



**COMMUNITY APPEARANCE COMMISSION**  
**Monday, October 26, 2026 –**  
**4:00 p.m. Hickory City Hall**

**2<sup>ND</sup> FLOOR**  
**PLANNING DEPARTMENT FLAG**  
**CONFERENCE ROOM**

| Commission Members            |                                   |
|-------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Ginger Bishop (Ward 1)        | Sharon Crosby (At-large)          |
| Vacant (Ward 2)               | Anne Brock (At-large)             |
| Bruce Hooker (Ward 3) (Chair) | Ed Fickle (At-large) (Vice-Chair) |
| Delores Deal (Ward 4)         | Vacant (Planning Commission)      |
| Ryan Young (Ward 5)           | Ella Barkley (Youth Council)      |
| Doug Dickson (Ward 6)         |                                   |

**----- Agenda-----**

1. Welcome and Call to Order
2. Approval of the Agenda
3. Approval of September 28 Minutes
4. Subcommittee Reports
5. Yearly Awards Planning
6. New Business
7. Adjourn

## **Community Appearance Commission Board & Subcommittee Assignments 2026**

### **Tree Board / Beautification Awards**

- **Sharon Crosby**
- **Delores Deal**
- **Anne Brock**

### **Litter Reduction**

- **Delores Deal**
- **Doug Dickson**
- **Ed Fickle**
- **Ella Barkley**

### **Gateways**

- **Bruce Hooker**
- **Ginger Bishop**
- **Delores Deal**
- **Ryan Young**

## *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 2025 / 2026

Community Appearance Commission - Grant Budget

| Applicant                    | Location       | Community Appearance | City Council Approval | Paid Out | Total Investment |
|------------------------------|----------------|----------------------|-----------------------|----------|------------------|
| Zack Cranford                |                | \$7,500.00           | Yes                   | Yes      | \$15,200.00      |
| Tim Herndon                  | Elks Lodge     | \$10,000.00          | Yes                   |          | \$29,904.00      |
| Crystal Rogers               | 310 4th St. SW | \$5,790.00           | Yes                   |          | \$15,080.00      |
|                              |                |                      |                       |          |                  |
|                              |                |                      |                       |          |                  |
|                              |                |                      |                       |          |                  |
|                              |                |                      |                       |          |                  |
| Grant Totals Awarded         |                | \$23,290.00          |                       | Total    | \$60,184.00      |
| FY 2026/2027 Grant Budget    |                | \$40,000.00          |                       |          |                  |
| Unencumbered Funds Remaining |                | \$16,710.00          |                       |          |                  |

**Hickory Community Appearance Commission**  
**Monday, September 28, 2026, at 4:00 pm**

A regular meeting of the Community Appearance Commission (CAC) was held on Monday, September 28, 2026, 4:00 pm, in the Map Conference Room at City Hall.

**Members Present:** Bruce Hooker, Ed Fickle, Ginger Bishop, Sharon Crosby, Delores Deal, Anne Brock, Ella Barkley, and Ryan Young

**Members Excused:** Doug Dickson

**Members Absent:** none

**Others Present:** City Planner Wilson Elliott and Minutes Clerk Anne Starnes

A quorum was present.

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

**Administer New Member Oath of Office & Introductions:** Mr. Hooker thanked new members Ella Barkley (Hickory Youth Council) and Anne Brock (At-Large) for joining the Commission. Ms. Barkley is currently a junior at St. Stephens High School. She has been sworn as a member of the Hickory Youth Council, and was appointed to the Community Appearance Commission as an ex-officio voting member.

Anne Brock was appointed by Hickory City Council as an At-Large member. She took the City's oath of office and was sworn in as a member of the Community Appearance Commission. Self-introductions were made.

**Approval of August 24, 2026 Meeting Agenda:** No changes or additions to the agenda were stated. Ginger Bishop moved, seconded by Ed Fickle, to approve the September meeting agenda as presented. The motion carried unanimously.

**Approval of August 24, 2026 Minutes:** Minutes of the meeting held on August 24, 2026 were distributed in advance. Mr. Hooker asked if there were any corrections to the minutes. The discussion on page 3 of the minutes, regarding purchasing a sandwich board for the CAC to use on Farmers Market days and during other downtown events, had stated Ms. Crosby said the CAC could not put their signage at the Farmers Market, because it is not a City of Hickory sponsored event. However, Mr. Elliott had stated this, not Ms. Crosby, and the minutes will be corrected.

