



COMMUNITY APPEARANCE COMMISSION

Monday September 25, 2023 – 4:00
p.m. Hickory City Hall

2ND FLOOR
PLANNING DEPARTMENT
FLAG CONFERENCE
ROOM

Commission Members	
Vacant (Ward 1)	Sharon Crosby (At-large)
Cliff Moone (Ward 2) (Chair)	Tony Jackson (At-large)
Daria Jackson (Ward 3)	Vacant (At-large)
Delores Deal (Ward 4)	Vacant (Planning Commission)
Nancy Zagaroli (Ward 5) (Vice-Chair)	Vacant (Youth Council)
Doug Dickson (Ward 6)	

----- Agenda-----

1. Welcome and Call to Order.
2. Approval of the Agenda.
3. Approval of Minutes from August 28, 2023 regular meeting
4. Discussion with HDDA Executive Director.
5. Beautifying Hickory Recognition Project and Beatification Awards Planning.
6. Open discussion of Tony Jackson's Suggestions from 6/23/23.
7. Other
8. Adjourn

**Community Appearance Commission
Board & Subcommittee Assignments
October 2022**

Tree Board / Beautification Awards

- Nancy Zagaroli
- Sharon Crosby
- Tony Jackson
- Bill Richter

Litter Reduction

- Daria Jackson
- Delores Deal
- Cliff Moone
- Doug Dickson

Mission Statement

To enhance and improve the visual quality
and aesthetic characteristics of the city.

CAC Powers and Duties

The City of Hickory holds all public meetings in accessible rooms as charged by the Hickory City Council. Special requests for accommodations should be submitted to the City Manager's Office (828-323-7412) at least 48 hours before the scheduled meeting.

FY 2023 / 2024

Community Appearance Commission - Grant Budget

Applicant	Location	Community Appearance	City Council Approval	Paid Out	Total Investment
Debra Moore	1054 3rd Ave Dr. NW	\$7,500.00	Yes		\$15,546.81
Daniel Dixon	1070 3rd AVE Dr. NW	\$3,750.00	Yes		\$8,200.00
Grant Totals Awarded		\$11,250.00		Total	\$23,746.81
FY 2023/2024 Grant Budget		\$40,000.00			
Unencumbered Funds Remaining		\$28,750.00			

Community Appearance Commission
Monday, August 28, 2023, 4:00 pm

A regular meeting of the City of Hickory's Community Appearance Commission (CAC) was held on Monday, August 28, 2023, 4:00 pm, in the Flag Conference Room at City Hall.

Members Present: Cliff Moone, Delores Deal, Sharon Crosby, Nancy Zagaroli, and Tony Jackson

Members Excused: none

Members Absent: Doug Dickson and Daria Jackson

Guests: Dan Dixon

Others Present: Planner Wilson Elliott, Staff Liaison, and Minutes Clerk Anne Starnes

A quorum was present.

Welcome & Call to Order: Cliff Moone, Chair, called the meeting to order at 4:05 pm and welcomed everyone.

Introductions: Mr. Moone introduced City Planner Wilson Elliott, the Commission's new staff liaison. Mr. Elliott introduced himself.

Items not on the Agenda: Mr. Moone said the planned discussion with Amy Ogle, Executive Director of the Hickory Downtown Development Association (HDDA) would be postponed. She planned to attend, but had a last minute conflict. Tony Jackson will invite her to the September 25th meeting.

Members discussed their preference of either receiving the agenda packet by mail or at the meetings. Members present agreed they do not need it mailed, so hard copies will now be provided at meetings. Staff will contact the absent members and ask their preference.

Mr. Elliott said Youth Council member Addison Cox was recently appointed to the CAC. She has a school conflict today and in September, but plans to attend the October meeting. Mr. Moone requested Mr. Elliott send her e-mail address to everyone.

Agenda Approval: Nancy Zagaroli moved, seconded by Sharon Crosby, to approve the August 28, 2023 meeting agenda as presented, with the exception of the HDDA discussion (item #5). The motion carried unanimously.

