

CITY OF GONZALES, TEXAS
BEAUTIFICATION ADVISORY BOARD MEETING
MINUTES – August 3, 2023

The regular meeting of the Beautification Advisory Board was held on **August 3, 2023**, at 5:30 p.m. at the Gonzales Municipal Building located at 820 Joseph Street. This was an OPEN MEETING, open to the public, subject to the open meeting laws of the State of Texas and, as required by law, was duly posted at the Gonzales Municipal Building giving notice of time, date, place, and agenda thereof. The meeting notice, agenda and agenda packet were posted online at www.gonzales.texas.gov.

CALL TO ORDER

Staff liaison Tiffany Hutchinson-Padilla called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m. and a quorum was certified.

Attendee Name	Title	Status
Connie Dolezal	Board Member	Present
Deane Parsley-Novosad	Board Member	Absent
Dee Sengelmann	Board Member	Present
Jessica McKinney	Board Member	Present
Pat Anders-Ryan	Board Member	Absent

STAFF PARTICIPATING:

Ralph Camarillo – Parks & Recreation Director
Tiffany Padilla – Main Street Director

GUESTS

None

PUBLIC COMMENTS

None

ACTION ITEMS

1.1 Discuss, Consider and Possible Action approving the July 11, 2023, Regular Meeting Minutes.

Action: Item 1.1

Approved

Board Member McKinney moved to approve the July 11, 2023, Regular Meeting Minutes with the correction that Mayor Steve Sucher was not in attendance. Board Member Sengelmann seconded the motion. Staff Liaison Padilla called for a roll call vote. For: Unanimous. The motion passed 3 to 0.

Board Report Item 2.1 was offered from subcommittee on progress of community driven cleanup campaign. Board member Sengelmann reported that she has a working list of potential block captains. Once garden club meets again (in September) they will all be encouraged to be block captains. She will also recruit block captains from her book club and Historic Homes group. Would like to get a beautification Facebook page up to advertise for the whole community with a map. That will help recruit from areas that we have less contact with. Need a method to reach out to the people and get them excited and inspired about beautification. Staff liaison Padilla reported that she spoke with City Secretary Vega and has been directed to post everything through the City Facebook page as this is an advisory board through the City. The City has a software that monitors our social media as it applies to municipal entities to keep us in compliance with various government laws. Board member Sengelmann suggested a headline “City Beautification Update” for each post to created continuity. Staff liaison Padilla suggested that the advisory board create a monthly social media plan: ‘what message would we like to get out, what action do we want the

community to take, what is the focus each month'. The goal is to get community buy-in and create a successful city wide, citizen led, beautification effort.

1.2 Discuss, Consider and Possible Action regarding planning community driven cleanup campaign.
Action: Item 1.2 **Approved**

Board member McKinney presented some draft thoughts on the letter to be distributed to various organizations. Brief letter with the request for participation plus an outline covering the program including on timeline. This will be an ongoing committee to meet and finish flushing out the plan to further determine the timeline. We will want to start and to promote it once a month until January or February, then every other week for March, then every week up to the event (Earth Day - April 20th). Ideas from Board Member Sengelmann suggested that we utilize the Facebook posts to spread incremental clean-up ideas like "Clean Up our Curb" month or "Collect Metal and send to Recycling" this month. Educating people about bulk pick up. "Clean up Sidewalk". If we want this town to be walkable and welcoming, we need to convince people to, or if they need help maybe we could find groups that can help people who can't do it. People in neighborhoods should be reaching out to one another and helping each other. Many volunteer groups like boy scouts may be willing to even do things like "park clean up". Consider having a list of things that volunteer groups can do to help.

Staff liaison Padilla has a small group of volunteers that would like to assist in a service project on their September 9th 'Day of Service'. Staff liaison Camarillo offered suggestions of having boy scout troop paint bridge by Guerra's Grill. He also liked the idea of making the small islands at Texas Hero Square a zero-maintenance area. Board member Dolezal suggested putting river-rock in those islands instead of grass. Perhaps consider Red Yucca plants or Esperanza. The gazebo at Market Square needs painting.

Board Member McKinney offered another idea to identify block captains would be to challenge our City Council Members to identify block captains in their districts. We could present to City Council a "City Council Challenge" ... whoever collects the most trash by truck load, or weight. Board Member Sengelmann suggested that this does not just have to be 1 time per year shot. We could create a cleanup campaign to focus on something specific each month: "Metal Recycling Month". Even though Earth Day is April 20th – we can celebrate Earth Day every day. That could be something to help get kids involved. Ask Science teachers help by getting info to kids in the classroom.

Ask Barbara or Pat about the history of the Jim Price Cleanup. It started with the Episcopal Church. They wanted to honor Dr. Price as a citizen not just as a physician. Continuing to get the articles out. This letter is good to get out to the groups. Board Member Sengelmann suggested that we add a "youth" component to the letter. A call to action for the youth. 1) our goal of the beautification committee is we want to be a Welcoming Community for our neighbors and also for our visitors. 2) we really want to get youth groups and the adult leaders of those groups involved in this. Perhaps suggest one-day projects that they could do or ½ day projects. The current letter is targeted specifically toward the April event. There definitely needs to be more outreach than just this, but the letter is great. The benchmark items are great because we definitely need to start creating energy around it. The hope is that we have huge community support amount the kids: adopt the block, pull trash cans in for the neighbors, get them used to doing things for others. Get the kids involved in being a part of it, and not just an afterthought. Board member Sengelmann made the motion to accept this letter as the blueprint for the Jim Price Cleanup Campaign. Board member Dolezal seconded the motion. Motion passed 3 to 0.

