



Board Meeting Minutes

January 6, 2026

Waldo Area Business Assoc.

7222 Wornall Rd, KCMO 64114

Also held via G-Suite Conference Call

Board members present: President Richard Murray, Vice President Amanda Rhodes, Treasurer Gaye Tillotson, B Michael McFarland, Secretary Sarah Schlachter, Justin Hutman, Alison Baker, Melissa Quearry, Andy Hyland

Board members absent:

Others present: Phil Martin

The January 6, 2026 meeting was called to order by Richard Murray at 7:02pm.

Richard Murray asked for revisions or feedback to the December minutes. Gaye Tillotson noted that Juie Whittman's name was misspelled on page 2, 5th paragraph. Murray asked for a motion to approve the December minutes; Justin Hutman motioned, Alison Baker seconded the motion. The motion was approved.

Financials:

Tillotson reported that there was an error on the dates in the Financial Committee report. She also noted that there are a few new memberships which were not reflected in the financial report. On the credit card bill there are charges for GoDaddy, ExtraSpace, Google Suite, MailChimp, and Alamar Printing. Tillotson noted that our investment went up slightly. Murray shared that the grant funding hit our account in late November.

Security:

Melissa Quearry stated that there is no security report. She has contacted Officer McKenzie for information. CPAC Patrol meetings have not started up again, so the only meetings happening are at Metro Patrol and are quarterly. Murray suggested reaching out to WABA to get assistance in restarting the CPAC meetings.

Quearry noted that the vacation patrol request form is functioning as intended.

Membership:

2025-2026 Membership

Murray announced that we had 275 members this time last year. This year we are at 223 with a few more to be added. Murray shared that he felt the LYBNT letters were successful. We will have increased cost for security because we are paying more per hour and officers are reporting more hours worked. Amanda Rhodes asked about another LYBNT; B Michael McFarland thought it would be appropriate for March. Tillotson inquired about the amounts for monthly charges and matching the new membership costs. Murray will look into this; we will not retroactively charge for any incorrect amounts.

Tillotson mentioned there are some PayPal payments that are coming from addresses outside of the neighborhood. Linetta Thurman offered to follow up with those addresses to ensure payments are correct.

Andy Hyland asked about the most common way that people sign up for memberships - whether it is by mail or by website. Murray responded that most memberships are by paper mailer form.

Diamond Member Gift Bags

Diamond bags are mostly distributed. There is one bag to be distributed this month, plus those for additional diamond memberships that were initiated during or after the holidays.

Beautification:

Sarah Schlachter reported that the holiday decorations are out of the urns. Spring decorations will be put out closer to spring. Schlachter also reported that she has been in touch with the Heartland Tree Alliance about tree planting around the neighborhood. Once she has more information, she will work with McFarland to provide information for the next newsletter. Quearry asked if these trees were for anywhere; Schlachter responded that these are for easement areas.

Hutman noted that he had done some trash pick up around the 75th Street island. Hutman also noted that there are many traffic signs (“Kids playing”, “Slow Down”, etc.) added by residents on the Terrace St. island. Some of these are in the street and, from a beautification standpoint, these do not look nice. B Michael McFarland noted that we had previously considered a WPHA-branded sign to replace these signs. Murray stated that we could budget for this expense and propose the signage to the families on the street. Hyland will look into feedback from the families who have added those signs.

Communication:

McFarland stated that the communication report is in the board packet. McFarland asked people to send revisions to the newsletter by the end of the day Wednesday. The Board Packet included the schedule of events for the year, the first event is this Friday’s Hoppy Hour.

McFarland summarized the Hale Cook Renovation Design Advisory Team survey results with top three concerns being traffic, trees, soccer field/orchard.

Events:

2026 Events Calendar

Murray stated that the calendar mailer has hit homes.

Holiday Homes/Caroling

Baker reported that caroling had a small crowd of four people, though a few families RSVPed and didn’t show. The group discussed moving this to every-other-year as an event, as well as rebranding it. Baker noted that Holiday Homes had some participants who had never won previously. Signs were picked up and returned to storage.

Hoppy Hour

Schlachter reported that she spoke to Murray and will be prepared to host the event this Friday with the tickets, roster, counter and signage. The event is 4:00-6:00 at Dodson's with the usual ticket allotments for members.

