



City of Granite Shoals  
2221 N. Phillips Ranch Road  
Granite Shoals, TX 78654  
(830) 598-2424 fax (830) 598-6538  
[www.graniteshoals.org](http://www.graniteshoals.org)

**AGENDA FOR A MEETING OF THE BEAUTIFICATION ADVISORY GROUP  
OF THE CITY OF GRANITE SHOALS  
TO BE HELD AT CITY HALL, 2221 N. PHILLIPS RANCH ROAD  
GRANITE SHOALS, TX  
MONDAY, FEBRUARY 8, 2016 at 2:00 PM**

1. Call meeting to Order
2. Consider the minutes for the BAG meeting of September 23, 2015.
3. Review of 2015 Christmas by the Highway light display
  - a. Prep/work day schedule
  - b. Setting up
  - c. Taking down
  - d. Report for 2015
  - e. Ideas for 2016
4. Discuss and plan work days for City Hall landscaping to prepare for 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Birthday Bash on April 23-24
5. Discuss and possibly take action on any further plans for City Hall landscaping
6. Discuss and possibly take action on grant application from Native Plant Society for Monarch Way Station
7. Discuss, consider and possibly take action related to April 2016 City-Wide Clean Up Day.  
(date TBD)
8. Discuss recruitment of new members
9. Public comment and announcements
10. Future agenda items
11. Adjourn

**CERTIFICATION**

*I certify that the foregoing agenda has been posted at Granite Shoals City Hall inside bulletin board, outside on the new Parks Information and City Notice Board, 2221 N. Phillips Ranch Road, and on the official city website at [www.graniteshoals.org](http://www.graniteshoals.org) a place assessable to the public at all times, on Wednesday, January 27, 2016 on or before 6:00 p.m. and shall remain there continuously from such time until after adjournment of the meeting which begins 2:00 PM on Monday, February 8, 2016. City Hall is wheelchair accessible and accessible parking spaces are available. Requests for accommodations or interpretive services must be made 8 hours prior to this meeting. Please contact the City Secretary at (830) 598-2424 for further information.*



Elaine Simpson, TRMC/MMC - City Secretary



# **CHRISTMAS BY THE HIGHWAY**

**A PROJECT OF**

**THE BEAUTIFICATION ADVISORY GROUP**

**CITY OF GRANITE SHOALS, TEXAS**

**2015 Report**

## CHRISTMAS BY THE HIGHWAY 2015

For the 2015 display, \$2000 was once again requested and approved by City Council. It takes approximately \$200-250 to pay for the electricity, and the remaining money is spent as needed or desired for replacement and repair of items, or for something new to add to the display.

The value of donations in 2015 totaled over \$1200 in new/used items, and \$182.52 cash.

On September 30th, volunteers began working 2 afternoons each week preparing display items. Since 2013 the Beautification Advisory Group (BAG) has been in charge of the display and we have been very fortunate to be able to use the storage shed on City Hall property for a workspace. With no power to the building, we used an inverter attached to a car battery to provide electricity, and shared one extension cord to check the lights. In October 2015, through the efforts of Mayor Carl Brugger, City Manager Ken Nickel and city staff, electricity was installed in the building. Having the electricity was a HUGE boon to the project! With better lighting inside the building and numerous outlets, volunteers were better able to see their work and each volunteer was able to have their own extension cord to check lights.



working on lights



We once again re-used existing incandescent light strings for 2 of the 6 Zilker light trees, so we bundled 24 green light strings for each of

the 2 trees. We may repeat this one more time in 2016 for 2 trees. We purchased 48 multi-color LED light strings for 2 more of the Zilker light trees. With the purchase of LED light strings for the Zilker light trees, we have made a commitment to re-use the strings for the next several years and we have made a significant impact on lowering the electric bill for the display.

For the 2015 display we continued repair and replacement of rope light on our display figures. The volunteers have become quite accomplished with the needed skills.



working on rope light entry arch

A generous donation from Marble Falls' Walkway of Lights project gave us speakers and amplifiers for a sound system. With the purchase of an iPod dock, an amplifier and some accessories we were able to have music with our display for the first time in 2015. Many visitors commented on the music.



setting up music

Marble Falls' Walkway of Lights project also gave us several figures that were included in the display: lollipops, an angel and a rope light train.

For the first time we set up the Zilker trees a week ahead of the rest of the display. This was planned for Monday, November 23rd. Due to equipment breakdown, this task was completed on Tuesday, November 24th. The rest of the display was set up starting on Monday, November 30th, 2015. There were a total of 10 volunteers helping. In addition, 2 city employees helped in various ways on the first set up day.



preparing for Zilker tree set up

We are very fortunate to have city employees who are available to help. This year, one Street Department employee, using a bucket truck, was on hand to put the light strings on the poles for the Zilker light trees.

