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| **cityseal1**KIMBERLEY DRISCOLL MAYOR | CITY OF SALEM, MASSACHUSETTS**Beautification Committee**98 Washington StreetSALEM, MA 01970 |      |

**Beautification Committee Meeting 6/14/22**

**Present:** Mary Ellen Halliwell, Sam Fiore, Brooke Nagle, Micaela Guglielmi
**Guests:** Charlene Bailey, Ariana Lema-Driscoll,
**Absent:** Jeremy Baker, Sandi Power (technical difficulties, she tried to get in), Ariana’s neighbor

 **Traffic Island Review**

* This has s been a busy month doing heavy cleanup of the sponsored islands (those paying for maintenance), of which there about nine plus the unsponsored Hosta Gardens on the Washington St. sidewalk or tweaking them to keep them up to par. Riley Plaza, the Hosta Gardens, and Temperance Park have been mulched, Temperance courtesy of Katie Nieman at the DPW. Several volunteers volunteered at the RGG median on Washington Street to help Sam with the trenching. The median was mulched by RCG following.
* We have a new sponsor, the Odd Fellows, to accompany SSU at Riley Plaza. They are a philanthropic organization, similar to the Masonic Lodge, founded in 1780 in England.
* Riley Plaza, and Temperance Park lawns have been limed to help green them up. Acid rain is a big problem in the northeast and anemic, sparse, and weedy lawns are an obvious symptom. Testing is likely superfluous.
* Riley Plaza Trees have had extensive work on clearing away the grass and over-high soil lines to a circumference of about 2’, with the help of. Tree commissioner Darleen Melis. The trees surrounds were then mulched as were the trees in front of the post office, after first clearing out the surrounding grass and weeds in the tree wells. The Post Office overseer, Mr. Tracchia, has been requested to have its landscaper continue the weeding and mulching going forward; he will put in a request. Many compliments received from passersby.
* There is an ongoing problem with root suckers growing around all the trees at Riley Plaza, even extending out into the lawns. We try to keep them pruned back severely, as recommended. All the trees in the Riley Plaza parking lot as well are severely affected. with the suckers growing up the sides of the trees. This severely impacts growth, even survival, of the trees. This should be corrected. We notice how stunted they all are.
* A new responsibility of the traffic Island volunteers has been the placement of sponsor signs, the DPW allowing that it is short staffed. This is not considered part of this program’s volunteer gardening and maintenance responsibilities and shall not be going forward. The DPW is very supportive, picking up our yard waste bags, and helping where they can. Sign placement needs to find someone responsible for it.
* Note that a few signs that needed to be repaired at Gorilla’s have not yet been placed but will be this week.
* Another concern is that sponsors who pay for watering are only getting water if and when there is irrigation that works. Those who depended on watering trucks twice a week, as still promised in the MOU’s, have not been getting it. This should be corrected either by return of their $75 fee, giving them a credit for the following year, or by providing the watering. Going forward, the MOU’s should not promise or charge for watering where there is not irrigation. Also keeping the irrigation system in repair has been an ongoing problem and needs to continue to be seriously addressed.
* There was a discussion about the importance of watering. Micaela stated she will call Ray Jodin tomorrow to discuss if the cemetery watering truck can be made available for the islands. Ariana emailed the Mayor requesting a meeting. Mary Ellen wondering if the City had a plan/vision for the island and several other expressed concerns that all the hard work will go to waste if they are not kept up with.
* We note that several gardens, e.g., Mullins and Mulley’s, St. Jean’s Credit Union, Dunkin’ Donuts, have not been planted at the time their sign was placed last week. They will be called. One sponsor, Boys & Girls Club, did not sign up and will be called to be sure it wasn’t an oversight.
* A severe problem has arisen of witch grass choking out the perennials at the Lafayette St. T.I. and the SSNA T.I. at Forest River Park. This requires extensive digging out and replanting and is very difficult, almost impossible, to completely eliminate. It is being addressed by the sponsors, SSNA and sponsor Polly Wilbert

 **Lady of Salem**

* Ladies installed on Lamp posts and will remain up until early November. Thank you, Salem DPW & PEM crew and Sam Fiore.
* Missing figurehead in Old Town Hall found at Pioneer Village. To be returned to same location in vestibule of OTH. May need to have another plaque made.
* PEM "Sale" store on Essex St. may install the Boys and Girls Club Lady inside store for street viewing...TBC.
* A map of figurehead locations being made by Brooke. Once complete a rack card will be designed and printed.
* A sincere thank you to Micaela for all her efforts in moving our public art exhibition forward. We wish the best in her new position!

**Other**

* We may do a volunteer appreciation pot luck in July instead of a formal meeting. Dave Knowlton or the Business Manager from the Engineering office will be responsible for hosting the next meeting if someone is not hired for Micaela’s position.
* Ariana started a google drive to share contacts and other important info.

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**Know your rights under the Open Meeting Law M.G.L. c. 30A §18-25**

**and City Ordinance Sections 2-2028 through 2-2033**