



**COMMUNITY APPEARANCE
COMMISSION**

Monday April 22, 2024 – 4:00 p.m.

Hickory City Hall

2ND FLOOR

PLANNING DEPARTMENT

FLAG CONFERENCE

ROOM

Commission Members	
Lynn Sampson (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)	Addison Cox (Youth Council)
Doug Dickson (Ward 6)	

----- Agenda-----

1. Welcome and Call to Order
2. Approval of the Agenda
3. Approval of the February 26, 2024 Minutes
4. Green fest/Arbor Day Plans
5. Beautifying Hickory Recognition Project
6. Open Discussion of Tony Jackson's Suggestions from 6/23/23
7. Other-

Adjourn

Tree Board / Beautification Awards

- **Nancy Zagaroli**
- **Sharon Crosby**
- **Tony Jackson**
- **Delores Deal**

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.

Community Appearance Commission
Monday, February 26, 2024, 4:00 pm

A regular meeting of the City of Hickory's Community Appearance Commission (CAC) was held on Monday, February 26, 2024, 4:00 pm, in the Flag Conference Room at City Hall.

Members Present: Cliff Moone, Nancy Zagaroli, Sharon Crosby, Doug Dickson, Delores Deal, Tony Jackson, and Lynn Sampson

Members Excused: Addison Cox

Members Absent: Daria Jackson

Guests Present: Kim Harkins

Others Present: City Planner Wilson Elliott, staff liaison, and Minutes Clerk Anne Starnes

A quorum was present.

Call to Order: Cliff Moone, Chair, called the meeting to order at 4:00 pm and thanked everyone for attending.

New Member Oath of Office: Mr. Moone introduced Lynn Sampson. She took the oath of office and was sworn in as a member of the Community Appearance Commission, representing Ward 1. Members welcomed her, and self-introductions were made.

Approval of Agenda: No additions or changes to the agenda were stated. Nancy Zagaroli moved, seconded by Sharon Crosby, to accept the agenda as presented. The motion carried.

Approval of November 27, 2023 Minutes: Mr. Moone said the Commission typically meets monthly. A combined November/December meeting was held on November 27, 2023 and the Beautification Awards reception and presentation on Tuesday, January 16, 2024 replaced the regular meeting in January.

Minutes from the combined meeting on November 27, 2023 were distributed in advance. The minutes incorrectly stated the Beautification Awards would be presented during the City Council meeting, but they were presented during the reception prior to the meeting. The minutes will be corrected and re-submitted to staff. No other additions, deletions, or corrections to the minutes were stated. Nancy Zagaroli moved, seconded by Doug Dickson to approve the November 27, 2023 minutes as presented, with one correction, as discussed and amended. The motion carried.

Consideration of Community Appearance Grant Application: Kim Harkins submitted an application for a Community Appearance Grant on behalf of H&H of Hickory LLC, for improvements to properties located at 266 & 268 1st Avenue NW, and 110 and 100-B 3rd Street NW. The project would beautify the front, side, and back of 268 1st Avenue NW, where Hatch Sandwich Bar has been located in downtown Hickory for 12-years.

The applicant was present to discuss the grant project and his application was provided in the agenda packet, including quotes and current photos of the building. Mr. Harkins said they had leased portions of the building since 2011 and extended their dining room into the adjoining space a year ago. In December 2023, they purchased the building from the Barkley family. If they receive the grant, the funds would go toward replacing a 50-year old awning along the front of the building where Hatch is located; it is broken and leaks, and they would replace it with the same style of black awning. The grant would be used to address two (2) separate issues on the side of the building (3rd Street NW), where they would add a new matching awning above the Hatch service door and make

repairs/improvements to the steps leading up to their office. They would also make three (3) improvements to the rear of the building, which is visible from 3rd Avenue NW, including painting it to match the brick, replacing a window, and repairing the rear door. They plan to add sidewalk seating out front, including two (2) black square metal tables and eight (8) chairs. Mr. Harkins discussed their business' history at the site and referred to photos in the agenda packet.

Mr. Moone asked if the purchase of outdoor tables and chairs, quoted at \$681.00, was an allowed expense for an appearance grant, and Mr. Elliott said likely not. Mr. Moone said they are not a substantial purchase, but deleting them would lower the total project cost from \$14,145 to \$13,464. Members asked additional questions and made positive comments about Mr. Harkins' renovation plans. While discussing the challenges of litter and discarded cigarettes near their business, Mr. Moone directed him to Litter Quitter program information on the City website.

The applicant requested a \$7,500 grant and provided two (2) estimates for the work listed. If the Commission moves to approve the grant at the lower of the estimates, the request would qualify for a \$7,500 grant.

Mr. Harkins was excused while members reviewed his grant application. They scored each criteria category on the checklist and the total score was in the "high" category, with 30 points. There are no longer two (2) types of appearance grants, so Mr. Elliott will combine the "impact" categories on the grant checklist.

Nancy Zagaroli moved, seconded by Tony Jackson, that the Community Appearance Commission recommends approval of the Kim Harkins/H&H of Hickory LLC Appearance Grant application in the requested amount of \$7,500, for improvements to property located at 266 & 268 1st Avenue NW and 110 and 100-B 3rd Street NW, based on discussion and review by members. The motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Harkins returned and thanked members for their support. Mr. Elliott will contact him to discuss sending the grant to City Council for approval.

A total \$21,250 remained in the grant budget, to use through June 30, 2024.

Green Fest/Arbor Day Discussion: The City's Green Fest/Arbor Day celebration will be held at the downtown Farmers Market on Saturday, April 27, 2024. An Arbor Day Proclamation was sent to the City Clerk. Mr. Moone said CAC members typically participate by handing out tree seedlings, seeds, and Litter Quitter information. Mr. Elliott will provide Litter Quitter stickers and printed information for the event, and will ask what types of trees Public Services staff ordered this year. Ms. Deal requested they provide more seeds this year, since they go quickly. Mr. Moone said they would discuss members' participation further at the next meeting.

