



**Meeting of the Beautification and Public
Art Committee
Held at the Elk River City Hall
Monday, August 18, 2025**

Members Present: Committee Member Deb Hjermsstad, Committee Member Melissa McAlpine, Committee Member Ryan Hardin, Councilmember J. Brian Calva, Councilmember Cory Grupa

Members Absent: Committee Member Nic Hahn

Staff Present: Economic Development Specialist Josh Mollan

Others Present: Zanielle Foxcroft and Kelli Sweeny (Wild Botanical Atelier)

1. CALL MEETING TO ORDER

Pursuant to due call and notice thereof, the meeting was called to order at 4:32 p.m. by Josh.

2. INTRODUCTIONS

Introductions were made.

3. CONSIDER AGENDA

Moved by Deb and seconded by Ryan to approve the agenda. Motion carried 5-0.

4. CONSIDER MINUTES

4.1 07-21-2025 BPA Minutes

Moved by Ryan and seconded by Melissa to approve the July 21, 2025 Meeting Minutes. Motion carried 5-0.

5. GENERAL BUSINESS

5.1 Wild Botanical Atelier Presentation

Zanielle and Kelli, local artists, presented Wild Botanical Atelier (WBA) artist-in-residence proposal.

Cory asked what size space they are looking for.

Kelli advised that they haven't decided on specific needs yet, but a space around 1,000 sf could be ideal. She asked how the city could support WBA as they approach Central Minnesota Arts Board for grants.

Josh advised that if EDA supported this initiative, it would take time to grow funding, and not without a proper plan.

Josh asked EDA and Council representatives Cory and J. Brian if this initiative is best fit for the EDA or Council.

Cory thought that the EDA would be best suited based on the current mission of the board.

J. Brian asked about current availability of downtown spaces and lease prices.

Zanielle and Kelli shared some of their botanical art works.

Josh asked Zanielle and Kelli to elaborate on how the resident artists would rotate.

Kelli shared that WBA would start as the artists-in-residence for an agreed upon time and then overlap with the incoming artist to mentor. She also suggested a revolving fund from ticket sales to go back into the space to fund equipment, supplies, or free workshops with the schools. She advised that some of their personal equipment could be stored at the space and the city would own the space itself, the rest of the supplies, and materials. She thought that there wouldn't be a need for purchases of expensive and specific artist tools, however, if future artists would need those, it could be considered by the board. She also advised that after their residency, they could afford and move into their own space.

Mel shared that the proposal excites her and reflected that downtown used to have an arts organization.

Deb is also excited about the opportunity and thinks downtown would be an ideal location for this venture.

Zanielle shared that connecting with MontiArts could be a good next step to see what is working for their arts program.

Cory suggested tightening up the proposal and providing some hard costs before approaching the EDA.

5.2 Garden Gem Awards

Josh shared that the judging panel visited the properties to score the nominees.

The highest scoring properties in each category are as follows:

Single Family (before 2000) - Sando 20753 York 54.6 pts
Single Family (2000 or later) - Quesenberry 10103 192nd Ln 49.4 pts
Commercial - Plaisted Companies 11555 205th Ave 50.6 pts
Neighborhood - Handke Center 1170 Main St 46.0 pts

Mel suggested considering different creativity scoring criteria for the commercial category.

J. Brian suggested looking at a unique category for properties like Varty's which is a natural prairie. He also asked how this program is marketed in the off-season.

Josh advised that the committee can review the policy at a future meeting to consider more changes.

Deb shared that this first season of this program slow-rolled due to when the program was approved.

Josh advised that he had not heard back from Two Rivers Monuments so he has connected with an outfit out of St Louis Park for the personalized garden keepsake. Sign frames are ordered and will be put at each winning property. Photos will be taken of the winners' properties next week.

Deb asked if the committee could acknowledge the city gardener.

Ryan asked if recognition could also be made for the judges.

5.3 General Updates

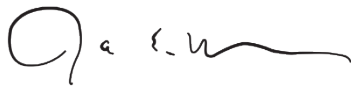
Ryan asked how many nominations have been received for the Beautification Award.

Josh shared that there have been two nominations: Price Homes, and Thunderstruck Exteriors. He expects the Chamber to self-nominate before the nomination period is up. He also advised that he will post an ad in the Chamber e-newsletter for a last marketing push.

6. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, Josh adjourned the meeting at 5:22 p.m.

Minutes prepared by Josh Mollan.



Josh Mollan, Recording Secretary



Tina Allard, City Clerk