New Business:

Strengthening the Health of the Neighborhood (STHOTN) 2025 Year End Recap

Murray announced that this cycle is officially complete. Neither Thurman nor Murray were able to attend the last meeting, though they connected with the sponsoring organization to do their final visit. Murray noted that the WPHA was encouraged to apply again this year. When 2026 grant year info arrives, Murray will circulate and will bring up for discussion with this group. Murray stated that he felt this was a very worthwhile program and that all our participants learned a great deal about the city and its neighborhoods.

Hale Cook Renovation Design Advisory Team (DAT)

Murray shared that the first meeting of this group was very eye-opening. There were 30-40 people in the room with 5-6 District employees, the project manager, the architect, some civil engineers, 12 members of DAT, and 1 school board member. Murray is the only community representative on the DAT. Other DAT members are teachers and families. Murray shared that his scope at this meeting was narrow as he is not commenting on the renovations inside the school and is focusing on the exterior. Murray stated that he felt the district is pushing their agenda for changes and the WPHA may have more influence than the rest of the DAT because the school community has less empirical data concerning their requests whereas WPHA has taken a survey and provided quantitative data.

District members at the DAT mentioned that schools where their kids attend have similar school design issues, such as 5 lunch periods, blocked egress paths, and poor bathroom facilities. However, the design proposals and the meeting did not address any of these concerns. Murray stated he felt the Design Team was unfriendly to parent and school feedback whereas they are addressing neighborhood concerns such as traffic and trees. District plans for the building include updating HVAC, but there are no plans to address non functioning bathrooms. The kitchen has been sited regularly by the fire department, but there are no plans to address this. The classrooms have 2 outlets on the same wall per classroom, there are no plans to ameliorate this.

Hyland asked what the District's objective is with this plan. Murray stated that they are concerned about storm shelter needs; the building currently does not meet standards and the proposed addition would meet that need. He stated that other elements of the proposed design are not in response to feedback: there was a large teacher and visitor parking lot though many teachers walk to work and there are relatively few visitors to the school. Visitors also typically park easily on neighborhood streets. Murray shared there is supposed to be another meeting, though it is not currently scheduled. This may be a problem for DAT members who cannot attend on short notice due to childcare needs, etc. DAT meetings are not open to the public. Rhodes asked if the plan is still to close Hale Cook next year during construction;

Murray responded that it is the plan, though it has not been publicized. Murray conveyed that he felt the District was not operating in good faith to meet the requests of the DAT or be transparent with their plans.

Schlachter asked when our WPHA minutes will be posted to the WPHA website; McFarland stated that they would be posted after approval at next month's board meeting. Schlachter clarified that Murray's report today was meant for the public and not in any way protected information, Murray confirmed.

Murray concluded by saying there is one more DAT meeting in February and the DAT would be better served to organize and focus on a few requests to gain traction. The overall work plan is to finalize the design in February and to break ground as soon as school is out.

New Business

Murray invited meeting visitor Phil Martin to speak. Martin stated he was present to discuss abandoned houses on the east side of the neighborhood. He mentioned 7225 Pennsylvania had received a complaint after Martin visited the August meeting of the WPHA. Martin noted that it is possible to check the status of investigations on the parcel viewer and it appeared there was no continued activity though the included report from "SKC inspector" did not mention the holes in the roof and it determined that the structure is acceptable. Martin feels that the abandoned houses need to have a city inspector (not a contractor) conduct an inspection and asked how WPHA can help. Murray stated that we have had an inspector come to WPHA meetings previously and we can invite them back. Additionally, he stated that the paper trail we have on 7225 Pennsylvania and 7243 Washington would provide more historical information for the inspector. Murray felt that this city representative would be able to give us more information than is available publicly. Thurman offered to seek out city contacts and try to make a connection. WPHA will let Martin know of any progress and if we will be able to bring any officials to a future board meeting.

Martin also mentioned that there was a possible city ordinance to allow dispensaries to stay open 24 hours and was concerned that there are multiple dispensaries bordering our neighborhood. Schlachter asked if this was related to World Cup efforts and if it would be temporary; Martin was unsure. Rhodes looked online and this appears to be the case. Murray stated that we will look into this issue.

Thurman reported that she delivered 54-55 new resident bags in 2025. Murray provided materials for 50 bags for distribution in 2026. Murray noted we will need more money for supplies.

Murray announced that the next meeting would be February 3, 2026. Rhodes moved to adjourn the meeting. Hutman seconded. The motion passed unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 8:06 pm.

Meeting notes submitted by Sarah Schlachter, Secretary, Board of Directors.