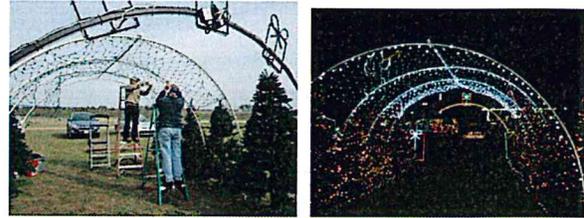


city employee installing lights

Once the Zilker light trees are up, setting up the rest of the display can be started.

Two very generous donors gave us four new un-lit artificial Christmas trees for the entry to the display. We added a new feature to the entry this year. Using net lights attached to PVC arches we created a "tunnel" between

the Christmas trees. This feature seemed to be a big hit with visitors to the display.



new feature in the entry

A new 12-foot tall tree was donated to the display and was outfitted with guy wires to make it more stable.

A little planning is needed in placing the various figures and sculptures. Figures need to be close enough to each other to make good use of extension cords, while still making a nice display.

Once all the items are set up and arranged, we start plugging in extension cords. Outdoor cords were used exclusively in the 2015 display.

Keeping the connections dry, off the ground or covered continues to be a challenge. Weather changes caused some damage on December 12-13th and again on December 26th. High winds and rain toppled some items and tripped the GFI circuit breakers on the light tree poles causing most of the display to turn off. Volunteers were able to repair most of the damage and get the display fully lighted again. The electric bill total was artificially low due to the display being unlit for 3 nights when the power was off.

Once it's all set up – enjoy a job well done!



In 2015 we were once again able to include the Highland Lakes Elementary School 5th-grade choir in the lighting ceremony on Friday evening, December 4th. We were pleased by the turnout of almost 150 people!

### Visitors:

At various times when volunteers were checking on the display, they chatted with visitors who were there to enjoy the lights. We were pleasantly surprised to find that many were from out of town: Lubbock, Dripping Springs, San Antonio, Houston, as well as Burnet and Kingsland.

### Planning ahead:

We hope to convert the last 2 Zilker trees to LED light strings for the 2016 display, which will further reduce the cost of electricity and require fewer extension cords as well.

There remains a large supply of incandescent light strings in storage and we will continue to use them for another year or two. We hope to continue converting more of the display to LED lights until we can quit using the incandescent light strings.

We now have a stockpile of rope light in colors needed to repair/replace the current rope light on various figures.

We hope to buy six more of the unlit artificial trees, but would prefer to purchase them when they are half-price starting December 24th. In addition we would like to add a new lighted figure each year for the next 3-4 years to complete the display.

Purchased on sale after Christmas 2014, we were a little disappointed in the "Animated Elf and Stocking with Controller." Some of the rope light did not light up. A letter was written to the company to let them know of our disappointment (att. 1), and City Manager Ken Nickel was made aware of the problem.

### Our figures and sculptures:

Much of the original incandescent rope light has been replaced. We made a lot of progress in replacing the incandescent rope light with LED rope light on a number of figures in 2014 and continued the process in 2015.

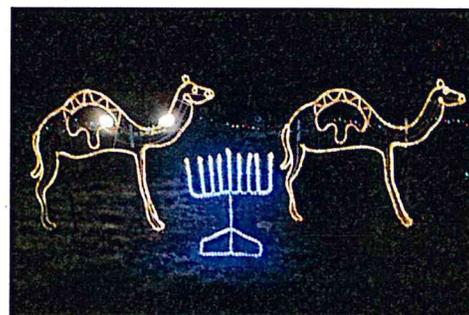
Re-done 2015 – in addition to the photos below, the entry arch was completely redone in LED rope light:



lamp post had not been used for several years



re-doing 3 kings & baby Jesus completed conversion of nativity to LED rope light



Menorah



Santa in the airplane

Still in need of repair:

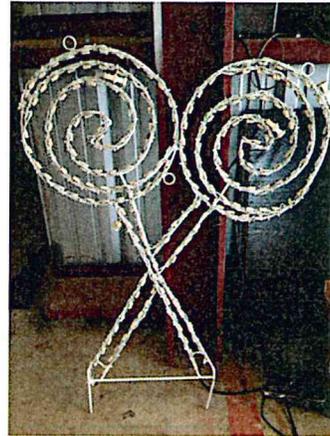
**Cowboy** – very faded colors. Will be re-done with LED rope light for 2016.



