

# KEEP SMYRNA BEAUTIFUL

## Minutes - Final



Smyrna Community Center  
Jonquil Room  
1250 Powder Springs St  
Smyrna, GA 30080

Lisa Davis (Mayor's Appointee)  
Shawn Garcia (Ward 1)  
Lisa Castleberry (Ward 2)  
Betty Williams (Ward 3)  
Karleen McNabb (Ward 4)  
Maggie McGarity (Ward 5)  
Neil Robinson (Ward 6)  
Tripti Gadgade (Ward 7)  
Phyllis Owens, Board Chairperson (At Large)  
Trevour Kelleher, Secretary (At Large)  
Ed Plansker (At Large)  
Hilary Scott (At Large)  
Olivia Wise (At Large)  
Chris Knight (At Large)

City Attorney Scott Cochran  
City Administrator Joseph Bennett  
City Clerk Heather K. Peacon-Corn

**September 12, 2023**  
**6:30 PM**

### 1. Roll Call

**Present:** 10 – Shawn Garcia, Lisa Castelberry, Betty Williams, Maggie McGarity, Neil Robinson, Tripti Gadgade, Trevour Kelleher, Hilary Scott, Olivia Wise, and Chris Knight  
**Absent:** 4 – Liz Davis, Karleen McNabb, Phyllis Owens, and Ed Plansker  
**Staff:** 2 – Julie Barwig and Eloise Holland

### 2. Call to Order

Olivia Wise called the September 12, 2023 Keep Smyrna Beautiful meeting to order at 6:30 PM.

### 3. Chairperson Instruction and Comment

**2023-157** Welcome / Call to Order – *Phyllis Owens, Board Chairperson*

Maggie McGarity made motion for Shawn Garcia to serve as Chair Pro Tem in this meeting which was seconded by Lisa Castleberry. The motion carried unanimously. Trevour Kelleher volunteered to take Minutes for this meeting.

### 4. Formal Business

#### A. **2023-158** Chairman's Report – *Phyllis Owens*

Julie Barwig, Environmental Services Director facilitated the updates in this meeting.

- Maggie McGarity reminded the Board about the expectation of making an annual donation. Julie Barwig shared that the donation portal on the website has been updated to allow monthly donations in addition to one-time donations.

- The Secretary position remains vacant.
- Board Recruitment: There are two at-large positions open. This will be shared in the next newsletter. Board members were reminded to share any interested people to the Executive Committee. Olivia Wise commented that any citizen can join a Committee and to refer such inquiries to the Committee chair or, lacking a Chair, to the entire Committee.

**B. 2023-159 Secretary's Report – *Trevour Kelleher***

**C. 2023-116 Finance – *Maggie McGarity***

Maggie McGarity presented the Treasurer's Report. The Financials were sent in an email prior to the meeting. The Report was filed for the Audit Committee.

Shawn Garcia asked about the availability of funds to make a \$5,000.00 contribution to the Campbell Middle School project to renovate and beautify their quad. The project is requesting donations of \$80,000.00 from the community with intent to complete the project by Spring 2024. Maggie McGarity identified that the Contributing Income is currently - \$5,932.00 in contract to the proposed income; however, there are \$24,182.00 in the Restricted Garden Tour Grant Funds. This request is above the \$1,000.00 maximum grant per school. There was open Board discussion about how to approach re-allocating funds for such a large request and the implications to current grantees.

Trevour Kelleher made a motion for Shawn Garcia, Maggie McGarity and interested Board members to draft an amendment for the School Grant policy for consideration at a future Board meeting; seconded by Lisa Castleberry. The motion passed unanimously.

Tripti Gadgade suggested that memorial plaque of our donation should be requested if grant is provided.

