Rd. (6200 Maggiore St.), 1 Casuarina Concourse., and 11030 Parabela St.

- TREE OF THE YEAR COMPETITION 2025: March 1<sup>st</sup> is the deadline for the community to vote for the Tree of the Year competition is approaching, with current submission amounts available on the website, the award will be presented on Arbor Day. The token NFT has been developed, and graphics are displayed for it each NFT on city website. Each nominee who selects the NFT reward will have it directly deposited into their digital wallet. An online preview of all submissions, including images, can be accessed via the city website's Tree of the Year page. Board Members are encouraged to view the submissions before the next board meeting, where voting will take place.
- FARMERS MARKET: Kurt Schubert will be presenting “*Where the Grass won’t Grow.*” at the Farmers Market on March 1, 2025, at 10am. The presentation will cover topics including artificial turf, crushed gravel, and plants, with a focus on the environmental benefits of leaving dirt exposed as part of natural habitat preservation. A handout and swale package will be printed for distribution at the booth. It will be highlighted that residents wishing to install artificial turf in their gardens must submit a permit request to the Greenspace Management division. The cost of the permit through Development Services will be discussed, along with the durability of artificial turf, which has a long lifespan. Currently, 25% of individuals are opting for artificial turf. The booth will be strategically located in the center of the Farmers Market to engage attendees.
- UPDATE ON CITY PROJECTS:

*Black Olive Treatment:* Ms. Bell said that studies were conducted by the Davey Institute over a 4-year period in Naples and Coral Gables, Florida to evaluate insecticide treatments against these pests. During 2015 and 2016 in Coral Gables, abamectin trunk injections resulted in excellent reduction in gall formation and staining. Abamectin trunk injections are proving to reduce the staining to property and preserve the positive environmental benefits of mature Black Olive trees in the urban forest. This represents an environmentally rational approach with none of the drawbacks associated with foliar applications or soil drenching. The City of Coral Gables performs treatment injections of 2000 Black Olive trees every March and April during the peak season for mite and caterpillar activity.

ADJOURNMENT: The meeting was adjourned at 11:46am

THE NEXT MEETING WILL BE HELD ON  
THURSDAY, MARCH 13, 2025, 10:30 AM