

**Westside Neighborhood Association
Board of Directors Meeting
Minutes – April 18, 2013**

In Attendance

Joshua Boehme, Dan Boutell, Danielle Casavant, Suzanne Knight, Keith Kris, Sara McCormick, Cassandra Nelson, Nic Piechotte, Paul Pratt, and Michael Schury

Excused

Cathy Bacille Cunningham, Jen Long, Jackie Payne, John Stratton, and Ellie Wong

Guest

- Bob Johnson, Director, Planning and Neighborhood Development Office, City of Lansing
- Joe McDonald, Community Outreach Coordinator, Office of the Mayor, City of Lansing
- Brett Kaschinske, Director, Parks and Recreation, City of Lansing
- Carol Skillings, Westside Neighborhood Resident

Call to Order

Schury called the meeting to order 6:04 p.m. with a quorum present.

Approval of Agenda

Schury noted that after the agenda was sent, Bob Johnson asked to present on the City of Lansing Budget and provide an update on Fire Station #7. This should be added to guest presentations. He asked Brett Kaschinske if there was a specific topic he was there to address. It was the St. Joseph Park storage space, which Schury noted is early on the agenda. Schury asked to have approval of new board secretary to New Business. Boutell moved, Kris seconded approval of the agenda as amended.

Approved

Guest Presentation

Bob Johnson and Joe McDonald distributed Mayor Bernero's Fiscal Year 2013-2014 Executive Budget Recommendation Summary. They talked about some of the ups and downs for revenue and expenses, including the fact that the city has 400 fewer employees than when the mayor took office and property taxes are down. They spoke to the proposed usage fees for fire hydrants and streetlights that would help shore up a \$5 million hole. The new budget would restore employees to a full-time schedule who had been furloughed. The total budget is \$191,494,000 – with \$70 million (reported verbally as \$70MM, but documents shared indicate \$83MM) being restricted funds. The executive summary and full budget are available for download on the city's website.

Fire Station #7 has been appraised and listed at \$150,000. It will remain residential.

Carol Skillings presented a lease agreement for a lot at 200 Huron Street. The lot is currently owned by the Ingham County Land Bank. Carol's concern is for a large, several hundred year-old oak tree. The Land Bank will only engage in a lease with a nonprofit organization, and that is why Carol brought this to the WNA. She offered to buy the lot, but her offer was refused as she is not an adjacent land owner. The board raised concerns about some of the language in the lease, especially language which would hold the lessee responsible for any damages that might occur on the property. The board also wants to ensure that other neighbors are in support of this. All in all there was support for the concept of protecting the tree, but financial and liability concerns need to be addressed. Carol is going to go back to the Land Bank to see if they would change the lease.

Approval of Minutes

Schury asked if there were any corrections for the Minutes from March 21, 2013. Boehme note that "approved" was misspelled in the Fiesta section of the minutes. Boehme moved, seconded by Cunningham, to accept minutes of March 21, 2013 with corrections noted.

Approved

Old Business

Storage Shed at St. Joe Park: Brett Kaschinske confirmed that his office has approved the use of the storage shed at St. Joseph Park by the WNA. He said he would visit the space tomorrow and dispose of the tires and paint that remain there. Casavant will get keys from Emily Stevens in Brett's office as soon as the space is cleared out.

Casavant put a plug in for considering St. Joe Park for a concert in the park next season and hopefully to get Root Doctor as Freddie Cunningham is a neighbor. Brett said he would consider this as having neighborhood support is very important to them.

Sara spoke to the fact that we wanted to use the park last summer but the fees for having bathrooms opened and trash cans and picnic tables put into place was too prohibitive. Brett asked Sara to call him and talk through the event for this year and he would try to help get things for us at a lower cost.

New Business

Secretary: Schury explained that John Stratton had resigned as secretary. Casavant volunteered to take on the role. Boehme moved, seconded by Kris, to approve Casavant as the board Secretary.

APPROVED

President's Report

Schury is continuing discussions with Susan Cancro, Executive Director of Advent House, about new ways to partner with them. Schury asked for another board member to join him at their next meeting. Nelson agreed to join Schury. The meeting will be set for a time after mid-May.

