

WARD PARKWAY HOMES ASSOCIATION BOARD MEETING MINUTES

September 1, 2020

Held via G-Suite conference call*

Board members present: President Nancy Bader, Vice President Richard Murray, Treasurer Gaye Tillotson, Secretary Amanda Rhodes, Jim Anderson, Alison Baker, Maureen Hardy, B. Michael McFarland

Board members absent: none

Other attendees: Alex DeMasi, Becky Schubkegel, Linetta Thurman

Meeting was called to order at 7:05 pm by President Nancy Bader. A quorum was present.

Guest Introductions: none

Minutes from the August 4, 2020 Ward Parkway Homes Association (“WPHA”) Board meeting were reviewed. Bader moved to approve the minutes and Vice President Richard Murray seconded. The August 4, 2020 minutes were unanimously approved.

Treasurer Gaye Tillotson reported on financials, which were provided to the Board via email prior to the meeting. Member dues paid to date are \$9,498.69 (266 homes) and Security Patrol dues paid to date are \$11,760.00 (197 homes). Total income over expenses for Fiscal Year 2019-2020 currently stands at -\$4,158.25.

Tillotson received the first paid membership for Fiscal Year 2020-2021. Bader will follow-up with Tillotson on communicating the online ballot to this resident.

Alison Baker joined the call at 7:05 pm.

Jim Anderson then reported on Security Committee activity. He reviewed the Community Policing Action Cooperative (“CPAC”) meeting notes for the period of July 12th – August 11th. Anderson noted there was a resident burglary, but the suspect was known to the resident. He stated that most crime in the neighborhood seems to be amongst known parties and are not stranger crimes. There have been some burglaries, but they appear to be at unlocked homes and garages. Anderson encouraged the Board to remind neighbors to lock their cars, homes, and garages. Generally speaking, crime in the neighborhood remains low.

Murray then reported on Membership Committee activity. The membership mailing will be hitting mailboxes this week. Murray noted that several volunteers worked the second half of last week to stuff envelopes and expressed his thanks to those individuals. The membership letters are customized based on the prior membership level to encourage membership growth. The mailing also includes the relevant forms, a letter from the President, and a flyer on the Mums Sale. Murray also noted that he intends to publicize the membership drive on social media. Lastly, he stated that he will begin working on the 2021 calendar and that the Board should expect an email prior to the October meeting.

Next, Bader reported on Beautification Committee activity. She reminded the Board that the Mums Sale is this Saturday and requested that the Board please advertise to residents and friends. There will be no limit on purchases, within reason. Volunteers will be wearing masks, and Bader is hopeful that customers will also wear masks.

McFarland then reported on Communications Committee activity, which was provided to the Board via email prior to the meeting. McFarland noted that a draft of the newsletter has been emailed to the Board and he requested that comments be provided by Wednesday afternoon. McFarland noted that the WPHA website went down yesterday because GoDaddy stopped supporting the theme. The website is now a “default” website, which means that things are operational and people can make a membership payment. There is a ticket in to GoDaddy to work on a new “theme”, but there is no time frame for completion.

Baker inquired as to when McFarland needs information for the holiday events for newsletter purposes. McFarland stated that for inclusion in the November newsletter, he would like all information by October 25th.

Next, Bader requested updates on events. First, Murray discussed the Hawaiian Ice Truck event. He stated that it was a very successful event, especially for the middle of a weekday. There were 60 people in attendance, most of whom were children. It was an easy event as far as volunteer needs. Murray is looking forward to hosting the event next year as it received a lot of positive feedback from residents. He also noted that the man who owned the Kona ice truck was grateful for the support and easy to work with.

New Business

Bader thanked Board members and volunteers for submitting bios for inclusion on the website. She noted that they may not be able to be published with the website issues in time for voting for the next Board but will be added as soon as possible and remain up for the remainder of the year.

Becky Schubkegel then provided an update on the volunteer coordinator position. She reminded the Board that the purpose of the position is to streamline volunteers. Schubkegel is working on adding a volunteer survey to the website so that she receives the information directly from interested residents. She will send the survey link so that Board members can direct people to the current survey. Murray noted that the link can also be added to the newsletter and social media platforms. Murray and Bader thanked Schubkegel for her work as the volunteer coordinator.

Next, Alex DeMasi provided an update on the Public Improvements Advisory Committee (“PIAC”) proposal. DeMasi has been working with Linetta Thurman, Leah Fitzgerald, and Anderson on the request, which focuses on two big issues: sidewalks and curbs, gutters, missing/dead trees. The group put together a 13-page PIAC request and has received good feedback. PIAC will review all requests in September and October and will select projects in 2021. DeMasi noted that the city was presented with a lot of areas that need updating, and he is hopeful that the city will respond positively, especially with respect to the sidewalks in the neighborhood. Bader thanked DeMasi for his work on the PIAC proposal and inquired as to whether the WPHA proposal is next “in line” if it is not selected for 2021. DeMasi stated that is not clear. He will try to continually follow-up to gauge where our

proposal is in the process. DeMasi has worked with Councilperson Bough's office to follow-up on the proposal.

Bader then asked if there is anything the WPHA can do to help with the proposal. DeMasi stated that the most important thing is that if a sidewalk near a home is in disrepair, report it to 311 to get it on the city's radar. Thurman noted she has heard of neighbors falling due to the deteriorating sidewalks. DeMasi stated that neighbors should be instructed to report those issues to 311 as the city will prioritize safety concerns. Bader encouraged the Board to discuss the PIAC proposal with residents and encourage them to use 311 to report issues.

