

Town of Rowe

Beautification Committee

MEETING

Wednesday, May 22, 2024 7:00 p.m.

In-Person at Cyndie Stetson's Home

1. Called to Order at 7:10 p.m. Present were Cyndie Stetson, Dawn Beaumier, Virginia Gary and Ann Grieco.

2. Old Business: CORRECTION from April 15, 2024 meeting minutes: Danielle Beaumier (not Christie Beaumier) stored barrels from the transfer station at her house over the winter.

Pansies have been planted at Town Hall and Office. The Town of Rowe approved \$1,500.00 for the Beautification Committee's annual budget. Virginia didn't realize she was supposed to ask Jerry Ferguson about whether he is responsible for maintaining the gazebo by Town Hall, but offered to do so now. Cyndie spoke with Donna Butzke, Administrative Assistant, about the timeline for doing repairs and fixing the lighting at the gazebo. Donna did not know when that work might begin. The solar lights are working there, but it would be nice if electricity could be restored. Dawn said that Jerry Ferguson is currently painting inside Town Hall and then will start painting the outside of the building, so this might not be a good time to talk to him about working on the gazebo and lighting. We agreed to wait before talking with him about this.

Cyndie added window boxes and a hanging planter at the gazebo. Dawn asked about plans/ideas for "dressing up" the well and the pole near the gazebo. Could we place a pot or barrel with flowers in front of the well? Wrap (solar?) lights around the pole?

Cyndie said there are two benches stacked inside the gazebo. Would someone please take them out and place them somewhere in the grass? She bought pots and other materials at Ocean State Job Lots. She placed a barrel by the memorial rock at Percy's

Point and planted it with flowers. She has not planted anything by the Town signs.

Once we receive permission from the homeowners, we will place signs reading "Rowe Beautification Recognition" in the yards of people who have added to the beauty of the Town through their gardens and plantings.

Dawn was asked by a man at Town Hall if the Beautification Committee would be cleaning up the brush and debris left by contractors for National Grid who are removing trees around Town. We all reaffirmed that this is not part of our duties as members of the Committee.

Virginia took care of the lilies. She dug them up from Town Hall, but left the new ones that still look nice. She planted two lilies at the State Line sign on Cyrus Stage Road and one by the State Line sign on Leshure Road. Cyndie and Virginia cleaned up the garden on Hazelton Road. Since that garden is in good shape, and the lilies and other flowers there look nice, Cyndie doesn't think we need to do more work or planting there at this time. We will mulch it eventually.

Virginia placed a single hanging basket by the State Line sign on Cyrus Stage Road and a double hanging basket at the Town Line sign on Zoar Road. She planted the barrel by the sign on Zoar Road and planted pansies in the Brittingham Hill garden today. She will buy two hanging plants to place by the Town Line sign on Zoar Road. She offered to help find someone to weed whack by the Town sign and barrel on Zoar Road. Cyndie said to wait before doing that because she placed a notice in the June Goal Post asking for help weed whacking those areas. We will wait to see what happens.

Cyndie recommends keeping the bushes and shrubs at Town Hall the same. We don't need to trim them. She would like to concentrate on planting flowers and maintaining areas we have already started working on and/or created.

We can get wood chips from the Town site near the Transfer Station and use them in the garden bed on Hazelton Road. Brittingham Hill garden doesn't need wood chips. Myra's garden is doing okay, so we will wait until Myra gets back before deciding what else might be done there. Should we place a barrel or pot by the stone bench in the gazebo area and plant it with flowers? The Committee members agreed that we should. We need to buy a pot for that location, which Cyndie will pick up.

In several locations, Cyndie placed hanging plants into barrels. This is easy to do and maintain, and they look nice. She bought plants and pansies from from the garden

center near Bernardston. (Carolina Eastern?)

Cyndie also recommends Walker Farm near Keene, New Hampshire. It is in East Dummerston, Vermont, and has a great selection of plants, including rare ones like convolvulus. They organize their plants by color, which is extremely helpful. Walker Farm has a great farmstand with organic fruits and vegetables, and offers CSA shares.

Virginia has been looking for and comparing prices for hanging plants. Mill River near Deerfield has some nice ones for \$25.00. She will buy three of them. She planted flowers in the box by the Town sign on Zoar Road, but the plants are too low to be easily seen. Cyndie suggested trying celosia, marigolds, snapdragons and zinnias. After some discussion, Virginia decided to get some zinnias and marigolds for the flower box. Cyndie mentioned that B. J. Roach offered us her extra bee balm plants. Bee balm is another good option for that area because it is colorful and pretty and grows to a nice height.

Cyndie spoke to Laurie Pike, Chair of the Park Commission, about the stumps at Percy's Point. They will be ground, so there is no need for Craig Brown to hollow out the tops. Cyndie will put a pot with flowers by the dam in front of the Atwood's house on Pond Road.

Virginia and Cyndie discussed what to plant at the fountain in front of Town Hall. The pansies should be moved and taller plants like marigolds should be added. Good colors for that area include yellow and orange. Shorter plants should be placed in front and taller ones towards the middle. Maybe incorporate red, like geraniums. Neither Virginia nor Cyndie like fire stick or firecracker plants. Virginia suggested getting more thornless roses or coleus from Greenfield Community Garden. Cyndie thought this was fine and also suggested verbena. She also suggested zinnias and marigolds, but don't use coleus with marigolds.

