

Minutes of Executive Board Meeting of West End Citizens Association

January 28, 2021

West End Citizens Association Officers

Brian Shipley, President

Noreen Bryan, Vice President

Donna Sprague, Vice President, Communications

Jane Pontius, Corresponding Secretary

Margaret Magner, Recording Secretary

Meeting Attendees in addition to Officers:

- WECA Executive Board members: Liz Baldacci, Bill Burchette, Justus Getty, Maggie Hadley, Kate Lenane, Ian Meyers, Rich Panzer, Kevin Pedone, Rose Slater, Jennifer Timmick, Bob Treseler, Patricia Woodward, Kevin Zaletsky
- Residents: Monique Ashton, Patrice Davis, Paul Newman, Rev. Jane Wood

Call to Order:

President Brian Shipley called the Zoom meeting to order at 7:05 p.m.

Welcoming Remarks:

President Shipley welcomed all and told the group:

- WECA made a memorial donation the Mansfield Kaseman Clinic in memory of Dennis Cain
- WECA has an officer opening for Treasurer to serve through May 2021 [since filled]
- The Planning Area 4 Neighborhood Plan developed by WECA Committee members over a 4 year span is awaiting final approval from Planning Committee. After that it will go before the Mayor and Council for their approval.
- The last of three City public input sessions on Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) and Accessory Buildings is February 4.
- The next Executive Board meeting will be held by Zoom on February 25 at 7 p.m.

Business Items:

• Treasurer's Report

President Shipley explained that we do not have a full Treasurer's Report tonight. He noted WECA has \$2,670 in our business account. No expenditures have been made or revenue received since February 2020, and none are expected in the immediate future.

• Approval of Minutes from October 22, 2020 meeting

Margaret Magner moved to accept these minutes and Jane Pontius seconded. The minutes were approved by a vote of 10 in favor and 3 abstentions.

• Report from the City

In the interest of devoting this meeting to the feedback from the Block Captains, Hjarman Cordero from the City and Lt. Berry from the Rockville Police are not attending tonight, and we will circulate their written updates after the meeting.

• New Block Captain Approval

No new Block Captains for approval this month.

Block Captain Discussion:

- The meeting is devoted to discussing and sharing views about the role of the Block Captains, how to make participation easier/enjoyable, how to increase involvement of the community.
- We welcomed 5 new Block Captains in the last year and currently have 9 openings.
- The officers reviewed the role and responsibility of Block Captains, who are members of WECA's Executive Board. [Please see attached presentation slides for details.]
- A Block Captain survey went out on Jan. 6, 2021. We had 32 responses (a very good response rate of about 2/3). Thank you so much to all of you who responded. Please see the attached slides file for details of the survey returns and findings.
- Here are some highlights of survey findings and Block Captain suggestions/discussion made at the meeting:
 - Suggestion for filling vacant Block Captain vacancies: suggested distributing the map of vacant blocks to other Block Captains.
 - Distribute agenda items and content of upcoming meetings in advance to stimulate thought and discussion.
 - It's important to know the Zoom and other details of meetings in advance, and to stick to the plan. Changes to meeting information cause difficulties.
 - Increase the social aspect of the meetings. Open up early or stay late (post-pandemic) to allow talking with neighbors. Have refreshments.
 - Increase outreach to new families. Send a welcome letter/package. Hold neighborhood events. Example: East Rockville is doing a cookie-wagon for new families.
 - Have some open-agenda meetings to allow talking about block concerns and see what issues are common across blocks, without always having a topic drive the meeting.
 - Put more focus on traffic and pedestrian safety issues. People using West End streets such as Wall Street as cut-throughs is a dangerous problem. Help encourage responsiveness to the City's upcoming surveys by RPAC (Pedestrian Advisory Committee) and RBAC (Bicycle Advisory Committee). Other Rockville civic associations have had success by putting together focus lists of particular risk areas and continually hammering away at them.
 - It's so important to have participation and block-feedback at meetings and in general.
 - Deer population is also very important to some neighbors, on both sides of the issue. Monique will provide a link to the City report this spring about the current deer culling program. This may be a complicated issue to take a position on as a neighborhood group because of the diversity of opinions on this.
 - Support opportunities for affinity groups e.g. New Moms. People are searching for ways to connect after the pandemic.
- In order to stay on track with meeting timing, the group agreed to save the discussion of the final survey topics of Communication and Advocacy until the February 25 meeting.

Adjournment:

- President Shipley thanked everyone for the fantastic response and discussion! The meeting was adjourned at 8:12 p.m.