

WARD PARKWAY HOMES ASSOCIATION BOARD MEETING MINUTES

January 5, 2021

Held via G-Suite conference call*

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

Board members absent: none

Other attendees: Linetta Thurman

Meeting was called to order at 7:02 pm by President Nancy Bader. A quorum was present.

Guest Introductions: none

Minutes from the November 5, 2020 WPHA Board meeting were reviewed. Bader moved to approve the minutes and Secretary Amanda Rhodes seconded. The November 5, 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 \$9,752.33 (273 homes) and Security Patrol dues paid to date are \$12,160.00 (202 homes). This means that there are currently 71 Gold memberships and 202 Platinum memberships. Total income over expenses for Fiscal Year 2020-2021 currently stands at \$15,349.03.

Tillotson noted there was a recent influx of memberships thanks to communications about the discount expiring at the end of the year. Memberships increased from 258 homes to 273 homes. Tillotson further noted that five homes paid twice, and those homes have already been refunded.

Tillotson stated that the WPHA is getting closer to having the memberships necessary to cover the Security Patrol costs. However, she noted that there remains a budget shortfall. Bader requested that the Finance Committee meet this month to discuss recommendations on addressing the budget shortfall.

B. Michael McFarland called in at 7:05 pm

Next, Linetta Thurman reported on Security Committee activity, which was provided via email prior to the meeting. She summarized the Community Policing Action Cooperative ("CPAC") meeting minutes. McFarland thanked Thurman on providing the CPAC minutes via email as it makes it easier to compile newsletter points.

Vice President Richard Murray then reported that he had no Membership Committee update for this month. He reiterated that there were additional memberships as a result of the end-of-year push.

Likewise, Bader noted that she had no Beautification Committee report for this month.

Becky Schubkegel and Alex DeMasi called in at 7:09 pm.

Next, McFarland reported on Communications Committee activity, which was provided to the Board via email prior to the meeting. He reminded Board members to provide comments on the draft newsletter by Thursday. Bader noted that she was happy to see that the November newsletter was opened by many residents. McFarland noted that the WPHA has a great open rate compared to similar organizations. Schubkegel thanked McFarland for providing space for volunteer outreach in the newsletter.

Events Update

Alison Baker provided a report via email prior to the meeting on holiday events. Baker noted that she was bummed that Caroling Covid-style did not generate interest. McFarland thanked Baker for the creative suggestion.

New Business

Murray and Bader presented the 2021 Strategic Plan, which was emailed to the Board prior to the meeting. The purpose of the 2021 Strategic Plan is to give purpose and structure to the upcoming year, so that the Board can look back in 2022 and quantify its accomplishments. Murray noted the items in the 2020 Strategic Plan which were unable to be completed: database, branding, mission statement, survey, tangible examples of Security Patrol benefits, and the block party coordinator position.

Bader then discussed Board development for 2021, noting that the year will be challenging with Covid concerns. She requested that each Board member reflect upon his/her own personal commitment to the WPHA and Board, identify his/her intentions for this year, and question how the Board can continue to bring value to members and work as a Board.

Next, Murray addressed administration. He noted that it may not be possible to tackle the database this year with budget constraints. Murray will explore a card reader which can be linked to the PayPal. He stated that the card reader will give the WPHA the ability to open an online store, take memberships real-time at events, and provide for expedited service at the Mums Sale and other potential Beautification Committee sales. Baker inquired as to the cost of a card reader. Murray responded that it is a minimal expense and he will explore non-profit pricing. The intention is to purchase the mid-point model (verses the basic version, which is similar to Square), but he has not yet had conversations with the sales representative.

Murray then discussed communication and noted there are many ongoing items from 2020. First, the Communications Committee will continue to implement the marketing plan, which includes items like the newsletter. Second, the Communications Committee will endeavor to create a mission statement, which will ensure the organization as a whole is heading towards the same goals. The purpose of the mission statement is to give the Board a structure in decision-making. Lastly, the Communications Committee plans to conduct a survey of residents this year.

