



CITY OF SALEM, MASSACHUSETTS
DOMINICK PANGALLO
MAYOR

APPROVED MINUTES

Salem Beautification Committee:

Chair: Henry Gulergun

Vice Chair: Ariana Lema-Driscoll

Secretary: Kim Parkinson

City Liaison: Janelle Rolke

10/10/23 – Hybrid Meeting

Present: Kim Parkinson, Zachary Schaad, Ariana Lema-Driscoll, Henry Gulergun, Brooke Nagle, Janelle Rolke (City Liaison), Sam Fiore, Charlene Bailey, Mary Ellen Halliwell, Jeremy Baker, Laurie Biel

Absent: Jason Lang

Guests: Kylie Sullivan (Salem Main Streets), Maria Connell (Volunteer, Salem Garden Club)

Agenda:

1. Call to Order 7PM
2. Mission Statement
3. Approval of September 2023 Minutes
4. Old Business:
 - MOU Changes 2024
5. Sub-Committee Reports:
 - Lady of Salem (Mary Ellen/Brooke)
 - Traffic Island (Charlene)
 - Monthly Litter Clean Ups (Kim and Zach)
6. New Business:
 - Kylie Sullivan, Salem Main Streets (Tree Decorating)
 - BCOMM Social Media Outreach
 - Video
 - Potential Competitions
 - Review of BCOMM Funds
 - Litter Signage Project
 - Traffic Island Responsibilities for 2024
 - Traffic Island Sign Takedown

7. Adjournment

Mission Statement: The mission of the Salem Beautification Committee is to assist the City in developing and pursuing initiatives that promote the beautification of the City. The goal of the Committee is to create civic pride and to motivate the City's diverse population to participate in the beautification process. The Committee will identify areas in need of improvement, will create programs, recruit volunteers and will secure the funding resources to achieve its goals.

- **Minutes Approved from September Meeting unanimously**

Old business:

- Traffic Island MOU 2024 Changes
 - Last meeting the idea was introduced to update the MOUs but nothing has been written down yet. It's only October but we need to be looking at what was sent to sponsors in 2023 to help determine what we need to do for 2024
 - Janelle proposes language is edited as well as sponsorship levels. If a sponsor is paying the highest amount, all they are responsible for is the initial cleanup and planting which many sponsors didn't do. Propose we drop the \$ amount down a bit and give them a little more ownership and accountability. If their TI isn't prepped and planted by a particular date, their sign doesn't go up
 - Could also consider raising the top amount if they don't want to manage it - know that there are volunteering challenges but this could bring more money into the committee and would likely cut down on the number of sponsors that would pay that much
 - The other challenge is the watering. The cemetery dept has the water wagon, Janelle gave them the list and they confirmed they were out most weeks twice a week but it was a rainy season which probably won't be the reality moving forward. Next year we need to look at the irrigation plan. Maybe it is only included in certain levels?
 - Propose simplifying the MOU as well as changing the verbiage and terms
 - Laurie, Charlene, Brooke to work with Janelle to propose a new draft to the committee in November so we can have it ready to go by January to send out in February
 - Brooke to compile the current one into a shared doc that everyone can comment on
- By-laws
 - Henry has started the by-law document - Ariana to help. Keeping it simple and Henry will share it with the group once a draft is ready

Sub-Committee Reports:

- Lady of Salem (Mary Ellen/Brooke)
 - Lady "Takedown" on September 27 by the DPW. Thank you Katie, Steve and Henry. Many thanks to B-Comm's Sam Fiore!
 - Storage of figureheads @ PEM's basement, 179 Essex Street, until June 2024 Art Festival. Thanks Tyler and Miguel.
 - Work scheduled for 2024 is repairs, (1 figurehead to be remounted and Lady Bowditch backboard needs attention), repainting, (5 backboards to be painted to remove graffiti), QR Code and website prep (establish and revamp to ensure all Ladies have stories listed)
 - Mary Ellen and Brooke are working on the website