**Star of Bethlehem** – stripped and painted, ready for rope light in 2016.



**Lollipops** - incandescent lights. Will be re-done with LED rope light for 2016.



**Happy Holidays** – parts are burned out. Will be re-done with LED rope light for 2016



There are also some other figures that we haven't used for the last 3 years because we haven't had time to repair them. All will be evaluated for repair or replacement and possible use in the 2016 display.

**Volunteer and city staff time (att. 2):**

Preparing display items	278.5 hours
Setting up display	175 hours
Making repairs	33.5 hours
Taking down display	44 hours
<u>City Staff time</u>	<u>29 hours</u>
<b>Total hours</b>	<b>531 hours</b>

Independent Sector.com states the value of a volunteer hour is \$24.66 in Texas (2014).  
 (\$24.66 x 502 = \$12,379.32 value)

**Donations:**

Cash	\$182.52
Goods and services	\$1200+

**Where the city's \$2000 went (att. 3):**

Electricity (25 days/ off 3 days)	\$227
Rope light & parts	\$708
48 Multi-color LED light strings	\$333
Audio components & parts	\$136
Net lights & PVC for entry	\$86
Miscellaneous	\$425
(paint, connection covers, cable ties, rebar, <u>miscellaneous LED light strings, bows, etc</u> )	
Total spent	\$1825

**Other money spent:**

City Manager Ken Nickel rented a bucket truck again this year to put up and take down the Zilker light trees since no bucket truck was available to borrow. Renting these trucks is quite expensive and the city spent a total of \$1170.89 for the two days the truck was needed. If the Christmas by the Highway starting budget were to reflect the amount needed for renting a truck, then the BAG would need to ask for at least \$3200 for 2016.

## Attachments

Attachment 1 - Letter sent to Christmas Lights, Etc

545 Contour Drive  
Granite Shoals, TX 78654  
December 9, 2015

Christmas Lights, Etc  
205 Curie Dr.  
Alpharetta, GA 30005  
Dear Sir,

I am the chairperson in charge of a group of volunteers who set up the city-sponsored light display for our small town of Granite Shoals, Texas. I am writing to let you know that we are disappointed in the figure we purchased from Christmas Lights Etc. last January. The order was placed by our City Manager, Ken Nickel. We operate on a small budget and try to stretch it to purchase a new lighted figure each year. In January 2015 we were able to purchase the "LED Animated Elf and Stocking with Controller" figure at an after-Christmas sale price. Recently we set up our display and were very disappointed to find that the figure has some burned out areas. I'm enclosing photos so you can see the burned out parts.

We are also somewhat disappointed that the figure was listed as "48 inches tall" when, in fact, it measures only 44.5 inches. In addition, the red color rope light looks more pink than red. Altogether, not what we were hoping for

Sincerely,  
Donna Maier, Chair  
Beautification Advisory Group  
Granite Shoals, Texas



1<sup>st</sup> elf has no leg and no base



2<sup>nd</sup> elf is OK



3<sup>rd</sup> elf is OK



4<sup>th</sup> elf has no leg



GRANITE SHOALS CHRISTMAS BY THE HIGHWAY 2015

	- repairs				- take down display					
	12/14	12/19	12/20	12/27	1/1	1/4	1/5	1/6	1/9	
DONNA MAIER		3.0	2.0	2.0	0.5	3.0	3.0		1.0	14.5
MERILYN NATIONS	2.5	3.0					3.0		1.0	9.5
JULIE BRUGGER						3.0	2.0			5
CARL BRUGGER						3.0				3
DENNIS MAIER			2.0	2.0		1.5	2.0			7.5
CAROL CARTER	2.5						3.0			5.5
STEVE CARTER	2.5						3.0			5.5
RICK MILLS	2.5						3.0			5.5
MARY MILLS	2.5						5.0		1.0	8.5
City Staff - x3?								2.0		6.0
<b>column total</b>	<b>12.5</b>	<b>6.0</b>	<b>4.0</b>	<b>4.0</b>	<b>0.5</b>	<b>10.5</b>	<b>24.0</b>	<b>2.0</b>	<b>3.0</b>	
										<b>Dec-January total</b>
										<b>70.5</b>
										<b>TOTAL HOURS SPENT</b>
										<b>531.0</b>
										<b>value of volunteer time per Independent Sector = \$24.66/hr in Texas in 2014</b>
										<b>\$13,094</b>