Treasurer's Report

Boehme reported that the \$100 check from Gannett had finally arrived. There have also been a few online ticket sales for the Fiesta.

Fiesta Committee Report

Casavant reported that ticket sales are going well. She asked that board members get Silent Auction items to John Putnam as soon as possible. She also asked if Josh and Keith were willing to help with the check-out for Silent Auction. There will be no dessert raffle due to health codes. Casavant will keep everyone posted of ticket sales as they progress.

Yard Sale Committee Report

Kris reported that the Yard Sale is the weekend of June 15th and the deadline for registering a sale is June 8th. Anyone interested in registering can email yardsale [at] wnalansing [dot] com. Maps will be at Letts.

Grants Committee Report

No Report

Riddle Liaison Report

No Report

Sexton Liaison Report

McCormick reported that the joint teacher recognition with PTA was not moving forward. The committee is considering hosting coffee and donuts at another time. McCormick moved, seconded by Kris, for up to \$75 to be allocated for such an event.

APPROVED

Community Center Liaison Report

Schury noted that a volunteer for this position is still needed.

Communications Committee Report

Kris reported that the letter to Mayor Bernero that had been approved by the board via email has been signed onto by seven other neighborhood associations. Kris will send the letter to the mayor and send copies to the Lansing State Journal, Lansing City Pulse and New Citizen Press.

Newsletter

Boutell reported that there was a \$200 profit on the newsletter this quarter. This will drop when Lansing Neighborhood Council begins charging us for copies in June (stated as June at meeting – but Boehme noted in minutes review that his email from LNC states July 1). As noted last month, the copy price is still very low at \$120 for a 6-page newsletter. Postage is running about \$225 per issue.

Voter Education Committee Report

No Report

Westside History Committee Report

Schury stated that one person from the neighborhood responded to his request for those who would like to be interviewed for the history project. He passed that person along to Matthew Miller.

Summer Social Event Committee Report

McCormick will follow-up with Brett about hosting the summer social event at either St. Joe Park or Letts. She is looking at something in mid to late July.

Community Engagement Committee Report

Schury noted that a volunteer is needed for this position.

Crime & Safety Committee Report

A report was submitted as part of the board packet.

MLK Garden

Garden members are meeting next week. Nelson noted that the garden is almost full. She also followed up on Melissa Lott's presentation from the last board meeting noting that the Garden Project would not be using the lot in the southern part of our neighborhood for the ground cover trials.

GM/RACER Trust Liaison Report

Pratt still needs to contact Grant Trigger to get a digital copy of the maps of the property that shows what used would be allowed what areas.

Scholarship Committee Report

Pratt noted that the committee met and picked two winners who will be invited to the Fiesta and introduced at that time.

Business Promotion Committee Report

Schury asked that members send any business contact information to Wong for inclusion in the print directory for the summer Westsider.

Places of Worship Committee Report

No report

Fun Committee Report

Casavant will have information about a Westside Lugnuts outing available at the Fiesta to see if there is enough interest to move forward.

Casavant asked if board members would consider a once a month designated neighborhood night at Harry's Place when neighbors could come together for dinner or drinks and talk about issues related to the neighborhood. It would require that at least a couple of board members be willing to attend each month. It was suggested that idea be floated on Facebook to see if there is interest.

Good and Welfare

Schury offered congratulations from the board to Wong and Piechotte who were both on the verge of completing their education. Wong is graduating from Douglas J Academy on April 20th and Piechotte is earning his MSW in May.

Kris motioned, Boehme seconded, to adjourn.

APPROVED

Next meeting – Thursday, May 16th at 6:00 pm at Letts

Action Items:

Casavant will get keys to St. Joe storage space as soon as they are available.

Nelson and Schury will schedule a meeting with Susan Cancro to continue discussion on partnering with Advent House.

Kris will send board approved letter to Mayor Bernero and media outlets.

Pratt will contact Grant Trigger of RACER Trust and ask for a digital version of the map document, ask for quarterly reports and follow-up on RACER's planned public meeting for the spring.

Casavant will have Lugnuts information available at the Fiesta and will float the Westside night at Harry's via Facebook after the Fiesta is completed.