

GARDEN DISTRICT CIVIC ASSOCIATION

BOARD MEETING November 18, 2008

Attendance:

Tim Paige, Sonya Pickens, Paul Miller, Ray Mack, Mike Schexnayder, Carolyn Schwarzhoff, Alex Tucker, Mary Fontenot, Greta Corona, Anna Hanks

Sonya is taking minutes this month because Mary has an injured hand.

Tim Paige called the meeting to order at 7pm by asking for approval of the September minutes. Alex noted that he was present but was not listed as such. There was a motion to approve the minutes with that amendment, a second, and all members present voted "Aye".

Greta Corona spoke to limiting time for each agenda item to 10 minutes. She feels that meetings are going on too long and that we should be able to finish meetings generally within an hour. At the September meeting it took 1 hour and 15 minutes just to get through the Committee reports. Ray Mack made a motion to limit each agenda item to 10 minutes, with the option that the board can then vote to extend discussion another 5 minutes. Mike Schexnayder seconded. All member present voted "Aye."

Ray Mack gave the security report. The Security Committee has decided to hold a garage sale/ plant sale/ bake sale on April the 25th @ Ragusa's on Government Street as a fund raiser for our extra security patrols. They will be having a planning meeting on December 2nd @ 6:30pm @ Joe Magee's house. Ray will send out a message about the planning meeting on the list-serve. Mary will put a notice in the upcoming flyer that lets people know to start saving their belongings to donate to the garage sale.

One resident has offered to let us use her garage for storage of the donated goods, but we will likely need additional storage space. Ray intends to ask Tom @ Government Street Hardware if they have space we can borrow.

Ray also recommends that we plan to have a policeman present at the garage sale for the whole day as well as at least 20 volunteers to run the sale. He will put out a request for volunteers on the list-serve and we will put something in a newsletter before April. The Committee will advertise the sale city-wide. We discussed sales tax/ income tax. We feel that we will not need to charge sales tax, but we will likely have to pay income tax as this is not income from our "core business". However, we will have some expenses to net against the income.

Broadmoor subdivision had a sale similar to this to raise money for their neighborhood. The man who organized the sale will be at the December 2nd meeting to provide guidance.

Ray also reported that Trick-or-Treating seemed to go very well this year. The board all agreed, and none of us had heard any reports of any negative incidents. We still had a large crowd of people through the neighborhood as usual. We all agreed that the early trick-or-treating from 5:30-6:00 for the little kids in the neighborhood worked out great and we should do that again.

The Social Events Committee reported on the picnic in the park held on November 9th. The weather was perfect. Having the picnic at the park was great because the kids played on the playground equipment which allowed the adults to visit. Tara Wicker, newly elected member of the Metro Council for our area, brought her family to the picnic. Everyone really enjoyed being able to meet and talk with her. We agreed that we should invite city officials to our neighborhood events more often.

The Holiday Lighting Contest Committee is still debating a date, but it is between the 16th and the 18th of December. The Board approved \$200 for the Committee in case they are not able to get prizes donated for the winners of each category. In the past they have not had to purchase prizes. Caroling will be on December 5th. Mary will ask Tara Wicker to come and bring her children caroling. She seems to want to be responsive to the issues in the area.

Paul Miller reported on the website. Many board members commented that the website is looking great! Paul suggested that we add a “virtual garage sale” feature which would allow residents to buy and sell things to each other. We currently don’t allow that on the list-serve.

Now we can start advertising the web-site more. We were holding off on that because Paul wanted to get approval from the owners’ whose homes are featured in photos on the site. Sonya reported that we did get our first payment through the paypal account that Paul set up on the website.

Paul also told the board that any of the board can add things like events, articles from the advocate, etc. to the website by using the password that was given discretely to the board members present.

Someone asked if the Drehr housing survey was linked on the site. Mike and Paul said yes, but it’s difficult to get to and they plan to try to make it easier to access.

Sonya needs to start doing the monthly income statement in a format that will be easy to post to the site.

Mike reported that Anna Forbes, who has been working on the Camellia House problems with DSS, received a letter from DSS that has been posted on the website. The letter says they will continue to monitor the situation.