Next, Secretary Amanda Rhodes discussed the revisions to the By-Laws, which were provided to the Board via email prior to the meeting. With respect to the electronic voting, she stated that the Board has the option of making the change "sunset" (i.e. expire at a certain date) or permanent (applicable to future elections). There is no legal distinction. The By-Laws as presented via email have language making the change permanent. If the Board makes the change permanent, the Board can always revise the By-Laws again in the future. The Board then discussed whether to sunset the electronic voting changes. Murray stated that he would be curious to see the interest in electronic voting before making it permanent. Bader noted that she is hopeful that electronic voting draws more involvement given that it is very difficult to get people to the Annual Meeting. She would like to see the option in the future for resident engagement and would prefer no sunset. Schubkegel agreed and stated that she would be much more likely to engage with an online ballot than attend a meeting if she were a resident. Bader moved to approve the By-Laws as presented (with electronic voting permanent) and Murray seconded. The revised By-Laws were unanimously approved.

Bader then discussed the proposed budget for the next fiscal year, which was provided to the Board via email prior to the meeting. Bader stated that the Finance Committee looked at events from a community gathering standpoint and acknowledged that not all events will happen due to Covid-19 or budget concerns. With respect to Holiday Homes, the Finance Committee concluded that it did not bring people together, it is an individual effort by homeowners, but the WPHA can still promote it via social media and acknowledge decorated homes on social media. The Finance Committee chose not to fund the event because it does not gather residents and the use of gift cards was out of line with other practices. Thus, the proposal is that Holiday Homes be promoted by the WPHA, but not funded.

Murray remarked that the amount of the prizes is skewed, and the amount of the gift cards to judges is also too much in light of the total WPHA budget and that it seems the same homes are winning. Tillotson noted that the WPHA could avoid prizes on the event by publishing winner information more widely.

Baker respectfully disagreed. She stated that the winners do not repeat for two years and that a home is not allowed to win more than twice. Also, the WPHA promotes and publishes honorable mentions, so the event is encouraging 20-25 homes in any given year and it is not always the same homes. With respect to the elimination of prizes, she noted that the WPHA spends large amounts of money on other events and the Holiday Homes winners are always paid members, so the prizes are going to members.

Rhodes inquired as to the prize amounts. Baker stated that it is currently a \$50 gift card to Sutherland's for each of the top three homes, a block party for the best block, and small gift cards (\$10-\$15) for judges as a thank you. Bader noted that with those prize amounts, the WPHA is basically giving away half of a membership for one event and that the WPHA does not give out gift cards near that amount at other events. Baker responded that the purpose is to encourage the neighborhood to be beautified and stated that the original award was \$25. She proposed a \$25 gift card instead of \$50.

McFarland stated that if the WPHA did not offer a prize to the top three, he does not think people would not decorate their homes. He also does not think the homes would not be members if not in the running for a gift card. McFarland proposed that the WPHA still host the event but instead of giving a gift card as a prize provide greater publicity to the top homes. Rhodes agreed with McFarland. She does not believe the gift card is the motivator behind spending the time to decorate a home, rather the pride associated with winning is the motivator. Anderson concurred and noted that winners seem to like the recognition and signs more than the prizes. Schubkegel noted that public recognition goes a long way, and perhaps the WPHA could include interviews with the winning homes in the newsletter.

Maureen Hardy stated that while the winners may not decorate for the prize, the event needs to continue. Baker requested clarification on whether the event will receive no funding or no funding for prizes. She noted there are other expenses related to the event. Specifically, she requested \$100 for sign maintenance. The signs need to be refurbished this year and the WPHA needs a new Best Block sign. Baker noted that the signs are made by a resident.

Tillotson asked how often the sign maintenance needs to be considered in the budget. Baker responded that the signs will likely need to be refurbished every 5-10 years. It was identified at the end of last year that the current signs needed to be updated. Anderson agreed and noted that the signs were worn and not appealing. Murray stated that he is in support of funding for signs. Bader moved to add \$100 to the Holiday Homes event for sign maintenance. There were no objections.

Next, Bader discussed the Holiday Caroling event. She noted that the Finance Committee budgeted \$25, the same amount the event received last year. Baker requested \$75 to redo the caroling books and noted this cost reflects adding lyric pages, adding music pages, and new binding. Murray inquired as to whether these costs will be reimbursements. Baker stated that they will likely be reimbursement and the project is being led by volunteer Laura Lavallee. Bader moved to change the Holiday Caroling event budget to \$75. There were no objections.

Bader noted that with the change in budgeted amounts for the holiday events, the budget has increased by \$150. This brings the grand total for the 2020-2021 Fiscal Year Budget to \$32,911. Bader reminded the Board that the budget is a guideline/ceiling, and that the budget does not mean these amounts will be spent. The Finance Committee will continue to monitor the budget and expenses throughout the fiscal year. Bader moved to approve the 2020-2021 Fiscal Year Budget at \$32,911 and Murray seconded. The Budget was unanimously approved.

Bader then gave a presidential summary of the last year. She noted that Covid-19 greatly impacted the vision and hopes of the Board. She highlighted that the Board was able to hold three events (with the Mums Sale this Saturday), and the events were safe for residents. Bader personally thanked Murray for his leadership in event planning and the volunteers who assisted with the events. Bader also thanked Murray and Anderson for delivering welcome kits to new residents. Next, Bader noted that the WPHA has strengthened its organization through the creation of the volunteer coordinator position, city liaison position, and Finance Committee. She thanked the Board members and volunteers and looks forward to working with each person next year to help grow and make better the WPHA.

Meeting adjourned at 8:29 pm.

Minutes submitted by Amanda Rhodes.

*** This meeting was held via G-Suite conference call pursuant to the [Covid-19 stay-at-home order](#) issued by Mayor Quinton Lucas on March 21, 2020.**