Maureen Hardy called in at 7:28 pm

Next, Murray discussed memberships. He stated that the WPHA has made significant strides in memberships and thanked McFarland for implementing a successful strategy. Murray noted that last year (January 2020), the membership numbers were 60 Gold memberships and 164 Platinum memberships, for a total of 224 memberships. This year, there are 71 Gold memberships and 202 Platinum memberships, for a total of 273 memberships. Over the past year, the WPHA has seen a total increase of 49 memberships, with 11 of those Gold memberships and 38 of those Platinum memberships. Murray stated that he intends to implement a program to upgrade Gold memberships to Platinum memberships to close the Security Patrol budget shortfall. In addition to this, Murray intends to accept memberships at each event once the WPHA purchases a card reader. With respect to welcome kits, Murray noted that he will bring down the cost of each kit this year, however there will be an increased incentive to join the WPHA. For example, the welcome kit will no longer contain a pint glass, but a home will receive a pint glass once it becomes a member pursuant to the offer in the welcome kit. Lastly, Murray stated that he will explore the effectiveness of the Mid-Year Membership Drive and, should the drive occur this year, will close the online store in August so that residents do not pay for a membership so close to the start of the new fiscal year.

Murray mentioned that the Security Committee goals remain the same as in 2020. Likewise, the Events goals remain similar to 2020, with an emphasis on increasing member value.

Murray then inquired as to whether there were any general questions on the 2021 Strategic Plan. Schubkegel asked whether the mission statement would be a committee decision or a Board decision. McFarland responded that he will discuss the process with Bader, but normally a committee will craft the mission statement and then bring it to the full Board for discussion and approval.

Finally, Bader discussed the efficiency of Board meetings. She noted that last year she intended to add time segments to the discussion of agenda items. Bader is cognizant of the time restrictions of Board members and stated that her goal is to make Board meetings no longer than one hour. In pursuit of this goal, the submission of reports via email prior to the meeting is essential and helpful. Hardy noted that meetings used to always be an hour, and she agrees with trying to limit a meeting to that amount of time.

Bader then opened discussion on the proposed discount card. She noted that she had a discussion with Baker, the chairperson of the Discount Card Ad Hoc Committee ("Card Committee"), on the funding mechanism in December. Per the By-Laws, when an item is not in the budget, it must be submitted to the Executive Committee for approval. In December, the Executive Committee decided to fund the discount card project at a budget of \$220. Baker has since requested an increase in funding, as outlined in her email prior to the meeting. Per the By-Laws, when an item is budgeted (as the discount card is now budgeted at \$220) and an increase in funding is requested, that request must also be submitted to the Executive Committee for approval. Although the budget increase must still be approved by the Executive Committee, Bader believes the full Board should discuss the selling of the discount card and the intention of the discount card.

Baker disagreed with the characterization of the request. She noted that she requested a certain amount of money, and the Executive Committee approved the budget at lesser

amount, which she considered a counterproposal. The Card Committee declined the budget approved by the Executive Committee and requested further discussion on the proposal. She noted that 11 members have committed to purchasing cards.

Schubkegel stated that when it comes to selling the cards, she believes the focus should be on selling memberships and not cards. Baker clarified that card purchases would be limited to existing members.

Murray then inquired as to the intention for the card. Is it intended to be a member benefit (and incentive for membership) or a thank you to current members? Baker responded that the intention is that the card be an on-going member benefit. Bader stated that given the current financial situation of the WPHA, she believes the card should be a thank you to members who have paid for a membership during Covid. She further noted that although the intent is to bring the card back each year, she does not think it is prudent to communicate it as on-going membership benefit and fundraiser. Bader stated that she does not believe the WPHA should sell the cards at this time.