No other additions, deletions, or corrections to the minutes were stated. Sharon Crosby moved, seconded by Ryan Young, to approve the August 24, 2026 minutes as presented, with one correction. The motion carried unanimously.

**FY 2026-2027 Grant Budget:** Mr. Elliott noted the CAC's \$40,000 grant budget in the agenda packet. To-date, two (2) grants have been funded during the current fiscal year. He said Hickory City Council recently approved the Hickory Elks Lodge's grant request of \$10,000. Also, the \$7,500 grant for Cranford Properties of NC, requested by Zack Cranford for the Charolais Steakhouse expansion on 4<sup>th</sup> Street SW, was carried over from the previous fiscal year. A remaining balance of \$22,500 is available to fund grant projects through June 30, 2027.

**Consideration of Community Appearance Grant Application:** Members had initially considered Crystal Rogers' Community Appearance Grant application at their July 2026 meeting, but a quorum was not present and no action could be taken. Her project includes making improvements to property at 310 4<sup>th</sup> Street SW, an older

home that is located along a main entrance into Hickory, mid-way between the Historic Ridgeview Walk and City Walk. The home is currently occupied by Ms. Rogers' real estate business.

The project has various work components, including replacing and painting all wood trim and porch floors, as needed; painting the exterior of the entire house; adding a new sidewalk; repairing and painting the front steps and adjacent concrete ledges; edging the front flower beds; trimming the large bushes; adding flowering bushes, plants and mulch; and, replacing the back door with a new wood door. Ms. Rogers' application requests a grant of \$7,500 and the overall project cost will be \$15,080.

During the July meeting, members had noted that both of the work estimates provided had expired, and one of the businesses submitting a quote was not located in NC. Mr. Elliott recently learned that the contractor located in Florida does have a current NC license and he has previously done work in Hickory. Two (2) new estimates for the work listed were included in the agenda packet.

Ms. Rogers joined the meeting. She again discussed her project in detail, and members asked questions. Her project includes replacing the back door, which she said is a wooden antique door, facing west, so it is in direct sunlight each day. She had hoped to keep it, but plans to replace it with a new Craftsman-style door. She clarified the correct name of her business is Elite Homes & Land.

With no further questions, Ms. Rogers was excused while members discussed her application and deliberated. Mr. Elliott explained the City's Appearance Grants are available on a 50-50 matching funds basis, and a business may request maximum grant funding of \$7,500. However, occasionally a special exception is made, and a larger grant amount is recommended by members, such as for the recent request of \$10,000 made by the Hickory Elks Lodge, which City Council recently approved. On the other hand, CAC members are not required to recommend the full \$7,500 if it is requested. Mr. Elliott also discussed the types of work that are eligible for funding under the City's grant guidelines.

During their deliberation, members noted not all of the work included in Ms. Rogers' project would be visible from the road; her clients would see the any improvements made to the back of the house, but the changes would not be visible from the street. Members scored each item on the grant checklist. The project's total score was in the "high" category, with 23 points. Mr. Elliott said the request was eligible for the full \$7,500 grant, if members choose to recommend it, based on the lowest bid submitted by Veritas Expert Solutions.

Discussion followed regarding the specific work items planned for the back of the house, listed as #1 & #2 on the Veritas estimate, a new exterior door (\$1,350) and stair railings (\$2,150) which represent \$3,500 of the total \$15,080 estimate. Mr. Elliott said if members choose to recommend grant funding on a 50-50 matching basis, the total grant amount would be \$5,790.

Sharon Crosby moved, seconded by Anne Brock, that the Community Appearance Commission recommends approval of a \$6,000 grant for the Crystal Rogers/Elite Homes & Land Appearance Grant application, for improvements to property located at 310 4<sup>th</sup> Street SW, based on discussion and review by members. Discussion of the funding amount followed, and the motion and second were withdrawn.

Ed Fickle moved, seconded by Ginger Bishop, that the Community Appearance Commission recommends approval of a \$5,790 grant for the Crystal Rogers/Elite Homes & Land Appearance Grant application, for improvements to property located at 310 4<sup>th</sup> Street SW, based on discussion and review by members. There was no further discussion, and the motion carried on a 6-2 vote.

