

Homewood Beautification Board

May Meeting Minutes

May 11, 2026

Members present:

Mary Michael Kelley, Kathryn Romanchuk, Angela McKinney, Victoria Dinges, Mary-Kate Carey, Nancy Mason, Roxanne Batson, Laura Stansell, Lauren Walton, Ron McCurdy, Leah Williams-Hooker. Also attending: Chris Lane, (City Council Liaison) and Shay Gartman (Director, Homewood Chamber of Commerce)

The meeting was called to order at 12:00 p.m.

A motion was made to approve the April 2026 minutes and was approved unanimously.

Leah Williams was welcomed as the new Ward 4 Board member. Mary Michael noted her background as an artist and photographer.

The Board discussed the recent **We Love Homewood Day** and **Earth Day** cleanup events. Members said that at We Love Homewood Day, the plant give-aways were very popular and ran out. The Board discussed planning earlier next year, approaching donors such as Sweet Peas and Lowe's, and offering a mix of plants, seeds, bulbs or native wildflower packets.

Members also discussed providing more child-friendly activities or prepackaged craft materials. A thank-you note and/or social media recognition will be sent to Sweet Peas for the plant donation. Members also discussed using stickers or labels on donated plants in future years to identify the donor. A suggestion was made to hold a drawing for a child's gardening set. A motion was made to approve up to \$250 for bead/craft activity supplies. The motion was seconded and approved.

The Board also confirmed that a previously approved custom tent with the HBB logo should be ordered.

Old Business

Street Banners

The Board discussed the 2026 banner schedule, including the impact of Centennial banners using existing banner hardware. Members confirmed that Centennial banners are expected to remain up through the Centennial celebration in October, with holiday banners to go up around November 1.

The Board discussed continuing to use existing HBB banner spaces where available and clarifying the banner schedule with Randy. There was discussion about whether additional hardware is needed and whether larger banners should be considered in the future. Larger banners would require new hardware at \$10.60 per pole and the printing would cost more than twice as much as the current banner size at \$4,000 compared to \$2,000.

Members agreed to table the larger-banner discussion until more information is available about hardware needs, placement, cost, budget and timing. Members were encouraged to look at

existing larger banners, such as those used by Trinity and Dawson, for comparison.

Holiday Decorating

The Board discussed holiday decoration needs, including outdoor snowflake lights, wreaths, and lighted balls, as well as possible future lighting upgrades along 18th Street, Lakeshore Drive, Greensprings Highway, Highway 31 and in Edgewood.

Members discussed the need to determine:

- What current decorations should be kept or discarded.
- What outdoor decorations need replacement.
- How many poles currently have power.
- What the cost would be per pole for new snowflake or lighted decorations.
- Whether any proposed upgrades could be phased in over multiple years.

The holiday decorating committee will review existing decorations before the June meeting if possible and bring recommendations for needed purchases. Mary-Kate will seek a quote for two pre-lit artificial 9-foot trees.

The Board also discussed gathering cost information from Randy, including what Gardendale spent on similar decorations and what would be involved in adding lights or decorations to priority areas.

New Business

Permanent storage locations

The Board discussed permanent storage locations for HBB materials.

Reusable shopping bags are stored in the storage closet near Cale's office in the City Manager's office area. Other HBB supplies, including craft materials, extra T-shirts, and possibly the tent, will be stored in the closet in the City Clerk's conference room, where Arts Council supplies are also kept.

Members also discussed the need to consolidate and organize Christmas decorations currently stored in multiple locations. A future work session may be scheduled to sort, discard, and organize decorations.

HEC / HBB Shopping Bags

The Board discussed concerns that the HBB logo on the new reusable shopping bags appeared blurry and less crisp than the proof. Scott was expected to contact the vendor about possible remedies, such as a reprint or partial refund. Members noted that the bags themselves are useful and attractive, but the logo quality was disappointing.

City Comprehensive Plan Public Meetings

Members were reminded of upcoming public meetings for the City Comprehensive Plan:

- Public Meeting #3: Tuesday, May 19, 2026, at 6:00 p.m., Council Chambers at City Hall.
- Public Meeting #4: Wednesday, May 20, 2026, 9:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m., Board of Education offices at 450 Dale Avenue.

Summer Beautification Award Nominations

Summer Beautification Award nominations were tabled until the June meeting. The Board plans to discuss nominations at the beginning of the next meeting and vote in time for summer presentation.

Standing Items

HEC Collaboration & Updates

The Board discussed coordination with the Homewood Environmental Commission, including Earth Day cleanup feedback and shared shopping bags. Scott has rotated off the Environmental Commission, and the Board will determine who the new HEC liaison will be.

Treasurer's Report

The Board reviewed the budget. Approximately \$7,871 remained through September 30, including pending expenses for the shopping bags. Members noted that after the tent, craft supplies, and tree purchases, the remaining balance will likely be lower, but there may still be funds available for some holiday decoration needs.

Committee Reports

Centennial banner timing was discussed under Street Banners. Centennial banners are expected to remain up through the October celebration.

Social Media & Promotion

The Board discussed posting a thank-you to Sweet Peas on social media for donated plants.

Events / Collaborations

We Love Homewood Day and Earth Day cleanup were discussed. Members suggested returning to We Love Homewood Day planning in January 2027 so the Board can begin donor outreach and event planning earlier.

Community Support

Members discussed giving feedback to the Environmental Commission about future cleanup locations. Suggested areas included Green Springs, Old Columbiana, bridge/interchange areas, and other places with heavier litter.

The meeting was adjourned at 1:00 p.m. The next meeting will be Monday, June 8, 2026 in the Central Park Community Center.