Attachment 3 - Money spent using starting budget of \$2,000.00

CITY OF GRANITE SHOALS

2015 Spending - Christmas by the Highway

Date	Item	Amount	Balance	Paid	Where purchased
10/1			\$2,000.00		
	FINAL Electric Bill - Jan 2016	\$227.46	\$1,772.54		
	deduction for electrical work	\$0.00	\$1,772.54		
10/7	6 cans white spray paint \$3.87 ea	\$23.22	\$1,749.32		Home Depot
	2 cans black spray paint \$3.87 ea	\$7.74	\$1,741.58		Home Depot
	4" cable ties - 2 pkgs of 1000 \$17.97 ea	\$35.94	\$1,705.64		Home Depot
	1 roll black Gorilla duct tape	\$8.98	\$1,696.66		Home Depot
10/7	40 strings LED multi-color lights \$6.94 ea	\$277.60	\$1,419.06		Walmart
	6 clear LED net lights - \$12.96 ea	\$77.76	\$1,341.30		Walmart
	4 pkgs bowl cover - various sizes \$1.98 ea	\$7.92	\$1,333.38		Walmart
10/7	iPod dock and amplifier for sound system	\$73.07	\$1,260.31		<a href="http://Amazon.com">Amazon.com</a>
10/8	8 strings LED multi-color lights \$6.94 ea	\$55.52	\$1,204.79		Walmart
	1 string LED red lights (100 bulbs) \$6.94 ea	\$6.94	\$1,197.85		Walmart
	1 string LED red lights (50 bulbs) \$3.92 ea	\$3.92	\$1,193.93		Walmart
10/8	4" cable ties - 1 pkg of 1000 \$19.24 ea	\$19.24	\$1,174.69		Home Depot
	1 can marking paint \$5.27 each	\$5.27	\$1,169.42		
	2 rolls fine wire \$2.98 each	\$5.96	\$1,163.46		
10/8	rope light parts & purple rope light	\$238.28	\$925.18		<a href="http://1000bulbs.com">1000bulbs.com</a>
10/8	red, blue, warm & cool white rope light	\$395.95	\$529.23		<a href="http://Amazon.com">Amazon.com</a>
10/16	20 strings LED lights	\$84.44	\$444.79		Walmart
10/19	1 piece heat shrink \$3.62; spray can silicone sealer \$18.95; weatherproof box \$18.13	\$40.70	\$404.09		City Electric Company
10/22	2 cans black spray paint \$3.87 ea; 1" PVC pipe 10-feet for entry "tunnel" \$3.93; 2 end caps \$0.73 ea; 1 coupler \$0.51; 1" PVC pipe 2-feet \$1.98	\$15.62	\$388.47		Home Depot
10/29	return weatherproof box	(\$18.13)	\$406.60		City Electric Company
	purchase larger weatherproof box	\$45.00	\$361.60		City Electric Company
11/2	rope light parts	\$73.92	\$287.68		<a href="http://1000bulbs.com">1000bulbs.com</a>
	Rebar; Christmas storage bags; padlocks; long nails	\$107.16	\$180.52		Home Depot
	return Christmas storage bags; padlocks; long nails	(\$72.30)	\$252.82		Home Depot
	smaller padlocks; rope	\$17.90	\$234.92		
	Large "Banana" bags; storage box	\$19.24	\$215.68		The Container Store
	Tree storage bags; large nails	\$40.68	\$175.00		Lowe's
	ending balance		\$175.00		
	<b>Donations</b>				
	10 speakers & 6 amps for sound system	\$400.00	\$400.00		MF Walkway of Lights
	2 angel figures	\$50.00	\$450.00		MF Walkway of Lights; Brugger
	lollipop figure	\$35.00	\$485.00		MF Walkway of Lights
	large train figure on frame	\$150.00	\$635.00		MF Walkway of Lights
	12-foot pre-lit artificial Christmas tree	\$150.00	\$785.00		St Frederick's Baptist Church MF
	tree stand	\$12.00	\$797.00		Maier (Home Depot)
	100 ft black heat shrink tubing	\$68.19	\$865.19		Maier (Allied Electric online)
	audio connection parts	\$46.31	\$911.50		Maier (Ace Hardware/Radio Shack)
	bows for deer, 1 string warm white LED	\$17.64	\$929.14		Maier (Walmart)
	4" white cable ties 2 pkgs of 1000	\$38.91	\$968.05		Nations (Home Depot)
	2 Fleetwood Pine 7.5' artificial trees	\$275.00	\$1243.05		Brugger (Lowe's)
	<b>TOTAL</b>		\$1243.05		

1/26/16