

Benton Park West Neighborhood Association Meeting

October 21, 2021

Board members present:

Erin Godwin, President

Linda Hennigh, Treasurer

Gwynne Jackson, Membership Chair

Sarah Pearl, Dog Park Chair

Katherine Turbin, Member at Large

Erin called the meeting to order at 7:03.

She began the meeting by discussing leadership positions and invited anyone who is interested to be on the ballot for election tonight.

The **September Meeting Minutes** were motioned to accept by Katherine and seconded by Gwynne. Passed.

The **September Treasurer's Report** was motioned to accept by Katherine and seconded by Christa Hughes. Passed.

Membership Report indicated that we have 26 members and 7 of those members need to renew their membership. Additionally, it was suggested that we change the category from 'business' to 'organization' to be more inclusive. There was also discussion about how to bring former members back into the active fold. Covid made participation very difficult, and it's a little easier now. Introducing neighbors at the meeting would be helpful, rather than just new participants. Erin encouraged present people to run for an office. Attendees went around the room introducing themselves.

STL City Election Judge Mark Robinson (m.robinson@stlouis-mo.gov 314-622-3546) came to the meeting to encourage more people to become poll workers. There will be new machines coming out on April 5, and there are pay raises for poll workers. Mark said they hope to have the new voting system where you can vote at any polling place in the city by April; they don't want to introduce it at a major election like the one in November 2022. He left applications for anyone interested in being a poll worker.

Erin next passed out **ballots for the election** to those who are eligible. While doing so she also asked if anyone might like to run for office. Christa indicated that she would like to be on the Membership Committee. Linda introduced Brennan England, who is running for Vice President, as a resident, business owner and member of the Cherokee Street CID board as well. Brennan and his wife held a large Halloween event for the neighbor kids this year and last.

Salvation Army Movie Night report was presented. Attendance has been low, but the last movie night was well attended by about 40 people who are looking forward to the event next year.

3323-26 Michigan continues to be legally pursued to get the owner to either fix the property or sell it before we encourage the city to take it from them. Legal Services of Eastern MO is helping us with that.

The Historic District continues to be worked on, but has been kind of stalled right now. If you are interested in helping please speak up!

Neighbors Naturescape is still going. Erin has been making progress but there is a LOT more work to do. This project may take several years.

Upcoming events were presented and discussed, including the neighborhood sponsored house decorating contest. Events were on the back of the agenda available.

Neighborhood Cameras were discussed, and people were encouraged to share their address to help solve crimes and arrest perpetrators.

Alderman Dan Guenther talked about redistricting, explaining that each ward needs to have equal population but this year we will be cutting the wards in half from 28 to 14 wards. Overall, the 9th ward lost only about 54 people total. They are looking for public input. Hopefully within the next week there will be a portal open on the St Louis website to invite discussion and show the proposal. There is also a survey about reimagining public safety, specifically what to look for in the new chief. www.stlouis-mo.gov/new-chief-survey (Chief Hayden is planning to retire in February). There will also be a public zoom meeting on October 26 at 6pm. Dan reported that a bill was finally passed to allow aldermen to determine where speed bumps go. Amazingly, he got approval for 14 speed bumps in the 9th ward (of the 50 or so he has requested) by the following Monday: 3022 Oregon, 3149 Oregon, 3100 Pennsylvania, 3100 Arsenal, 3233 Nebraska, 3100 Nebraska, 3233 Nebraska, 3014 Oregon, 3149 Oregon, 3231 California, 2837 Texas, 3016 Texas, 2700 Juniata, 2900 Juniata, 2712 Wyoming, 2747 Wyoming, 3012 Wyoming, 3330 Compton. If street lights are out, call 622-4800 to report the location. Alley light calls go to Ameren; it helps to have the number from the tag on the pole.

Emily from the Cherokee Street CID talked about new businesses on Cherokee (26 in 2021!). There are still open store fronts available. The CID will be installing new planters on November 13. New camera grants have been approved. Upcoming events include Trick or Treat on Cherokee on Halloween from 4-6, The Jazz Crawl on November 6, Cherokee Thanksgiving on Tuesday November 23, and Holiday Market on December 4 in conjunction with Antique Row which will include the Print Bazaar.

Officer Jazmon Garrett and **Barb Potts** were unable to give their reports due to technical difficulties.

The attendance prize winner was Alderman Dan Guenther.

Who was the guest at the end of the meeting?

2022 election results:

President: Erin Godwin

Vice President: Brennan England

Secretary: ChrisSchmidt

Treasurer: Linda Henneigh

Members at Large: Katherine Turbin and Marit Lau

The meeting was adjourned at 8:06