- 1.3 Discuss, Consider and Possible Action regarding Fall and Christmas Decorating
Action: Item 1.3 **No Action Taken – follow up next meeting**

Citizens have asked about bringing back a city-wide holiday/seasonal yard or porch decorating contest. Board member Sengelmann is meeting with the Spade and Trowel Beautification committee and will speak to them about yard of the month, market square, and other items. Would this board like to consider sponsoring a Halloween Decorating Contest and a Christmas Decorating Contest. Main Street only does the downtown area. Put the entries in the paper so people can drive around and see them. Put on our Facebook post and have people submit their properties if they are going to decorate. Offer a map or driving tour of those that entered. We could consider offering a prize. A trophy or ask businesses to sponsor or create a basket or something even a cash prize. Board member Sengelmann will present request to the Spade and Trowel Garden Club to see if they would like to take this on. It will bring Spade and Trowel back to the forefront. In the past Dot Eberly had done something similar and had signs made but there were too many categories. Consider just doing 1st, 2nd, 3rd. Don't make it too complicated. Dot may have them in her garage. Board member Sengelmann will talk to Ms. Eberly to see if she may still have the signs.

- 1.4 Discuss, Consider and Possible Action regarding wildflower seeding

Action: Item 1.4 **Deferred**

The request is to seed wildflowers all around the museum so that when we do Texas History month then it is full of bluebonnets. Also seed bluebonnets on the highway. Do bulk seeding on the highway. Consider creating a “wildflower” area at the museum because when there are events on the lawn at the museum, it will just get trampled. To appease the community that sees it “growing too tall”, we could consider having a perimeter and a sign that says, “no mow area, wildflower area”. Perhaps consider mowing from the sidewalk out just 3 feet and the rest let the wildflowers grow. That way people can see that there is something different about that area. We would need to seed more specific areas following years where needed. Would like to see it done at the entrances to Gonzales and possible at the Eggleston house. Board member Sengelmann suggested that as long as there is a parameter that is “kept” them people would be more accepting of allowing some areas of wildflowers to grow. Board member McKinney posed the question in regard to a budget or funds for wildflowers. We would need to take the request to City Council to approve funds. Staff liaison Padilla researched the Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower seed program and found that it is not offered to municipalities. Where can we buy seeds at a discount? Price seeds so that we can take the request to EDC for beautification funds. Maybe we start with the area around museum and then based on success we can propose it into the budget next year. We could consider putting it in the rough area by the frisbee park. Staff liaison Camarillo suggested putting it at the museum in the square by the two flag poles. That would be a good starting point. Board member Sengelmann mentioned that the head of the Children’s Garden by the Eggleston House mentioned that he has been inspired by the Beautification Committee to activate that garden to be a year-round garden. They will be planting flowers to make them pretty when they are not being used by the children. Board member Dolezal asked about money for landscaping of Hero Square – Main Street can request beautification funds for those little islands. Entrance to City off Water Street on St Louis Street – Master Gardeners have really stepped up to take on the planning of that area. The brick wall needs to be pressure washed and possibly repainted by Parks and maybe add “Welcome To...” And possibly put a cannon or a star on it. All of the items we are discussing flows into a Keep Gonzales Beautiful campaign. In the past we had quite a bit of work under our belt (as a city participating in Keep Texas Beautiful) that we would qualify for state funds. Go to City manager Crow and propose the wildflower planting and we need some guidance on how the city would view that and where would be a good place to start. Then we could take the request to Main Street or EDC for funding. We will table this item until we can get further direction from City Manager.

- 1.5 Discuss, Consider and Possible Action regarding setting a time and place for subcommittee of community organizations to discuss signage branding and design.

Action: Item 1.5

Approved

Propose a date after September 18th so that Board member McKinney and Board member Sengelmann can make it. Board member McKinney made a motion to set the meeting for the branding and design subcommittee to meet on Tuesday, September 19 at 5:30pm. Board member Sengelmann seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously 3 to 0.

STAFF/BOARD REPORTS

Staff liaison Padilla shared with Board a proposal from a citizen regarding ideas for replanting market square. Consider using a variety of shapes/heights. “People are driving 60mph down Water Street and may not appreciate as much if there are just planting of single level flowers. Perhaps use Dwarf Ilex Tree (Yaupon Holly, Pride of Houston) and Lunar Magic Crepe myrtle. Add LED Uplighting cha attach to branches. Adds eye catching – various shapes & lighting.

Board member McKinney brought a comment from community member asking about the fountain out front of city hall. Could we change the box cover maybe to match trash cans in town? What happened to the colored lights in the fountain. Staff liaison Camarillo mentioned that the maintenance department had been working on them. Additionally there are many dead trees between St Lawrence and St Louis on east avenue. Could we put a blue ribbon around them (maybe during the winter) so that parks know what needs to be removed.

Board member McKinney asked about the bridge at the disc golf. What is being done there? The gas company is working there. We have had some erosion and they are repairing it. Could we possibly consider doing something with bridge there to make it a destination.

- 2.2 Requests by board members for items on a future Beautification Board Meeting agenda
- Planning for July 4th and line incoming avenues with American flags. Campaign to have the Knights of Columbus put them out but we have a campaign to get more flags
 - Update on FB social media campaign
- 2.2 Set date and time for next meeting.
- Wednesday, September 13th at 5:30pm.

ADJOURN

A motion by Board McKinney and a second by Board Member Dolezal, the meeting adjourned at 6:26 pm. Staff liaison called for a roll call vote. For: Unanimous. The motion passed 3 to 0.

The meeting adjourned at 6:26 pm.

Approved this 3rd day of August 2023

Tiffany Hutchinson-Padilla
Main Street Director, City of Gonzales