

# Brookline Together Board Meeting Minutes February 8, 2021

## Board Officers:

President: Caitlin McNulty

Vice-President: Blake Plavchak

Secretary: Ally Bove

Treasurer: Bill Kim; co-chair Mark Hopkinson

Finance Vice-Chair: Mark Hopkinson

Community & Business Engagement Chair: Melissa Kilmer

Community & Business Engagement Co-Chair: Sami Melhorn

Beautification Chair: Lisa Wilson

Beautification Co-Chair: Blake Plavchak

## Attendance:

Board members/co-chairs present: Caitlin McNulty, Blake Plavchak, Ally Bove, Bill Kim, Melissa Kilmer, Lisa Wilson, Mark Hopkinson

Regrets: Sami Melhorn

Caitlin McNulty called the board meeting to order at 7:03 p.m.

## Brookline Together February 2021 Meeting Agenda

- Correspondence
  - All relevant correspondence is discussed below; nothing further to report.
- Approve January Minutes
  - Motion: Caitlin McNulty; Second: Bill Kim; all in favor, 0 opposed, 0 abstentions.
  - Minutes can be read on our website; they're updated monthly
- Treasurer Report
  - Available balance \$22,473
    - Does not include some membership checks to be deposited
  - Discussion of Wix website annual charges:
    - \$295 for our business website plan for the year, including payment options
    - \$128.40 for Ascend, which is the website's messaging platform that we use for people to contact us
      - Will likely remove this for next year; unnecessary given that people can simply e-mail us @ [brooklinetogether@gmail.com](mailto:brooklinetogether@gmail.com)
    - \$5.33/month for website to have the Magic Forms function, where we can have people use it to submit surveys, etc.
  - Budget for 2021 is approved; a report will be provided at the March community meeting
  - 2020 taxes have been filed
  - Finance Committee meetings are scheduled to occur quarterly in 2021
- Committee Submissions – Remember to create committee reports to be handed out at each community meeting – due for March meeting
- New Business
  - Candidate Night: March 8, 2021 Community Meeting.
    - Planning – Which races to include?
      - Magisterial District Court
        - James Motznik (incumbent, Democratic party candidate)
      - District 4 City Council

- Anthony Coghill (incumbent, Democratic party candidate)
  - Bethani Cameron (Democratic party candidate)
  - Connor Mulvaney (Green party candidate)
  - Mayor
    - Bill Peduto (incumbent, Democratic party candidate)
    - Ed Gainey (Democratic party candidate)
    - Tony Moreno (Democratic party candidate)
- Outreach
  - Ally will reach out to each candidate, since she cannot vote in these races and is impartial to the candidates
- Coordination
  - Opening/closing statement by each candidate – 2 mins each
  - A few prepared questions from Brookline Together, representing both business and resident perspectives – 1-minute responses for each candidate per question
    - Ally will send an e-mail to all BT members asking them to submit questions for the candidates
  - Open it up to questions from the community attendees
- Plan for meeting
  - BT members will get the Zoom link; others can watch the livestream on Facebook Live
  - Do we have Zoom Webinar function?
    - Ask city clerk's office if we can use their Zoom account if it has the webinar function?
    - Caitlin will see if Brookline Together's account has it
    - Ally's work account has a max of 500 participants but she can't use webinar function without special permission
  - Candidate Night will take up most or all of the evening's meeting; we can provide updates on the rest of BT business via e-mail
- May Community Meeting Theme: release summer 2021 schedule and details
  - Beautification will present summer plans
  - Community/Business Engagement will present summer plans
  - City has a new Office of Community Affairs employee who oversees Brookline; we can invite her to speak about the city's summer events
  - Sing happy birthday to Blake
- Our Lady of Loreto Site development
  - Cherner Development Group
    - Based in Virginia, but lead Jonathan Ackaoui is from Mt. Lebo originally
  - City pre-application meeting was 1/25/21
    - Plan is to convert the existing building into apartments and add townhomes
    - After the meeting, they feel they need to do substantial edits to the plan before they're ready to present to the community
    - They are planning for a proportion to be affordable housing units – we will be diligent in ensuring this development will not price current Brookliners out of the neighborhood
    - They will come and do a formal presentation to Brookline Together when their plans are more solidified
    - When that meeting is scheduled, we will blast it on our social media and deliver flyers to residents on Chrysler St.
- Pedestrians hit on 1/15 at Brookline & Castlegate

