

CITY OF CORAL GABLES

LANDSCAPE BEAUTIFICATION ADVISORY BOARD

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

THURSDAY, May 8, 2025 – 10:30 A.M.

- MEETING MINUTES -

MEMBERS	M 24	J 24	S 24	O 24	N 24	D 24	J 25	F 25	M 25	A 25	M 25	APPOINTED BY:
Carolina Estefan-Chahine	P	E	*	*	E	P	P	P	E	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	P	P	P	P	P	Commissioner Fernandez
Saralane Conde	P	P	*	*	E	E	E	E	P	P	E	Commissioner Castro
Nancy Leslie	P	E	*	*	E	P	P	P	P	P	E	Commissioner Menendez
Amy Dash	P	P	*	*	E	E	E	E	U	P	P	City Manager
Kurt Schubert	P	E	*	*	P	U	U	P	P	P	P	Board-As-A-Whole

P – Present
E – Excused Absence
U – Unexcused
(-) – No Appointment
(*) – No Meeting

STAFF:

Sayleen Arocha-Quian, Landscape Designer, Greenspace
Pilar Wiese, Recording Secretary, Greenspace

CALL TO ORDER:

The meeting was called to order at 10:30 a.m. The roll was taken, and a quorum was present. Meeting was held at the Youth Center Conference Room.

MEETING MINUTES APPROVAL:

The board reviewed April 10th, 2025, minutes. **A motion was made to “Approve the minutes of April 10th, 2025”. The motion was seconded, voted upon, and adopted unanimously.**

PRESENTATIONS / DISCUSSIONS:

- **LANDSCAPE BEAUTIFICATION AWARDS:** The Board began preparations for the upcoming Landscape Beautification Awards 2026. A reconfiguration of zones was approved: Zones 1 and 2 remain unchanged; Zones 3 and 4 were combined into a new Zone 3; Zone 5 is now Zone 4; and Zone 6 has been divided into three new zones—Zones 5, 6, and 7, resulting in a total of seven zones, one zone per board member. Assignments were made as follows: Mr. Schubert will cover Zone 1, Ms. Boynton-Trigg will review Zone 2, Ms. Parnes is assigned to Zone 3, Ms. Dash will evaluate Zone 4, and Ms. Estefan-Chahine will take Zone 5. Ms. Conde and Ms. Leslie, who were not present, will choose between Zones 6 and 7 later. The deadline for submitting nominations is scheduled for the October meeting.

- **EVENT PLANNING 2025:**

Arbor Day 2025 & 2026: Board members reflected on the success of the 2025 Arbor Day event, noting significant community engagement and increased participation from the community. Ms. Parnes observed a notable increase in public turnout, attributing it to the micro forest initiative. The Board expressed a desire to maintain and grow this level of participation in future events.

Tree of the Year for Centennial: The Greenspace Division provided a printed canvas commemorating the “Tree of the Year,” which was presented to the Board. Discussion arose regarding the canvas's permanent placement, with suggestions including displaying it in the new meeting location for visibility. Mr. Schubert proposed making the “Tree of the Year” an annual tradition to encourage ongoing community interest. Ms. Boynton-Trigg introduced a related idea presented by a state representative: the designation of a “Champion Tree,” defined as the largest or rarest tree in Florida. Concerns were expressed about the feasibility and scope of whether this were to become a statewide competition. Some members questioned the value of an annual “Tree of the Year,” fearing it may dilute the uniqueness of the event. Mr. Schubert volunteered to investigate similar programs in other cities and will report his findings at the June meeting.

- **LANDSCAPE BEAUTIFICATION ADVISORY BOARD OBJECTIVES FOR 2026:** The Board discussed its core objectives for 2026, which include continuing Arbor Day celebration and the Landscape Beautification Awards, revitalizing local Farmers Market, which has seen reduced community engagement. Ms. Parnes suggested reintroducing the successful orchid giveaway in collaboration with Fairchild Botanical Garden, which previously drew large crowds. The Board plans to consult Susan Lainfiesta to explore strategies for enhancing next year’s market.

Additionally, members are tasked with identifying new locations suitable for inclusion in the Tree Succession Project 2025 which is scheduled to begin before the rainy season.

- **UPDATE ON CITY PROJECTS:**

Ms. Arocha stated that the Tree Succession Project for 2024 has been completed, though inspections remain pending to ensure tree health and maintenance. The planting contractor is responsible for upkeep during the first three months of post-planting. Planning for 2025 is underway. She will consider the Manatee overlook site on Riviera Dr. to install trees to provide shade.

Other city beautification efforts include:

- *Entrance at Granada and 8th Street:* Ms. Arocha is coordinating with crews to install privacy hedges for residents behind the entrances. The project is closed to being completed.
- *Country Club Prado:* Identified by Mr. Schubert as deteriorating and unsightly; a site meeting will be scheduled to develop improvement strategies.
- *North Greenway and Coral Way:* Also noted to be in poor condition and added to the beautification priority list.
- *Microforest Sites:* Finalization of plant lists is ongoing, with both locations intended to serve as educational exhibits. Bidding will commence soon.
- *Library Sculpture:* Ms. Bell will update the board at the next meeting.

Ms. Boynton-Trigg informed the board that the Manatee overlook area on Riviera Dr. has been handed over to the Capital Improvements Program (CIP), with a projected implementation date of 2029, confirmed by email from Deena Bell; the project is scheduled for Commission review in October. Mr. Schubert said that he had personally visited the site and reported that the area is currently in poor condition.

ADJOURNMENT: The meeting was adjourned at 11:39am

THE NEXT MEETING WILL BE HELD ON
THURSDAY, JUNE 12, 2025 at 10:30 AM