Julie Barwig requested additional funds on behalf of the Staff:

1. \$180.00 to purchase Mailchimp software. Hilary Scott inquired about selection criteria for software and offered to assist in assessment. Julie Barwig clarified that request was for remainder of 2023. The two agreed to work together when considering software solutions for 2024. It was noted that these costs are far lower than typical customer relationship management tools used in corporate enterprises. Maggie McGarity made the motion to approve the funds which was seconded by Lisa Castleberry. The motion passed unanimously.
2. \$110.00 to purchase a new branded tablecloth. Nell Robinson made the motion to approve the funds which was seconded by Lisa Castleberry. The motion passed unanimously.
3. \$2,000.00 to the Recycling Center expense budget to allow for higher hauling fees due to increased receipts, especially glass. Lisa Castleberry made the motion to approve the funds which was seconded by Chris Knight. The motion passed unanimously.

**D. 2023-161 Old Business - *Phyllis Owens***

**E. 2023-162 New Business - *Phyllis Owens***

Chris Knight presented information about native plants and their importance to a sustainable ecosystem. Highlights from the presentation are:

- Most suburban areas lack native plants
- Adverse impact to pollinators and wildlife from use of non-native plant series
- Doug Tallamy is a leading academic in this field
- Roswell in 2021 resolved to use majority of native plants in all city lands and to eradicate invasive species
- Chris Knight suggested the Board consider two possible actions: 1. Pursue city action and/or legislation similar to Roswell, and 2. Explore Bee City designation for Smyrna. Several Board members suggested they could connect with their ward representative. Shawn Garcia and Olivia Wise suggested the Board members show up together at a future City Council meeting when Chris Knight will make his proposal. The date is not yet determined while Chris Knight introduces the idea with City staff and Council Members ahead of a formal proposal.

**F. 2023-119 Committee Reports – *Phyllis Owens***

Phyllis Owens noted that Committees can have members other than Board members as needed.

1. **Garden Tour Committee:** Julie Barwig and Neil Robinson shared that updates are pending for the next Committee meeting.

2. **Education Committee:** Hilary Scott updated the Board that the Committee is crafting more storytelling about grant experiences. They are considering how Board members could be more involved with grant recipients during and after their projects.

Two grant proposals were submitted for approval: School Grant submitted by Joseph Wang for \$1,000.00 at Argyle Elementary and a Teacher Grant submitted by Amy Gilbert of Griffin Middle School. Betty Williams made motion to approve the School Grant for \$1,000.00 to Argyle Elementary which was submitted by Joseph Wang; seconded by Lisa Castleberry. The Teacher Grant was not approved because Hilary Scott requested more information for clarification of the amount requested and further details on the project proposal.

3. **Pollinator Garden Committee:** Chris Knight provided update that the Committee is continuing to select plants and other preparatory aspects of the design while City and Budget alignments are completed. The budget is not yet defined but likely to be above the earlier estimate of \$15,000.00.

4. **Audit:** No updates.

5. **Fundraising and Grant Committee:** Trevour Kelleher provided the update. The Committee identified primary focus on strengthening fundraising skills of the entire Board (to help each Board member identify, solicit and thank our donors using the Fundraising cycle Identify-Cultivate-Solicit-Recognize-Stewardship)

- We will provide a learning session at the October Board meeting. This provides guidance in time to practice the skills during Thank-a-thon late October / early November before Georgia Giving Day which occurs after Thanksgiving. We have heard several Board members are uncomfortable with asking directly so we will share tools and tips to increase confidence in requesting donations from individuals or businesses. Remember fundraising is the responsibility of everyone on Board!

- We continue to draft goals and work plans for 2024; our themes are: 1. Strengthen fundraising skills of the Board, 2. Fund the continuing operations of KSB, and 3. Provide incremental funding for new or expanded initiatives (to be defined by Board).

- While we have only about 100 donors per year, we're on fertile ground: we know of 900 leads (qualifying criteria: receiving newsletter) and 500 - 600 prospects (qualifying criteria: email / social media engagement). Strong number of volunteers as well. Committee

recently joined SBA networking event to re-introduce KSB, thank prior donors/volunteers and seek partnership in future endeavors. KSB invited for free table at Business Expo organized by Gary Hill on September 23 → who could attend?