Approval of July 24, 2023 Minutes: Minutes from the previous regular meeting in July were distributed to members in advance. No corrections, additions, or deletions to the minutes were stated. Nancy Zagaroli moved, seconded by Sharon Crosby, to approve the July 24, 2023 minutes as presented. The motion carried unanimously.

Consideration of Community Appearance Grant Application: Dan Dixon submitted an application for a Community Appearance Grant, for improvements to property located at 1070 3rd Avenue Drive NW (Old Lenoir Road), the future OLLE Art Walk. Plum Pretty currently operates their business in the building. If he receives the grant, Mr. Dixon would use the funds to enhance the building's front view, including updating the awnings and adding stonework along the bottom and sides of the front pane glass windows and doors.

The remaining grant budget was \$32,500. A copy of Mr. Dixon's grant application was included in the agenda packet, including quotes, a current photo of the building, and a rendering of the building's future appearance. The

total project cost is \$8,200 and two (2) estimates were provided for the work listed. Staff advised that if the Commission moves to approve the grant at the lower of the estimates, the request would qualify for a \$3,750 grant.

The applicant was present to discuss his project. Mr. Dixon said he purchased the property 20 years ago, as his first commercial investment. He discussed his tenant history and current plans to improve the building's appearance, referring to photos in the agenda packet. Members asked questions and commented on his plans.

Members reviewed the grant application privately and scored each criteria category on the checklist. The total score put the request in the "high" category, with 27 points.

Tony Jackson moved, seconded by Nancy Zagaroli, to recommend approval of Dan Dixon's Appearance Grant application in the requested amount of \$3,750, for improvements to property located at 1070 3rd Avenue Drive NW, based on discussion and the criteria review. The motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Dixon returned and thanked the members. The grant application now goes to City Council for approval, and Mr. Elliott will contact him to discuss the contract.

Other – Ms. Zagaroli noted Century Furniture received an Appearance Grant over a year. She recently viewed their property and was uncertain what changes were made with the grant funds. Likely Cal Overby would know, and Mr. Elliott will request an update.

Discussion with HDDA Executive Director: This agenda item was moved to the September meeting.

Beautifying Hickory Recognition Project: Members discussed recent frustrations related to implementing the new "Beautifying Hickory" program, using yard signs to encourage and recognize residents' efforts to beautify their properties. Mr. Moone asked that members be given clearer guidance in the future, including advice on proper protocols to follow when implementing future projects. Mr. Elliott offered his support, saying he would help in any way needed going forward.

Prior to the meeting, Mr. Elliott inquired about the signage situation and learned the following:

1. Legality of posting yard signs – It appears the proposed yard signs are illegal under the City's current Sign Ordinance. Management has no problem with the design or recognizing residents with an award, but technically, the City ordinance does not allow for putting signs in residents' yards. Posting political signs is a different topic.

Mr. Moone noted the members' plan was to first contact each resident, taking time to explain the program and award to them, and request permission to post the yard sign. Members need to understand the City ordinance, so they can follow it correctly in the future. Mr. Moone requested Mr. Elliott share the specific ordinance with them.

2. Newton's Yard of the Month program – The City of Newton has a similar program, and it might not be a good idea to duplicate it. In Newton, a group of people chooses a yard to recognize from the submissions received. At times, some of Newton's residents have reacted negatively when not chosen for the recognition.

Mr. Moone said Granite Falls has a similar program, also, as do many other cities. He clarified that Hickory's program would be different, since no public award nominations would be involved. Also, Hickory would not be recognizing a single Yard of the Month. The CAC's plan is to print 20 signs, and the number of properties being recognized in a month would vary, including recognizing no properties in some months.

Ms. Zagaroli said CAC members would nominate residents for the award; residents will not nominate themselves, and it will be publicly noted that Commission members chose the award recipients. Adding a line of small print to the yard sign was suggested, stating the award recipient was chosen by the City of Hickory's Community

Appearance Commission. Negative comments could still be made by residents who did and did not receive an award, but members accepted that fact.

Mr. Moone said the CAC would keep a list of award recipients for future reference, to avoid duplication.

