

Garden District Civic Association Board Meeting Minutes
Monday, January 14, 2013, 6:30 p.m.

The meeting was held at Mindy Pointek's home. Present were Mindy, Ray Mack, Dorothy Prowell, Beth Floyd, David Franz, Andy Johnson, Jay Noland, Nancy Grush, and Willie and Mary Fontenot.

The minutes from the November meeting were unanimously approved.

In Rosary's absence, Ray gave the Treasurer's report. Rosary sent all the information to the board ahead of the meeting. Ray guessed that there are approximately 215 members. Beth updated the board on the committee activities. Beth and Andy worked on the data base. Margaret Bach helped by getting a list of all the owners through the Assessor's Office. This brought 200-250 new names into the data base. They are not all correct. Andy was not listed as an owner. Some had two different owners for the same address so they decided that they will just send them both a dues letter.

Ray gave a security report. There was not as much crime in 2012 so money was saved by lessening patrols until the end of the year when there were problems all over the city. The association increased patrols at that point so it was good that we had the money to do it.

Dorothy asked about putting extra money in a CD or an interest bearing account when there is an excess. The board agreed that interest is so low right now that it isn't worth it. Ray thought that it might be helpful to look at the GDCA's monthly expenses and suggested that we never allow the balance to go below \$10,000.

There are some long-range goals that Ray has thought about for the GDCA. He wants us to think about the money in the bank and the best way to use it.

1. The Board decided earlier that it did not want to pursue a crime prevention district, but if residents want to, he thinks the GDCA should support them and pay the upfront costs. There would be the expense of an election, plus other expenses.
2. There is a growing problem of rental homes in the Garden District owned by out-of-state landlords. Rentals are not usually as well kept as owner occupied homes. There is a house next to Rosary that is a problem. Ray and Willie met with attorney Elliott Atkinson and discussed the possibility of restructuring the Garden District so it would have deed restrictions. Mr. Atkinson has done this for other neighborhoods in Baton Rouge. Willie and Jay offered to look into this.
3. Give programs in the Garden District a high profile so they attract the interest of the City. The infrastructure, such as sidewalks, is failing. It would be nice to bring attention to these.

Andy supported these three ideas. Willie suggested that since there will be sewer work done in the next couple of years in our neighborhood, a committee should be formed to meet with the councilwoman and DPW before the work is done to discuss outcomes and possibly get sidewalks repaired as part of the infrastructure work. Ray liked the idea and Willie offered to head the committee. Ray commented on the rocks that are being used on S. Eugene's roadwork right now,

which are washing away in the rain. Mindy commented that the asphalt on St. Rose did the same thing.

The Annual Meeting is scheduled for February 14th from 2-4 p.m. at the Church of Christian Science on Park Blvd. at Wisteria. He would like the board to meet at his house after the meeting for another meeting.

Ray will send board members the agenda.

Details for the meeting are:

1. Ray will bring a table and three chairs.
2. David will handle getting and giving out door prize tickets.
3. Dorothy will volunteer at the sign-in table.
4. Mary will provide sign-in sheets.
5. Door-prizes will be 15 t-shirts and 10 cookbooks
6. Board members will wear name tags. Who will make them?

Speakers:

Sustainability Tour:

1. Dorothy will give an overview of the Sustainability Tour.
2. One of the Tour Guides will speak about Renewable Food.
3. Mary will discuss what Mike Thibodeaux did to their house to seal it.

Crime Prevention:

1. Sgt. Stone will speak about specifics in the Garden District. He'll be asked about typical activities of the patrols that go through the neighborhood so the residents can better understand their philosophy and what and why they do whatever it is that they do. It would be good if neighbors better understood. Jay suggested that he also be asked to address any helpful information about crime prevention districts, any facts or things we should know. Willie suggested that he again remind people that they should report all problems to the police and tell us what we can do as an association. Ray said he would like to have follow-up reports when people are caught.
2. Ray will talk about security from the Board's point of view, including what we are doing now. He will ask if there is any interest in a crime prevention district.

Easter Egg Hunt Social: We need a chairman. Easter is March 31st. The hunt is usually the week before that.

Ray announced that he would like everyone to write up the details of what they do this year for his notebook so it can be a guide for future boards. Ray has all the details of the Champagne stroll in his notebook.

Mary offered to be on the Nominating Committee for new board members. She passed a paper around with names on it asking for suggestions. Mike Schexnayder has offered to help. Dorothy would like all the board members to notify her as to when they started on the board so it can be determined how many years they have been on the board. Terms are for two years so some board members will need to run for re-election.

Dorothy gave the Sustainability Tour report. Five houses have agreed to be on the tour on April 21, 2013, from 1-5 pm. That is the Saturday before Earth Day. Besides the three speakers who have agreed to come, she will let the homeowners invite whatever company worked on their house to come talk about what they do and why. Ray hopes to have hybrid cars in his driveway. Dorothy has planned how to advertise. It was suggested that she add Donna Britt to her list of people to notify. Mindy will put it in the March newsletter. Compensation was discussed. Willie asked to get gasoline monetary compensation for Mike Thibodeaux, who will be driving from New Iberia. David suggested we put advertisements as a thank you in the newsletters all this year. Willie suggested that as part of the advertisement they could highlight the people who own the homes, such as Adam Knapp, with the Chamber of Commerce. Dorothy said that she will be talking with the owners further. She thought that might be something that Amy Wold, with the *Advocate*, might want to do. There was a discussion about selling tickets for a small fee of \$5-\$10. No decision was made. Mary offered to call the Justice of the Peace to find out where she bought her biodegradable signs.

Mary requested reimbursement for past and future expenses of coping new neighbor packets. Past expenses were approximately \$40 and more packets are needed. Permission was granted.

David showed the board the beautiful postcard that Paul Miller designed to send as a thank you to people who have paid their dues. Andy enhanced it with a heartfelt message of appreciation. David said they are planning to have a different photo each year and will involve the neighbors by letting them post their photos of the neighborhood on the web site.

Jay and Paul have been discussing new GDCA signs over the holidays. David, Willie and Ray offered to be on the sign committee. Ray is going to ask a carpenter who has been working at his house how much he would charge to make signs about the same size as the ones that we have, but without the picture, with only words on them. Ray would like them to say "A Great American Neighborhood." David suggested that this should be made as something that is placed on top and can be removed in a couple of years since it was a 2012 honor.

The meeting adjourned at 8:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Mary Fontenot