- Ask of each Committee to identify their financial requests and include potential new ideas so Fundraising and Grant committee can set our targets before November Board Meeting. We considered revising the fundraising responsibilities of the Board of Directors to be more specific.
- Share our expectations that 2024 SMART goals should be aligned with Board by November meeting (last of the year)
- Data amendment: we asked if data integration into Salesforce could be completed by the end of Q1 2024.

**G. 2023-120 Director's Report – Julie Barwig**

Julie Barwig spoke about the following:

- Danielle Stanley started August 22 as new Program Assistant working approximately 15 hours per week. She is able to work Saturdays opening up the potential for more weekend events.
- City is exploring two-year partnership agreement with [Trees Atlanta](#). This would sponsor 80 trees for cost of \$23,000.00.
- At the upcoming September 18, 2023 City Council meeting, Liz Davis will be recognized for her award from Keep America Beautiful. All Board members are requested to attend in support of Liz!

**H. 2023-059 Coordinator's Report – Eloise**

Eloise Holland presented her report to the Board:

- Volunteer survey results
- Jonquil bulbs to go on sale in October
- She shared two design options for the Festival Banner
- Upcoming events

**5. Approval of Minutes**

**A. MIN2023-094 Approval of the August 8, 2023 Keep Smyrna Beautiful Meeting Minutes.**

Boardmember Christ Knight made a motion to approve item MIN2023-094, the August 8, 2023 Keep Smyrna Beautiful meeting minutes; seconded by Boardmember Hilary Scott.

The motion to approve carried with the following vote:

<b>Aye:</b>	10 – Garcia, Castleberry, Williams, McGarity, Gadgade, Knight, Scott, Wise, Kelleher, Robinson
<b>Nay:</b>	0 – None
<b>Recuse:</b>	0 – None

**6. Other Business / Staff Comment**

**A. 2023-166 Upcoming Events:**

- Community Cleanups: September 20<sup>th</sup>
  - Storm Drain Marking: September 15<sup>th</sup> & October 12<sup>th</sup>
  - Monthly Recycling Center Tours: September 15<sup>th</sup> and October 20<sup>th</sup>
  - Document Shredding: September 9<sup>th</sup>
  - Rivers Alive: September 23<sup>rd</sup>
  - Litter Free Events: October 7<sup>th</sup>
  - Crafts & Drafts: October 28<sup>th</sup> & 29<sup>th</sup>
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- ALL attend City Council meeting on September 18 in support of award recognizing board member Liz Davis.
  - Shawn Garcia, Maggie McGarity and interested Board members to draft an amendment to the School Grant policy for consideration in future Board meeting.
  - ALL Board members to help identify applicants for Secretary role and inform the Executive Committee and Julie Barwig.
  - ALL Committees to identify their financial requests including potential new ideas to the Fundraising and Grant committee before October Board meeting to allow them to set 2024 targets before November Board Meeting.
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- (COMPLETE) Julie Barwig:
    - Share Secretary role description to Board members to seek volunteers
    - Seek recycling collection data from Public Works
  - (IN PROGRESS) ALL: Decide who will volunteer for Board position.
  - (COMPLETE) Phyllis Owens: Share list of available grants to Fundraising Committee

## 7. Adjournment

The September 12, 2023 Keep Smyrna Beautiful Board of Directors meeting was adjourned at 8:00 PM.

Facilities are provided throughout City Hall for convenience of persons with disabilities.

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**THIS MEETING WAS PROPERLY NOTICED AND POSTED AT THE FOLLOWING LOCATIONS IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE NOTICING STANDARDS AS OUTLINED IN O.C.G.A. 50-14-3:**

**The City of Smyrna website – [www.smyrnaga.gov](http://www.smyrnaga.gov)  
City Hall, 2800 King Street SE, Notice Boards**