3. Focus on the Litter Quitter Program – City management encouraged CAC members to focus on the Litter Quitter program, pushing it into the schools and seeking involvement of local groups. Fall is a busy time, with the Oktoberfest and Christmas events coming up soon, and the various new trails/walks are opening or nearing completion. City management wants Hickory to look its best.

Members agreed their plans include continuing to advance the Litter Quitter program, but they cannot promote the program alone; involvement is needed from other City departments. Also, the Beautifying Hickory program would mainly be a spring and summer effort, since properties would not be chosen year-round.

Mr. Moone discussed recent requests made by the CAC, such as their need for more Litter Quitter stickers and other materials to use promoting the program. Ms. Zagaroli shared a small Litter Quitter sticker, saying members had asked for enlarged stickers to put on City-owned trash receptacles. She was advised it is in the City's plan, and Mr. Moone requested Mr. Elliott provide them an update on the plan.

Mr. Jackson noted the fiscal year workplan states the Commission's programs and projects during each year, along with the budget provided. He suggested members review their current workplan and begin discussing what to propose next year. He noted attending a recent meeting with City management staff, where he discussed being a new downtown resident and suggesting they address the fact that downtown Hickory is becoming more residential, in addition to being pedestrian and commercial. Becoming more residential will continue increasing as the two other apartment projects are completed in downtown. He said traffic will also increase and the downtown crosswalks are already dangerous. Not only are drivers not sensitive to pedestrians crossing the streets, but their sight lines are also blocked by parked cars and the sides of buildings. Mr. Jackson said he had also addressed the potential for increased litter, since more people living downtown likely means more litter. There is also an unacceptable level of noise at night in downtown, and he had suggested the City might need to adjust their police patrol patterns. He said management staff had appreciated his input on traffic, litter, crosswalks and noise levels, and were very receptive to having their awareness raised.

Members acknowledged there are many steps involved in getting things done. They agreed if they know the process the City requires for approving programs and projects, they are willing to do the work needed to implement them and accomplish their goals. Mr. Jackson again suggested members begin discussing next year's work plan now, revising it to include a redefinition and expansion of the Commission's role. Mr. Moone requested Mr. Elliott provide the current workplan to members for discussion at the next meeting. Each month, the to-date grant budget expenses are included in the agenda packet, and Mr. Moone requested staff provide the entire CAC budget for their review.

Members discussed their perceived role as Commission members appointed by City Council, and expressed sincere intentions to serve the City honorably in carrying out their mission and goals.

2023 Beautification Awards – Next month, Mr. Moone and members will discuss the upcoming Beautification Awards. He and Delores Deal have discussed possible changes and additions to the program, some of which could involve the CAC budget. This past year, the awards presentation was held in January, instead of the fall, which had actually worked out very well.

Discussion of Tony Jackson's E-mail Suggestions from 6/23/23: With the meeting coming to an end, discussion of Mr. Jackson's June e-mail was postponed to next month. Last night, he reviewed his suggestions from June, and added the following focal points: cleanup, beautify, educate, support, and acknowledge. He plans to prepare a new document for discussion next month, combining his thoughts from June through the present.

Members agreed their discussion with HDDA Executive Director Amy Ogle would require the majority of the allotted meeting time, so possibly a special called meeting is needed, at City Hall or possibly outdoors. Regarding the location, Mr. Moone said being able to hear well was important to consider. Mr. Jackson will share possible dates and locations with him.

Other Business: Mr. Elliott said Communications Department staff recently shared their new Litter Quitter brochure ideas with him, which could be distributed to Hickory's schools. He will discuss it with them further and update members next month. Commission members agreed they want to be involved in the City's plan to promote the Litter Quitter program in schools.

Next Meeting: The next regular meeting is scheduled for Monday, September 25, 2023, 4:00 pm at City Hall.

Adjourn: Tony Jackson moved, seconded by Sharon Crosby, to adjourn. There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 5:20 pm.

Cliff Moone, Chair
Community Appearance Commission

Anne Starnes, Minutes Clerk
City of Hickory