The elephant ear and coleus potted plants from last year got spider mites. Neither of the elephant ears made it, but the coleus survived and is on the steps in front of the Post Office.

Cyndie weeded the herb garden by the Library.

Cyndie said the Town will be hosting a Summer event called the "Summer Social" with events and activities at Pelham Lake Park and the Rowe Historical Society. The date is Sunday, July 14, 2024 from noon until 6 p.m. There will be a Garden Tour including the following five gardens: Tom Chiofalo, Cyndie Stetson, B.J. Roach, Karen Soviecki and

Anna Humbert. Faith Travis was invited to have her gardens included, but she has not responded. People have already come forward who are interested in having their gardens included in a tour next year. Perhaps next year we can also add wildlife gardens and nature areas to the tour.

Information about the event will appear in the June Goal Post. From noon to 2:00 p.m., there will be a talk on the Hoosic Tunnel and a Classic Car show. There will be live music, Touch a (new) Fire Truck (with ice cream served.) From 2:00 to 4:00 p.m., there will be a Garden Tour, Panini Food Truck, music by Bill Knittle, and a dessert buffet. The event is hosted by the Rowe Historical Society, Town Hall, Town Library, Caravan Kitchen, Fire Department, Council on Aging, Camp and Conference Center, the School Parent Teacher Program, Beautification Committee, Cultural Council, Parks Department and local families from Town.

3. New Business: Cyndie wanted to review the Open Meeting Laws, which we are required to follow by the State of Massachusetts. We cannot send emails to everyone on the Committee in a group. Calls are okay, or we can talk on the street. Virginia asked for clarification regarding planning work to be done and responding to questions asked at a meeting. Cyndie said we can inform one another about jobs being done in an email. If we see something or some type of work that needs to be done, it's okay to call or communicate with one another. We can say, "I did this" in a group email, but we cannot ask questions in that format. We can speak individually by phone or in-person.

As Committee members, we are appointed and have to be re-appointed every year. Cyndie asked whether everyone had completed their Conflict of Interest training on the Town website. Certificates are good for three years. Everyone but Ann had completed the work and received their two certificates. Ann agreed to complete hers before the next meeting.

Virginia said that we have perennials, but no garden to put them in. She suggested starting a new perennial garden/flower border near the gazebo along the water's edge because this area is visible to all and visited by many. Because the area is on Town property, Cyndie believes we should ask permission from Town Hall before creating a garden there and will ask Laurie Pike about it.

Virginia mentioned that the folks at the Library didn't like where the stone bench was placed behind the gazebo because it blocked their view of the water. Cyndie suggested Virginia ask the folks at the Library where they would prefer to have the stone bench placed. Virginia thought planting by the bench might be another nice area to create a

perennial garden.

Cyndie spoke with Laurie Pike about planting around the entrance sign to Pelham Lake Park and by the bench in the Town Common. Laurie said we can do whatever we want in those areas. Cyndie weeded the area by the Park sign so that it is now ready for planting. Virginia said that the grasses are not coming back there. She has daisies which can be used to fill in by the bench near the gazebo and by the Park Entrance sign. She would be happy to dig the holes if Cyndie will place the plants. Cyndie agreed to do so and will ask B.J. Roach for additional plants she may wish to share.

Sean Loomis will not be coming back as the Park Manager. Roberta Baker's son, Nick, will take over as lead this Summer.

Watering: Cyndie will water the pot by the Fire Station and entrance to the Rowe Camp sign. She will water the planters and hanging plant at the gazebo, as well as a plant she added by the Church water fountain.

Rob Beaumier has watering jugs and will water the plants at the Transfer Station. Virginia will water at the "Entrance to Town" signs, and the barrel. She will water the plants by the Town Office, the pot on the stairs, and the two on the ledge. Ann offered to be the "back up waterer" and wanted to work with Cyndie and Virginia to learn about where and when to water.

Dawn asked about whether the memorial plant (from a donation received last year) was planted and if a commemorative plaque was placed. Cyndie planted a viburnum by the gazebo and made an "In Memory Of" sign out of slate, which she placed nearby.

Cyndie said that with our new budget, we should think about how to use that money. Should we invest in things other than plant material? Let's think about ideas for next year and share them at our next meeting. One suggestion was to have a metal sculpture made. We could ask in the Goal Post for a metal worker. We may also want to use some funds to dress up the pole and well near Town Hall. Cyndie will buy pots for the dam across from the Atwoods and the well near Town Hall.

Weeding: Priorities are the gazebo, entrance to the Pelham Lake Park, and the fountain in front of Town Hall. Cyndie encouraged members to weed as much as they can.

At our next meeting, raffle tickets will be available for \$5.00 each for August calendar prizes. Bring cash to the meeting, if you are interested in purchasing tickets.

Cyndie was unanimously re-elected as Beautification Committee Chair

4. Citizen Comments: None.

5. Next Meeting will be on Monday, June 17, 2024, at Cyndie Stetson's home.

6. Meeting Adjourned at 8:13 p.m.