- o Because the tree is so big, there is no way to do it without all of the departments - tree dept, electrical has to rig it up, a lot that we can do with the volunteers. They'll also take care of the tree cutting and the big rig coordination
- o Kylie can help keep the wreaths and ribbons but she's been holding on to the tree for awhile to give it a little more love and creativity
- o Need to confirm if the tree has already been sourced or not - usually is sourced from a resident's property in Salem. There are a lot of old trees that people want to get taken down because they're unsafe so they're usually donated by locals.
- o Usually the tree dept goes out in summer/fall to see if a resident's tree meets a safe tree criteria. Around this time of year, Kylie starts to get ornaments (Jacobsons Floral in Boston has been the source in the past). Tree Dept and Public Works then identify the day to coordinate
- o Ideally the Friday before Thanksgiving the tree goes up, Monday/Tuesday do the ornaments, leave a day in case there is bad weather, Friday after Thanksgiving we light the tree
- o Don't do all new ornaments every year, try to swap out a few of the bigger things because it is so expensive
- o Budget about \$1500 for ornaments/lights alone. Cost would not be put on BComm this year but looking to get BComm help with the decorating. If it's a good fit, in the next year we could work through the financial piece
- o Kylie is still happy to manage the lighting ceremony - carolers, etc. Tree gets the least of her attention and needs the most help
- o Kylie can share an overview of about how many ornaments, what's been done in the past, what they typically get, etc.
- o Day after Thanksgiving is when Santa arrives - they walk down the pedestrian mall to Latham Park, countdown to the tree lighting
- o Currently have about 100 small/70 larger ornaments stored at Greenlawn. Kylie has a count of how many we have by color, etc. and if we want to change the colors, then we may need to buy more.
- o Have multicolor lights - may need the Repair Cafe to help with the fuses. Lights are in the Main Streets office to test them out. May need to replace a decent amount of lights which isn't a bad idea given the lifespan of them (Home Depot?)
- o Tree topper is changed every year
- o Biggest thing Kylie needs help with this year from BComm is the tree topper and the ornament selection - could be split up into a few different roles if that's easiest
- o Tree comes down through January 6 if it is still safe to be up for that long
- BCOMM Social Media Outreach
 - o Andy Varela is working on the video currently with the footage that was sent over to help promote the volunteer opportunities
 - o Potential competitions
 - Looking at the pumpkin carving competition but it was a huge lift - pumpkins to be bought, bringing them places, not realistic. Could do it all online, advertise at the schools, bring them to the common?
 - Could do a fall or winter window box or holiday lights? Salem Main Streets does something on the business side, we could do something on the residential side
- Review of BCOMM Funds
 - o Kim ran through the current state of the finances for each sub-group
 - o BComm main group minus LoS and Traffic Islands available balance - ~\$26k
 - o Los available balance - ~\$3k
 - o Traffic Islands balance ~\$18k

- o Could consider spending some money on electrical to light up a few of the statues in the city to make them pop - Hawthorne, Temperance, Boston St.
- Litter Signage Project
 - o Councilor Morsillo has volunteered to do a pilot on 1st Street Traders Way
 - o There is a lot of walking and car traffic that produces an insane amount of litter and is not downtown where a pilot program could potentially be done any time of year.
 - o Proposal is once a week for 8 weeks, someone does a 10 min walk to log how much trash is picked up then signs are put up to not litter, then continue 8 weeks to see how/if it changes (have 2 people, 1 picks up and 1 logs)
 - o Being encouraged to try something like this to see if it could work
 - o Could we look at existing studies?
 - Jeremy to look!
 - o If anyone wants to help, please email Janelle
- Traffic Island Responsibilities for 2024
 - o This year was year number 30/40 knowing that we don't have enough volunteers for the traffic islands during the season - 6 veterans and 4 or 5 new committed ones - not enough!
 - o Proposal is that everyone in the committee is assigned to 1-2 traffic islands paired with the sponsor to maintain it
 - o Should make sure it's included in the MOUs
 - o Committee to think about it and if there is a traffic island anyone would like to own/sponsor, let Janelle know which one
 - o Could also consider other people being the owners that aren't on the B-Comm if they want
 - o Vision is to build the volunteer list and send out when people will be at each island to give people more options
 - o Kim shared a doc "Volunteer Outreach" in the B-Comm shared drive to get people to contribute where we can/should target
- Traffic Island Sign Takedown
 - o Friday, October 13th - Kim and Henry to take them down using the map
 - o 1 sign was missed last year - Federal Hill still has the Mayor Driscoll sticker on it that needs to be taken off

Thoughts and Concerns:

1. Gardens:

- a. In September, Janelle acquired 25 Asters that we planted in the following gardens:

Pamplemousse 3
Salem Chiropractic 6
Lifebridge 3
Dunkin 2
Mazow & McCullough 3
Washington Strip 8

They are blooming now . . . so that is a good thing.

- b. Fall Additions to Gardens: As the season changed into October, our gardens have slowed down. We are keeping eyes on them and will be doing our final cleanups as we progress further into Fall.

BULBS: If we want flowers in early Spring, we need to start thinking about planting bulbs. What are our resources for obtaining bulbs? Where do we want them? How many? What flowers, etc.?

2. Brick Enclosures Around Trees at Dunkin – Safety and Appearance --- and Bouchard’s

- a. Our group has been working around Dunkin this past month, cleaning up the garden, planting the Asters and working on cleaning up around the two huge trees on the sidewalk in front of Dunkin on Washington Street. Both are unusually large surrounds that were originally bricked in and mulched. I have taken photos of the trees with the background so that the brick area can be located on the photos. One brick surround has remained intact, the other has crumbled out into the sidewalk, missing many, many bricks, with some of the neighboring bricks loosened and uneven. Not only is it unsightly, it is a possible accident/legal sidewalk situation. We have removed the tree suckers and weeds and brought in several buckets of loam (donated) and mulch to fill in both scooped out tree surrounds.

We bring this to our committee’s attention because not only is it not acceptable by our standards; it is also a safety issue. Can the Beautification Committee bring this situation to the attention of the correct department?

- b. And Bouchard Garden, corner of New Derby St. and Washington St. is in need of work by the city. Curbing is gone or very low – some plants sit on the street and

it seems to border unsafe for walkers to stand in center of that garden waiting for their light.

3. Thank you note for recognition to the veteran Garden Volunteers and the other Volunteers who helped this summer.