AHNH Board Meeting

March 9, 2021

6:30pm

Via Zoom

Attendees: Jackie Bastyr Cooper, Ashley Gibson, Nicholas Griffiths, Josh Grotheer, Rebecca Koerschner, Michael Horecki, George Ermert, Neil Dinndorf, Grant Roeming, David Makovec

Absent: Samantha Castro, Shawn Page, Jodi Wabiszewski

6:34 Approval of January 2021 Board Minutes—Jackie

Motion to approve - George, 2nd - Josh (motion passes 10-0)

6:38 President’s Report - Ashley

* Fyi - Brandi Grayson running for District 14 alder; she had reached out to discuss with board about hosting a town hall; at January meeting board decided that we are not equipped to host town halls, etc. but would share information through our channels (which was done this week via email and on the website - for both Brandi Grayson and Sheri Carter) [David mentioned that as a 501c3 we are unable to endorse candidates so our position was the correct choice; hosting a town hall would not be problematic, but our position was a good choice; this may come up again with school board elections, etc.]
* Fyi2 - website is now live (see previous email from Ashley with details re training videos); request from Ashley to go to website and test links, etc. [feedback from George: looks good, professional!]
* NextDoor - should we as a board be taking a role in welcoming new members (?); block captain asked if they could do welcomes as a board; should be establish an informal group with block captains for welcoming new neighbors? [Neil: this is not our message board so we should be careful; Rebecca: seems like a large number of people are looking for information re events from NextDoor; George: NextDoor is becoming a big thing for the neighborhood, we can’t control it but we should use it, useful tool because people are on it - use to our advantage; Michael: should we use it as a “one way street” - a way to direct people to our website - so that we direct the conversation from where we want them to happen; Nicholas: welcome message with link to website, message to block captains will be a generic message to post if they see a new neighborhood member
* Lighting in neighborhood - adding street lights in neighborhood has been requested for years (this isn’t a new request); survey was sent out to those affected; number of people in neighborhood are against this proposal and have been encouraged to contact city; Sheri Carter and others at the meeting are not pushing this, they are responding to requests they have received for years [George: 2nd time this has been done/brought up in the neighborhood in the past 5-6 years, there are areas that are really dark and do not feel safe in the neighborhood; Neil: started with additional lights in areas near 7-11 to reduce crime, which appears to have helped, now concern with light pollution seems to be coming up]; Ashley recommends that we follow-up with Sheri to find out what the concerns are, and if widespread

7:00 Updating Bylaws - David

* Goals - clean everything up, duplicative spots, confusing sections, areas without a purpose; some substantive changes include updated board member roles, specifically recording and corresponding secretary and newsletter editor; elections and annual meeting - changes to language, specifically to add option to hold virtual meetings and eligibility for anyone to run for a board position and publishing requirements prior to annual meeting; ability to directly nominate someone to the board; specifics re unopposed position elections; political endorsement procedure (i.e. non-partisan stance per requirements of 501c3); any member in good standing can propose changes to bylaws - just need language in the bylaws that describes how this is done; would like to have this completed before annual meeting so it can be presented at that time for approval (not sure it needs a full vote?)
* ACTION ITEM (Ashley): upload bylaws to new website (was on old website)

7:10 Membership Outreach Update - George

* Mailer (postcard) went out last Friday (via Every Door Direct mail program)
* Newsletter coming up
* Email/digital abilities for more outreach

7:11 Budget & Membership Update—Neil

* Broke even on postcard to cover cost of mailer (16 new memberships, 11 in mailbox, 5 online)
* Time spent on backend of new website; not as intuitive as hoping, but working with Wanda Jean
* 73 members (56 now, 37 at this time last year); received a number of new memberships in March last year so expect the same this year
* Savings $7,718.20
* Checking $1,202.62
* PayPal $191.20
* $9,012.02 total
* Full Financials to follow
* Ashley: Rebecca - are you receiving new member emails? Neil would like to know list in MailChimp - Rebecca will get list and post to Google Drive or send to Neil; Is there a way to get auto-updates or something between website and MailChimp (?); Are people on MailChimp list not current members?
* Neil: Josh - any ad partners? (working on this)
* ACTION ITEM: Neil will send current membership list to Rebecca

7:18 Neighborhood Survey - Rebecca

* 40 people responded already (max number we can see details); many restrictions with free SurveyMonkey account (can’t download information either); Rebecca will look at costs of a paid membership (and send to Ashley and Neil to see if it works with budget)
* Decent amount of comments and suggestions already; will summarize after we allow people more time to complete (will send at least one reminder via NextDoor, etc.)

7:22 Events Update - Samantha (absent)

* Dates set for scavenger hunt - will span a full week and will be same week as neighborhood cleanup (start date of April 24); reminders provided at cleanup; will ask for photos, etc. to be emailed for newsletter
* Date for annual meeting set: Tuesday, October 11, 2021
* Michael will confirm dates with Samantha so they are added to newsletter

7:25 Newsletter Update - Michael

* More content than what could fit - good problem to have!
* Send any updates for current newsletter by Sunday, March 14
* George: are we able to add any return envelopes for membership? [Nicholas has envelopes; Ashley believes this is a manual process for block captains to stuff envelopes into newsletters; Josh: can block captains get a list to filter out envelopes from those who are already members? George: not worth the effort because we have enough envelopes; there is nothing in the newsletter that talks about what the envelopes are for, i.e. membership; Micheal will include a content block in newsletter about membership payments going into envelope; Ashley: only this newsletter will include the envelope]

7:29 Block Captain Update - Nicholas

* 5 attendees, then 4 (plus Nicholas and Ashley)
* NextDoor discussed
* Questions that came up: When can we expect next newsletter? Phone directory? Difficult to do a phone directory, can we do this on the website? [Ashley: board conversations have been had about the time and effort required to put together a directory; there is a population in the neighborhood that is probably not being met with electronic resources; Neil: the legwork required is significant, not worth the time/effort even though we know a subset of neighbors prefer a directory; Nicholas: agree it is very labor intensive, suggest block captains work with their neighbors to create their own directory, George thought this was a great idea! Neil: suggests that we should have a blurb or article in the newsletter about the directory not being printed anymore, and other options that are available; Ashley: can you easily generate a directory from this website in PDF format? Neil: thought there was a membership login area of website to look up this information
* ACTION ITEM: phone directory should be a topic at the next board meeting
  + Nicholas will follow-up with block captains to get their feedback
* Mailer feedback: need to have in Spanish if we do another mailer (David agreed this was a great suggestion; Jackie suggested a QR code;
* ACTION ITEM: add a Google Doc with “ideas for the next mailer”

Additional Topics for discussion:

* David - block captain map on the website is great! Props to Ean! (Nicholas agrees!)
* Michael - city is bidding on town of Madison merger area (Ashley: need to discuss how this impacts our neighborhood, because there will be changes for a number of residents); how will this affect residents - blurb in newsletter (George suggest talking to city to get information; Ashley has contacts)

7:47 Adjourn