

*City of Alexandria, Virginia*  
*Alexandria Beautification Commission (ABC)*  
*P.O. Box 178*  
*Alexandria, Virginia 22313*

**Meeting Minutes**

Thursday, November 10, 2022  
7:30 PM

**Present:** Michael Budinski, Steve Cohen (Chair), Kathryn Chiasson (Vice Chair), Alexander Mcelya, Laura Norfolk, Denise Tennant, Julie Chapman, Monica Murphy, Eleanor Quigley, Richard Dorrier, Yanique Revers, Eleanor Trice

**Excused Absences:** NA

**Unexcused Absences:** NA

**City Staff:** Oscar Mendoza

The meeting was called to order at 7:30 PM.

1. **Approval of the October 13, 2022 Meeting Minutes**
  - a. Alex motioned to approve the minutes, Mike seconded, unanimous approval.
2. **Membership Updates**
  - a. 12 members, to date, 3 vacancies
  - b. Resignation: Kathryn Chiasson
  - c. We are looking for new Commission members.
3. **Commission Business**
  - a. Officers / Next Year / Elections
    - i. Steve Cohen was nominated and voted in for the role of Chair
    - ii. Laura Norfolk was nominated and voted in for the role of Vice Chair
    - iii. Alexander Mcelya was nominated and voted in for the role of Secretary
  - b. **Review proposed Community Beautification Award Winners and gain Commission approval**
    - i. Discussed proposed winners based on voting with the Commission and gained consensus to approve the following winners:
      - a. West Winner - Ben Brenman Park, 4800 Brenman Park Dr.
        - i. For the ongoing execution of a large scale native tree planting and nurturing of new native trees initiative.
      - b. Central Winner - The Telegraph and Duke Meadow Complex, Telegraph & Duke St. Interchange

- i. For the continual commitment to maintain the interchange through the removal of invasive plants.
- c. East Winner - The Visitors Center Garden at the Ramsay House - 221 King St.
  - i. For the revitalization and maintenance efforts.

#### 4. Propose Awards approach option for 2023

- i. Gained feedback from 3 Award approaches for 2023. Pros and cons were discussed.
  - a. 2021-2022 Staggered approach of nominating and then voting throughout the year.
  - b. Pre-Pandemic approach of 1 single nomination effort across all nominating categories(residential, architecture, community, commercial etc.). Include a celebratory event the second half of the year
  - c. Pre-Pandemic approach of 1 single nomination effort across all nominating categories(residential, architecture, community, commercial etc.). Do no include a celebratory event the second half of the year
- ii. The Awards Subcommittee met last month to decide regarding the 2023 Awards approach. After carefully reviewing The Commission's feedback from the November ABC meeting, the Subcommittee has decided to go back to the pre-pandemic approach. 1 single nomination effort across all categories (Residential, Community, Architecture etc). Followed up with 1 single voting effort. There will be an annual celebratory event sometime the 2nd half of the year.

#### 5. Update objective of the Promote Environmental Sustainability Subcommittee

- a. **Goal:** Promote environmental sustainability through collaboration and engagement with City Council, City staff, and private organizations
- b. **New Objective:** Identify at least one issue relating to sustainability and beautification for the commission to address with the mayor and city council. Draft a letter for approval by the full commission.
- c. **Other 2 objectives** are the following:
  - i. Coordinate with City staff (T&ES) on installation of the new gateway signs (Phase IV of the City's Wayfinding Program) and landscape plans for each gateway site to upgraded in 2023 (number to be determined). Help with site verification of sign locations, suggestions on landscaping & plant material including native plants if possible, and installation of the landscaping by the City contractor (BrightView). Also work with the City staff to develop a maintenance program for all landscaping installed at the gateways to ensure continuity of this investment for the future.

- ii. By June 2023, collaborate with the City staff (Park Planning) and the HUME Springs Civic Association to develop an improvement plan for Flagpole Park, to include Surveying neighborhood residents in English and Spanish on desired uses and improvements for the space and working with a landscape designer to develop a landscape plan. Work with City Staff to ensure a plan iOS in place for these improvements to be implemented upon completion of the planned T&ES storm water improvement project.

**6. New Commission Business**

- a. None

**7. Agenda Items for the January 12, 2023 Meeting**

- a. None

**8. Public Comment/Discussion: None**

**9. The meeting was adjourned by the Chair at 8:58 PM.**