Mike gave the beautification report, which has focused on problems with Allied Waste picking up our garbage. Since Gustav, we have had trouble getting them to pick up trash in the alleys again. They say some are not cleared of debris, but we have reports from residents that the alleys ARE clear, so there is confusion as to what’s clear and what isn’t.

Mike plans to write up a document outlining residents’ responsibilities in regards to alley maintenance. Mike also plans to let people know through the list-serve, in a newsletter, and on the website, that

- 1> Allied Waste has said that they can help residents clear large debris out of the alleys, but they need to know where help is needed.
- 2> It is ok to trim or prune at the back of your neighbor’s property if something is encroaching on the alley.
- 3> We need to know where people are having problems with Allied Waste. Which alleys are clear that aren’t getting trash pickup? Mike will ask this question on the list-serve.

4> Remind people to make individual complaints to Allied Waste as well. This seems to be getting some attention for some residents.

For the treasurer's report, Sonya had e-mailed the September financials out to all Board members the week before. There were no questions. Sonya needs to have the last statements for 2008 printed, and had the file on a flash drive. Mary took the file to have them printed, and we will get together @ Mary's house next week to fold and stuff the envelopes.

Mary needs to find someone to help with or take over the newsletter. It is becoming too much of a burden for one person to handle. It takes a lot of time to go around and ask people if they want to advertise, which we try to do to offset the cost of the printing and delivery. Mary also doesn't have the right software that makes doing these things easy, so she is doing a lot of the set-up manually.

Paul said that until we find someone who wants to take over the newsletter, he can set up a newsletter template on the computer for Mary. Mary can then send Paul just the text in a word document, and Paul can do the rest of the set-up and spacing and such.

Anna Hanks presented a report about the Park Boulevard Zoning Committee activity. Anna is hoping to meet with the office of zoning on Friday but may not be able to attend due to a work obligation. Alex met with Ogden Park's Committee. They worked with Troy Bunch in the Zoning Office. Ogden Park developed their own petition. They had 85% of the residents sign the petition. They did not have to pay a fee. Anna talked to someone in the Office who apparently wasn't as knowledgeable as Troy. He was unsure how we could go about doing the petition, how many people had to sign, and thought that there would be large fees.

The Committee is hoping to meet with Troy Friday but isn't sure that's who they will get to talk to. Greta, Ellen, and Lynn Lamia are going to the meeting Friday. Alex can't go to due to another obligation.

Old Business

Mike needs to write something up to tell Allied Waste definitively which alleys are ready. He and Mary may just drive down each of the alleys to check them out. We will also put a message out on the list-serve asking which alleys are getting picked up and which aren't.

Paul suggested putting a discussion link on the website called the "Alley alley" where people can talk about the clean-up/ trash pick-up issue. The board all agreed this is a great idea.

There was a short discussion on Camellia House.

Beverly Arceneaux tendered her resignation from the board this week. This means that so far we have at least 5 openings to fill at the annual meeting in February. Mike moved and Sonya seconded that we appoint Carolyn Schwarzhoff to Beverly's position until the annual meeting. Carolyn accepted. All board members voted "Aye". Mike and Alex will serve as the nominating committee. We are unclear about whose term expires when. We were not doing a great job of keeping up with that. Mike and Alex will make a decision about whose seats should be up for re-election in February and from there we'll start fresh keeping up with everyone's terms.

The board tabled the discussion about the question from someone on the list-serve about whether we should be having open board meetings. The question was asked if we were legally obligated to have open meetings. We are a corporation but not a public company so probably not.

Mary informed the board that Mike Futrell offered to come to the annual meeting to speak about the new sewer plan for the city. We will try to book him for March the 1st, which is the best date for the annual meeting this year due to when Mardi Gras is.

Our by-laws say the annual meeting should be in February. Ray made a motion, seconded by Sonya, to suspend the by-laws to allow for a March meeting in 2009. All members present voted "Aye."

Respectfully Submitted,

Sonya Pickens, Treasurer, Standing in for the Secretary

November 25, 2008