Baker noted that selling the cards allows for self-funding of the project. Bader responded that she is concerned that the current infrastructure cannot support the logistics of selling the card. Murray agreed. He suggested that in this pilot year, the discount card be offered as a thank you to members for helping fund the WPHA through Covid. If a member needs an extra card, he suggested just giving an extra card this year. He noted that the logistics of selling a card will be difficult, and it would require additional time to figure it out. Murray also noted that there is a limitation with PayPal in that the website will not allow a purchase to be limited to members. Baker stated that she envisioned using the roster to confirm membership prior to distribution. Murray noted that there is no reason to further delay the discount card to figure out the logistics of selling extras and reiterated his proposal that the WPHA provide an extra card at no charge to any member who requests one. Providing an extra card at no charge will also eliminate any need to get a plastic card for this year. If a cardstock card is damaged, the WPHA can provide another cardstock card. Murray noted that the cost of a cardstock card is significantly less than the cost of a plastic card, and this year the Board needs to prioritize the fiscal health of the WPHA and the need to fund the Security Patrol.

McFarland stated that he appreciated the hard work that Baker and the Card Committee have done on the project, especially during this Covid year. He commended the Card Committee on the great response from businesses. He stated that from a marketing standpoint, he recommends offering the discount card as a thank you and saying something to the effect of: "This has been a difficult year. Thank you for your support of the WPHA." If the discount card is successful, next year the letter can say something to the effect of: "We had such a tremendous response to the thank you discount card last year, that we have decided to offer it as a membership benefit this year."

Baker noted that if the discount cards are printed on cardstock and extra cards are provided at no extra charge, the WPHA may incur additional costs for stamps. Schubkegel volunteered to hand-deliver any extra cards.

Tillotson noted that the Board can communicate that this is a cardstock card for a new pilot program, and should the program be a success then the WPHA will consider upgrading to a plastic card. McFarland supported this idea.

Bader summarized the discount card discussion as follows: (1) most Board members view the discount card as a thank you card for the pilot year; (2) the discount card is not to be sold this year; and (3) extra cardstock cards will be provided to member households at no charge.

Baker stated that she will revisit these parameters in August for the next discount card. For this pilot year, she has no objection to marketing the discount card as a thank you to members. Bader then inquired as to whether Baker was still requesting additional funding for the project. Baker confirmed that her request still stands. Rhodes inquired if the funding increase (from the \$220 budget) is necessary given that the discount cards will be printed on cardstock. Baker noted that her funding request contained two amounts: the increased amount for plastic cards and the reallocation of funds from the holiday events. Baker has waived the request for the increased amount for plastic cards, so she is not requesting an increase in the \$220 budgeted amount.

Baker then inquired as to whether the Executive Committee will discuss selling the discount cards. Bader stated that the majority of the Board is in agreement that the card will not be sold this year, but the Board is open to selling the discount card in the future. Bader clarified that if a paid member requests an extra card this year, the WPHA will provide that member with an additional card at no charge.

Next, Baker inquired as to whether the discount card will be used as door prizes at WPHA events. Bader stated that the card will not be used as a prize because all residents, not just members, attend WPHA events. Rhodes stated that it is bad optics if the WPHA offers the discount card as a door prize to non-members at an event where the Board is also soliciting memberships. The Board should not offer a member thank you to non-members, even as a prize.

Bader noted that since Baker has waived her request for additional funding, the discount card project is approved at a budget of \$220. Baker inquired as to who will take requests for extra cards. Murray noted that would be the responsibility of the Card Committee. Rhodes, Murray, and Schubkegel volunteered to hand-deliver any extra cards to avoid the cost of postage. McFarland noted that for the sake of convenience, when the WPHA email receives a member request for an extra card, he will forward that information to the volunteers for hand-delivery.

McFarland requested clarification on the card printer. Baker noted that the cardstock cards will be printed by VistaPrint. McFarland stated that he will follow-up with Baker on details regarding printing. Bader noted that the project will go forth at the \$220 amount previously approved by the Executive Committee and thanked everyone for a productive discussion.

Meeting adjourned at 8:16 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.