

CITY OF CORAL GABLES

LANDSCAPE BEAUTIFICATION ADVISORY BOARD

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

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 14<sup>th</sup>, 2023 – 10:30 A.M.

- MEETING MINUTES -

<b>MEMBERS</b>	<b>M</b>	<b>J</b>	<b>S</b>	<b>O</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>J</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>M</b>	<b>M</b>	<b>J</b>	<b>S</b>	<b>APPOINTED BY:</b>
	22	22	22	22	22	22	23	23	23	23	23	23	
Carolina Estefan-Chahine	P	P	P	P	P	E	P	P	P	P	P	P	Mayor Lago
Anne Boynton-Trigg	P	E	E	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	A	Vice Mayor Anderson
Elizabeth Parnes	.	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	E	A	Commissioner Fernandez
Sara Lane Conde	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	P	Commissioner Castro
Nancy Leslie	P	P	E	E	P	P	P	E	P	P	P	A	Commissioner Menendez
Amy Dash	P	P	A	P	P	P	P	A	P	P	A	A	City Manager
Maria Debye Saxinger	-	P	P	E	P	E	P	P	P	P	P	A	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, Landscape Designer, Greenspace  
 Pilar Wiese, Recording Secretary, Greenspace

**CALL TO ORDER:**

Carolina Estefan-Chahine called to order at 10:50am, the roll was taken, and the absence of quorum was announced. Anne Boynton-Trigg and Nancy Leslie joined the meeting via zoom because they were out of town.

**MEETING MINUTES APPROVAL:**

Meeting minutes of June 8<sup>th</sup>, 2023 were not approved because quorum was not met.

## **PRESENTATIONS / DISCUSSIONS:**

- New board member Ms. Saralane Conde was appointed by Commissioner Castro. She introduced herself to the board members. She is a CPA who works in the Controller's office for the University of Miami. She has been living in the Gables for almost 30 years. She is a member of the Tropical Audubon Society, and she would like to be a part of the Gables and help the city move in the direction towards native, to benefit fauna.
- STATE OF ROAD AT THE INTERSECTION OF OLD CUTLER AND RED RD.: Ms. Estefan-Chahine said she has not received any updates since summer break. She has seen some of the holes have been filled with gravel and some street signs have been put up. She is hoping that this issue can be pushed a little bit with county representatives.
- EVENT PLANNING 2024: Ms. Bell explained to Ms. Conde that the board organizes the annual Arbor Day and Landscape Beautification awards. Generally, Arbor Day celebration is the last week of April every year. The board picks a spot in a city park or public space and plants a beautiful specimen tree of its choice. The Garden Club of Coral Gables donates the tree, and the Greenspace division plants the tree. Another thing the board usually likes is to arrange a talk at the Farmer's Market. Ms. Estefan-Chahine told her that the board also organizes the beautification awards. She explained that the city has 5-6 zones, and a zone is allocated to each board member to choose a beautiful landscape based on a criteria passed by the board. Chosen properties are checked by code enforcement for any code violation. Then the board will vote on 5 properties and each zone will then have a winner. Ms. Bell suggested bringing the zone map to the next board meeting for the board members to pick a zone and start canvassing now and turn them in before the end of the year. The beautification awards are usually given out in April and are presented at the city commission meeting where the residents are invited to come and receive their plaque. Ms. Boynton-Trigg intervened saying that it would be better to change the timing on this to avoid the Christmas and/or Halloween decorations as it is difficult to have time for submissions in by the beginning of January. She thinks it is best to delay a little bit until getting into the full beauty of the wintertime. Ms. Bell said that maybe it would be a good idea to move the awards to another time of the year because it does not have to be in April.
- UPDATE ON CITY PROJECTS: Ms. Bell shared with Ms. Conde that the Greenspace Management division is in charge of maintaining the landscaping in all the public space in the city, including a lot of little parks as well as 41,000 trees in the right-of-way. Ms. Bell talked about the swale planting package -anybody can plant a tree or landscape in the swale if they want to. Residents are responsible to maintain their own swale as per city ordinance. The division is also in charge of replacing and planting new trees for the ones the city needed to remove because they were diseased or hazardous.

Every year the city commission designates funds specially for a tree succession. Trees are replaced with the best species for the location and residents can choose the tree they want as long as it can be found. The goal is to plant the trees during summer, during the rainy season and maintain tree canopy at above forty percent.

*Coral Gables Library:* Library is now open to the public. It has been restored and renovated recently; it is gorgeous. The county is in charge of maintaining it. They have been tasked to hire their own landscape architect to produce the garden restoration and renovation plan. Plans are being reviewed by Ms. Bell and assets management of the City Manager's office. The Coral Gables Garden Club has reached out as they are interested in being involved in the restoration of the butterfly garden.

*Tree Succession project:* Greenspace division has put a list of trees for the tree succession project. Trees are a mixture of native and flowering trees and some palm trees too. Paperwork for about one hundred new trees is in the Procurement division and is out to bid.

*Tarragona waterway:* West of Alhambra on Tarragona along the waterway, the city just built a new retaining wall to help with the erosion. The landscape plan was designed for that site and is out to bid.

ADJOURNMENT: The meeting was adjourned at 11:30am

THE NEXT MEETING WILL BE HELD ON  
THURSDAY, OCTOBER 12<sup>th</sup>, 2023, 10:30 AM