



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

2/13/24 – Zoom Meeting due to anticipated winter storm

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

Absent: Sam Fiore

Guests: Brian Donnelly, Maria Connell, Andy Varela

The meeting was called to order at 7:01PM.

Agenda:

1. Call to Order 7PM
2. Mission Statement
3. Approval of January 2024 Minutes
4. Old Business:
 - MOU Changes for 2024 update
 - Artbox Sponsorship (Guest, Brian Donnelly)
 - Great Salem Cleanup
5. Sub-Committee Reports:
 - Lady of Salem (Mary Ellen)
 - Traffic Island (Charlene & Sam)
 - Monthly Cleanups (Kim & Zach)
6. New Business:
 - SAFE February 28th, “Trash Talk in Salem”
 - Licensing Board Meeting Monday 2/26, NIP Bottle Ban Discussion
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.

Charlene made a motion to approve the January meeting's minutes and Jason seconded the motion. The minutes were approved unanimously.

Old business:

MOU Changes

A smaller group met to discuss the committee's recommendations in late January and they have put together their proposal. The proposal was shared during the meeting and edits were made to wording, page numbers, and removing duplicate items. The last thing to be added to the document is a list of planting tips to add to the final page and then Janelle can send a copy of the revised document to Beth Renard for her feedback. This version can be used for new and returning sponsors and the plan is to get the letter out to all potential sponsors by February 20th.

It was confirmed that we'd like all sponsors to have their gardens planted by May 31st (in line with previous years), that the mulch will be provided by the sponsors, not the city, and must be dark mulch. We will also encourage the sponsors to bring in native plants wherever possible.

Artbox sponsorship - Brian Donnelly

Brian shared a few rough sketches of the electrical box he is proposing. The initial sketches contained a trellis with a number of native plants and a Lady of Salem (Jenny Lind - a Swedish Opera singer) with a nightingale singing to her cat in an old theater. He is going to try and work in a message to the community to try and keep the community clean and will work on the 4th side as well. Initial feedback from the committee was very positive and budget was approved in the last meeting.

Next steps:

- Brian is going to work on finalizing his proposal in the next 2 weeks and will share his sketches with the committee
- Janelle is reaching out to Julie to try and get the Public Arts Commission's March agenda because we will need to get their approval before moving forward

Great Salem Cleanup

The Great Salem Cleanup is confirmed for April 20th from 10-12PM with the volunteer event happening at East Regiment afterwards. We sent an email out to the Salem Chamber of Commerce looking for sponsors to help with any food or gift cards to be raffled off at the volunteer event. We haven't had a great response yet from businesses and are working with Salem Main Streets to see if they have any other recommendations.

Next steps:

- Kim to reach out to the tour company owners to see if they want to make a donation (Mary Ellen has had success with them in the past and they care a great deal about the community)
- Kim and Janelle to finalize locations so we can identify captains and then create a registration form
- Zach to work on a flyer with a QR code on it

- The committee to consider doing a kid-designated option in a safer location and to consider buying a few grabbers with our budget to raffle off as prizes

Sub-Committee Reports:

Lady of Salem (Mary Ellen)

The 2024 sponsors are Stardust Salem (Pequot House) and Witch City Tours who are currently working on their figureheads. We also got a new addition of Black Cat Curiosity Shop who will be placing a figurehead in their maritime themed window on Washington Street to be seen all year long.

On Thursday, Feb 22nd, Mary Ellen and Sam will go down to refurbish and paint the several figureheads that need some updates. Tentatively, we will be putting them up during the last week of May - Mary Ellen is working with DPW and Katie to finalize the date.

Mary Ellen shared a great video with the group and encouraged all to watch the full version when possible - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=g1cNpmKqm7s>

Next Steps:

- Mary Ellen and Brooke to continue working on the website to try and get as much information up there as they can

Traffic Island (Charlene/Sam)

No items to discuss outside of the MOU updates discussed earlier

Monthly cleanups (Kim/Zach)

We had a successful cleanup on January 14th with about 32 participants helping to pick up ~262lbs of trash including 7lbs of recycling. Our next cleanup will be on February 25th in Palmer Cove that currently has 16 people signed up so far and we will do another push. Our March 24th cleanup is being advertised as a part of zero waste week and already has several people signed up.

New Business:

SAFE February 28th, “Trash Talk in Salem”

Bonnie from SAFE invited Janelle to attend an event called “Trash Talk in Salem”. They invited Henry as they think it will be a great opportunity for him to share what the Beautification Committee is doing/has planned in the community. This should allow us to reach new audiences we may not be capturing already to get more volunteers. The chairperson for the SalemRecycles Committee will also be a part of the event sharing all of the initiatives SalemRecycles is working on. SAFE has created an event on Feb 28th and there is space for about 30 attendees but it will also be aired on SATV and Youtube which will allow us to edit the video and share it on our social channels.

Licensing Board Meeting Monday 2/26, NIP Bottle Ban Discussion

The licensing board will be getting together on the 26th to discuss whether or not we should ban the sale of nips in Salem. Anyone who has gone to the cleanups knows that they are all over the place and there are a lot of feelings on both sides of this topic. We strongly recommend that people on the committee attend the meeting and share their opinion. It would be good to think about if we want to do a committee endorsement depending on the committee’s stance. Jeremy suggested we try and find out how some of the taxes would work and if we could get tax money back to the BComm for supplies to help with the trash cleanups we run.

Other items in progress:

TikToks/Videos

Andy Varela is happy to help get a video started in the spring to show off the traffic island program and to help with the litter cleanups. We had talked to him at a previous cleanup to try and get younger kids to see the importance of cleaning their community and are excited to also have an opportunity to show off the traffic islands.

Sandwich board signs

During the last meeting, we discussed coming up with a few designs and an A-frame sign. Jason shared a sandwich board that he found online and a few options for designs with the committee over email.

Next steps:

- The committee members should take a look at the proposal and be prepared to talk about this in the March meeting.

Meetings with other groups

The Point Neighborhood Association meeting is in March - need to confirm we will still be on the agenda. The Neighborhood Improvement Advisory Council meeting - Janelle to follow up

Charlene made a motion to adjourn at 8:43PM. Zach seconded the motion and it was a unanimous vote.