- Look into traffic calming – yet again
    - Blake will reach out to DOMI regarding this incident
  - Outreach to businesses
    - Received complaint from a non-member business wanting more specifics about how Brookline Together represents our local business community
    - Ideas to better engage our member businesses / recent examples
      - Testimonials to put on our website
      - Membership “welcome letter” will be hand-delivered when possible to chat in person and find out what the business owners are looking for
      - Beautification team has been working on getting the city to take care of the trash cans on the Blvd more often, in response to member business complaints
      - 802 Bean Co recently offered to provide free coffee/hot chocolate to our Beautification volunteers at our next event
      - Restaurant Week type of event? Perhaps combine with Beechview’s community group?
      - Gift card swap with nearby neighborhoods/towns for gift baskets? Betterworld.com = online raffles, integrates with Stripe (our payment processing system).
- Old Business
  - Breeze 5K Race – Update from meeting on 1/20
    - Caitlin, Bill, Blake, and Melissa have been meeting with the city and remaining members of the Breeze 501(c)3 organization
    - Breeze 501(c)3 is going to dissolve and transfer any remaining funds to Brookline Together
    - Brookline Together will be the community organization that liaises with the City of Pittsburgh for the race
    - The City will cover the course setup, barricades, platform to register runners, etc.
    - Brookline Together will be responsible for everything else –
      - Create a Brookline Breeze subcommittee under Business & Community Engagement with at least 5 members: including a rep from Brookline Together (Blake will chair for 2021), a rep from the City of Pittsburgh (Brian from the city’s Office of Special Events), and a minimum of 3 additional members (in 2021 will include Melissa Kilmer; Beth who was in charge of the Breeze 501(c)3 for the past several years; and Melissa who was the race director last year)
      - Hire someone to produce the event day-of
      - BTO will assist with recruiting race-day volunteers
      - Collecting sponsorships
      - Medals, t-shirts, etc.
    - City is projecting the race can be in-person in 2021
    - Race date is August 14, 2021
    - Will integrate with Breezefest to the greatest extent possible
    - Motion from Caitlin McNulty to:
      - Brookline Together to become the nonprofit organization that is liaison to the City of Pittsburgh for the purpose of hosting the Brookline Breeze
      - Accept funds from the previous Brookline Breeze nonprofit organization by 4/1/21
      - Sign contract with City of Pittsburgh by 4/1/21
      - Create Brookline Breeze subcommittee by 4/1/21
    - Seconded by Bill Kim
    - All in favor, 0 nay, 0 abstentions
  - Jacob/Whited site construction start date and plan
    - Mid-late March tentatively, depending on when the ground thaws enough

- Goal to clear out overgrowth before it starts getting worse again in the spring
- Bill and Caitlin will work on securing a rented Bobcat for 1-2 weeks
- We'll need to direct some funds to clearing the brush from the property – our Love Your Block grant from 2020 that got postponed to 2021 due to COVID can help pay for this
- Announcements
  - February 6<sup>th</sup> Brookline Blvd trash can cleanup day has been postponed due to inclement weather – will share new date when determined

Meeting was adjourned at 8:41 p.m.

Mission: To promote a vibrant and livable community through collaborative initiatives that unify Brookline's business and residential interests.

Goals for 2021:

1. Increase membership
2. Increase revenue
3. Improve communications

Upcoming community meetings:

- March 8, 2021 – Candidate Night (Zoom for members; Facebook Live for non-members)
- May 10, 2021 – Brookline Summer Preview (meeting format TBD)