Beautifying Hickory Recognition Program: Members had previously voted to recognize properties through the media, during April through September, with City management suggesting they choose 4-5 nominees for recognition each month. Members had agreed to notify the monthly recipients of their recognition in advance, advising them where their property photos would be shared and requesting permission to share them on all media outlets, the City website, and social media. Members also agreed to hold further discussion on whether to continue the program during the months properties are decorated for the holidays.

Members discussed the program timeline in more detail. They will ask City communications staff to begin publicizing the program on April 1, including a call for nominations, which will be submitted to Mr. Elliott. The nominations process will be on going, with no submission deadline. Members agreed to take all property photos from the street, to submit with their own nominations. In summary, the CAC will begin accepting nominations on April 1 and select the first group of recipients at their April 22 meeting. When Mr. Elliott receives a nomination and property address, he will notify the property owner of their nomination in writing and request permission to use the photos. Additional photos might also be needed.

Ms. Sampson suggested the CAC could encourage additional publicity by enlisting the newspaper to take “more professional photos” and include them in a news article. The photos would be posted on the City website, along with the monthly candidates. Mr. Moone expects communications staff will send the City’s media release to the newspapers. His understanding was the members would take the photos they need to use for the selection process, but said it might be possible a second round of more professional photos could be taken of the chosen properties. Mr. Elliott will ask communications staff if they are willing to assist with the photos, and he could also assist. Mr. Dickson noted the timing of taking two (2) sets of photos, saying that blooming flowers photographed by members could be gone by the time the second photos are made. Members agreed there would likely be a learning curve for the program; if they find that changes are needed, they will make them.

Again, Mr. Moone said members had agreed to begin publicity on April 1, and also begin accepting nominations. They will consider all nominations received during their April 22 meeting, and choose the first group of recipients.

Beautification Awards Event Follow-up: The Beautification Awards Reception was held in the City Hall atrium on Tuesday, January 16, 2024, at 5:00 pm. The seven (7) award recipients each received a framed 8x10 certificate this year. Mr. Moone asked members for their comments and suggestions for next year. Suggestions included:

- Ms. Crosby suggested they personalize the presentations more by involving the person who nominated each recipient in their award presentation. She suggested the nominator be asked to introduce the recipient, while the before-and-after photos of their project are being shown, and they would also present their award to them. Mr. Elliott offered to create two (2) different PowerPoint presentations next year, one with all photos on a loop to show while attendees visit and enjoy refreshments, and a second PowerPoint to advance manually, with photos of the individual projects to show during each recipient’s award presentation.
- Mr. Jackson suggested members make an effort to increase the awards reception attendance next year, including City Council and CAC members. He also suggested making it more personal for the recipients by providing them time to make comments about their project, if they choose.
- Ms. Zagaroli said the refreshments were very good, but people did not eat much. This year they ordered half the amount of food as last year, and she suggested ordering even less next year.

Open Discussion of Tony Jackson’s Suggestions from 6/23/23: Due to the time, Mr. Jackson asked to table discussion on his suggestions from last June.

Other Business:

- Mr. Jackson suggested members become advocates for the City’s appearance. He said Randolph’s Billiards, located beside the One North Center apartment complex downtown, has created issues for a long time, including outdoor litter each morning, frequent crimes, etc. He and others discussed the on-going issues with City management, and the police patrol in the area changed the next day. The situation will continue to improve in the future, as the new owner of the building plans to expand their business into the lower floor. Mr. Dickson asked if Hickory has a process for declaring a business as a nuisance. No one knew for sure, but Mr. Jackson said if there is not one now, then members could advocate for establishing a process.
- Mr. Moone noted no meetings were held since late November, and asked if a 2024-25 Work Plan was submitted for the CAC. Mr. Elliott submitted the work plan and requested a \$200 budget increase, specifically for the Beautification Awards. Mr. Moone requested CAC members plan on reviewing their next work plan together in the fall of 2024, possibly at their November meeting.
- Mr. Jackson informed members The Jackson Group will change ownership later this year, but they plan to continue operating four (4) small businesses on the lower level of the building.
- Mr. Jackson noted the Hickory murals painted by James Smith and other artists, suggesting that Hickory strive to become known for their murals. He proposed appointing someone from the Arts Council to fill the vacant at-large seat. Mr. Moone discussed the current CAC make-up, which includes a member appointed by the Hickory Regional Planning Commission. Mr. Jackson suggested they consider adding a member from the Hickory Downtown

Development Association (HDDA), and could also expand the number of Commission members, in general. To add an appointed member to the CAC from the Arts Council, and/or others, Mr. Elliott expects members would need to send a formal recommendation to City Council.

Tony Jackson moved, seconded by Delores Deal, that members hold a general discussion on redefining and expanding the make up of the Community Appearance Commission, and look into the process required for making changes. The motion carried unanimously.

At the next meeting, Mr. Moone said members would begin discussing the CAC make up and possible expansion.

Mr. Jackson noted a previous discussion he and Ms. Sampson had on whether the CAC currently addresses the distressed areas and/or individual properties in Hickory. He suggested the CAC could also consider expanding their role into helping affect change to distressed areas and properties.

Next Meeting: The next regular meeting is scheduled for Monday, March 25, 2024, at 4:00 pm.

Adjourn: Doug Dickson moved, seconded by Tony Jackson, to adjourn. There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 5:25 pm.

Cliff Moone, Chair
Community Appearance Commission

Anne Starnes, Minutes Clerk
City of Hickory