



**AGENDA
CITY OF CREVE COEUR
HORTICULTURE, ECOLOGY AND
BEAUTIFICATION COMMITTEE
CITY HALL- MEETING ROOM 2
JUNE 18, 2025
4:30 PM**

CALL TO ORDER

ROLL CALL

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

1. Approval of March 26, 2025 HEB Committee Meeting Minutes

NEW BUSINESS

2. Introduction of new HEB Committee Council Liaison Kim Norwood
3. Committee to vote on new Chair and Vice Chair

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

4. Arbor Day 2025 Review
5. Conway Park Pond Rehabilitation Project Update

NEXT MEETING DATE

ADJOURNMENT

Posted by: _____

Date/Time posted: _____

If you need special accommodations to attend a meeting, services may be arranged by contacting the Office of the City Administrator in advance.



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CALL TO ORDER

A regular meeting of the Horticulture, Ecology, & Beautification Committee of the City of Creve Coeur was called to order by Chair Mara Berry on Wednesday, March 26, 2025, at 4:30PM.

ROLL CALL

Committee Chair Mara Berry - Present
Committee Member Paulette Pierson (Vice-Chair) - Present
Committee Member Fran Cantor - Present
Committee Member Rachel Eilbott - Absent
Committee Member Carol Mueller - Present
Committee Member Gene Rovak - Present

Council Liaison David Hoffman - Present
Staff Liaison Emily Groves - Present

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- 1. Approval of February 19, 2025 HEB Committee Meeting Minutes**

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

- 2. Arbor Day**

Staff liaison Emily Groves advised the committee that 130 artwork submissions had been received, categorized, logged, and will be judged by the Arts Committee at 6pm on Wednesday, March 26, 2025.

The HEB committee expressed concern that not all entrants had followed the guidelines put forth, and discussed being more explicit with our criteria for next year's event. The concern is that framed artwork is not only difficult to display due to its weight, but also gives an advantage to the artist, as a frame typically gives artwork a more polished and appealing look, which could potentially be considered an unfair advantage. We will ensure that "no canvas, canvas panel, or **frame**" is added to the criteria for Arbor Day 2026.

Mara let the committee know that she had secured the shrubbery for the winners of the Art Contest, and that there would be three varieties from which to choose; Beauty Berry, XX, and XX. In years past, Mara noticed that not all winners had the space to



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plant a tree, so it was decided a shrub might be a better alternative. The committee also discussed suggesting the possibility of planting the winners' trees at the winners' academic or religious institution for those who were unable to plant their saplings and/or shrubs at home.

Carol Mueller agreed to run the "Giveaway Table," which will include the saplings and the winners' shrubs. Emily Groves agreed to maintain the "Sign-In Table," which will include art contest participation ribbons. Gene Rovak will consider creating a "Rain Garden Table," which will include a deeper dive into **A Backyard Oasis: The Beauty and Benefits of a Rain Garden**. Gene will look into creating a storyboard to educate and inspire others, and will bring a sampling of examples of materials he has determined to be most successful. Other tables will include: Forest ReLeaf, Wild Ones, MSD, E&E, Arts, Parks & Recreation, and potentially 2 other organizations (School of Rock & Master Kim's Martial Arts), which Emily Groves will be looking into to determine their eligibility, as they are both for-profit organizations. Emily will look for the 2 face-hole photo-boards, which have been used in years past. Gene will repair if need be. Committee members will bring shovels and plastic bags to the event. Fran suggested bringing in an example of invasive honeysuckle to give people an idea of what it looks like, and let them know that invasive honeysuckle could be removed and replaced by a native plant.

Order of events will be: 12:30PM - HEB committee arrives to set up, 1:00PM - Tree Planting Demonstration, 1:15PM-2:15PM - Babaloo Music and Fun performance, 2:30PM - Art Awards

3. Conway Park Pond Rehabilitation Project

The HEB Committee agreed unanimously that April is not great timing for a final presentation of the Conway Park Pond Rehabilitation Project, and has asked to have the Stormwater Committee present this to HEB during our June 2025 meeting instead if they are able to do so.

NEW BUSINESS

The HEB Committee reviewed and commended Gene Rovak and Melissa Bradford's article entitled, **A Backyard Oasis: The Beauty and Benefits of a Rain Garden**.

A Backyard Oasis: The Beauty and Benefits of a Rain Garden



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Presented by the Horticulture, Ecology and Beautification Committee

More than a decade ago, Creve Coeur resident Gene Rovak set out to transform a portion of his backyard into a thriving rain garden. By carefully selecting native flowers and shrubs, he created a space where rainwater could collect and naturally absorb into the ground. Today, his garden is not only an effective stormwater management system but also a vibrant habitat teeming with life. Among the plants soaking up the runoff are shining blue star, yellow coneflower, milkweed and butterfly weed—each playing a vital role in supporting pollinators like butterflies and songbirds.

As a member of the Creve Coeur Horticulture, Ecology, and Beautification Committee, Rovak hopes his success will inspire others to create their own rain gardens using native plants. Rovak has said, “As a professional water resources engineer, I recognize the role of a rain garden as one of the most practical Stormwater Best Management Practices (BMPs) to control quantity and quality of storm water runoff”

At the heart of his rain garden is a pond, where stormwater runoff settles and gradually infiltrates into the soil. Over time, this water feature has become a popular gathering place for local wildlife. In the evenings, the air fills with the rhythmic chorus of frogs. Goldfish thrive in the pond, naturally controlling mosquito populations. At one point, even a snapping turtle took up residence—ready to surprise any curious raccoon attempting to paw at the fish.

Rovak’s rain garden serves as a model for sustainable landscaping, demonstrating how thoughtful design can benefit both the environment and the local ecosystem.

Interested in starting your own rain garden? Visit the Missouri Botanical Garden website at missouribotanicalgarden.org for helpful tips and step-by-step guidance.

(picture)

The pond was constructed with impervious lining with clean rock above to promote infiltration.

(picture)

The rain garden in full bloom during late summer in 2024.

NEXT MEETING DATE

4. Friday, April 25, 2025 Meet at Tappmeyer at 2 p.m.

HEB Committee Chair Mara Berry reminded the group that this meeting to get ready for Arbor Day and the Arbor Day Event on April 27th 2025 will be her final meetings with HEB as the Chair.

Council Liaison David Hoffmann confirmed that elections will be held on June (April??) 8th 2025.

Fran suggested the committee hold a primary election, and she nominated Gene Rovak to be HEB Committee Chair. Gene humbly reminded the group that he is not as big of a gardner as other committee members. This did not dissuade the committee members, with many disagreeing with Gene's self-assessment and agreeing that he would be a good fit. Gene nominated Paulette Pierson. However, Paulette said she was content to



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remain Vice-Chair and would support Gene in the role with gardening knowledge and by keeping us on track during meetings.

ADJOURNMENT