Ms. Rogers re-joined the meeting and was advised the CAC would be recommending City Council approve a Community Appearance Grant of \$5,790 for her property improvements. Mr. Elliott said the next City Council meeting is on Tuesday, October 6, but he was not sure if the grant recommendation would be reviewed at this meeting or the following one on October 20. He said she would have 120-days from the date City Council approves the grant to complete her project. She thanked the members for their support and left the meeting.

If Council approves the grant recommendation, a remaining balance of \$16,710 will remain in the budget to fund additional grant projects, through June 30, 2027.

**“Hickory in Bloom Recognition” Program:** Mr. Elliott did not receive any nominations for the month of September. The program is not held from October through February. Members previously discussed re-visiting their program criteria, so they have a few months to decide whether to do this before the program begins again in early March 2027.

Members will soon review all of the 2026 Hickory in Bloom Recognition recipients and choose one to receive a **2026 Beautification Award**.

**2026 Beautification Awards:** A copy of the revised nomination form for 2026 was distributed in the agenda packet. Mr. Elliott said the submission deadline for nominations is Friday, November 20, prior to Thanksgiving. He shared this information with Communications staff so they could begin publicizing the awards program, and will advise them if members choose to revise the nomination deadline.

Mr. Hooker asked each CAC members to submit at least 1 or 2 nominations, noting there are eight (8) different award categories. Each property must be located within the Hickory City Limits or ETJ, and Mr. Elliott asked members to contact him with any questions. He will confirm each property location based on City tax records.

This past year, the Beautification Awards Reception was held in mid-January at the Shuford House, instead of at City Hall, and the change of venue was a great idea. Mr. Elliott asked members to decide on the upcoming reception location soon, and he will make the reservation. Mr. Hooker suggested members discuss the reception location during the October meeting.

**CAC Sub-committees:** A list of the CAC’s two (2) current sub-committees and assigned members was included in the agenda packet. At the June meeting, Mr. Hooker had proposed members form a new sub-committee to consider ideas for improving Hickory’s gateways, including encouraging businesses located along the entry corridors to apply for an Appearance Grant and improve their properties. Mr. Elliott had noted that only the businesses located within the City’s Urban Revitalization Area would be eligible for a grant.

At the previous meeting in August, members again discussed forming a Gateways Sub-committee, but had postponed appointing the members to today. Mr. Hooker distributed a proposed mission statement and methodology for the new sub-committee. Proposed mission – To ensure a positive first impression of the community by evaluating and proposing improvements to the primary routes of travel (Gateways) that visitors take to access local attractions (downtown, ballpark, airport, SALT Block, LR University, mall, etc.)

Mr. Hooker said Hickory’s gateways would include any primary travel route with high visibility that is used by visitors. Mr. Elliott will check and see if the City prefers the CAC use “gateways” or “corridors” or another term. Mr. Hooker asked for volunteers for the new sub-committee, and discussion followed.

The current sub-committees and assigned members are:

Tree Board/Beautification Awards  
Sharon Crosby  
Delores Deal  
Anne Brock

Litter Reduction  
Delores Deal  
Doug Dickson  
Ed Fickle  
Ella Barkley

Gateways  
Bruce Hooker  
Ginger Bishop  
Ryan Young  
Delores Deal

**New Business:** none

**Other Business:** Ms. Deal asked if the trees the City recently removed near the Olde Hickory Station restaurant would be re-planted. Mr. Elliott will ask the City's landscaping staff. She noted all of the street-side shrubbery at Oakwood Cemetery is dead; apparently, it was sprayed, and it needs to be removed. Mr. Elliott said landscaping staff would know about that situation, too. She also noted the lights embedded in the sidewalk across the street from Cowa-Sake are still blinking, and said the lights on one of the black corner posts do not work.

**Next Meeting:** The next regular meeting is scheduled for Monday, October 26, 4:00 pm, at City Hall.

**Adjourn:** Sharon Crosby moved, seconded by Ryan Deal, to adjourn. There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 5:05 pm.

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Bruce Hooker, Chair  
Community Appearance Commission

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Anne Starnes, Minutes Clerk  
City of Hickory