

Brookline Together September 2022 Meeting Minutes

Attendees:

Board members

present: Blake Plavchak, Bill Kim, Ally Bove, Mark Hopkinson, Melissa Kilmer, Lisa Wilson

excused: Caitlin McNulty, Samantha Melhorn

Community members and residents: 18 additional folks present

Minutes:

- Meeting was called to order at 7:08 p.m. by Blake Plavchak
- Thank you to Tree of Life for hosting!
- Motion to approve August minutes (Bill Kim), second (Melissa Kilmer), all in favor, 0 opposed, 0 abstentions.
- Guest speaker: Rebekkah Ranallo from Mayor Gainey's Neighborhood Services office
 - The Neighborhood Services office is staffed by 3 individuals who are the primary liaisons with City neighborhoods. They'll be trying to regularly attend community meetings and be available to hear community member concerns.
 - Jessica Farrell: social worker
 - Chrisarah Johnson: internal liaison with departments within the city and 311 requests
 - Rebekkah Ranallo: Neighborhood Services manager
 - September 27 at 6pm: public meeting in Brookline about the upcoming snow season and plans for improved snow removal. Venue is To Be Determined but will be shared as soon as possible.
- BT Community Information
 - Open meeting with intro to what we have been doing and how we want to serve the community, and how community sees Brookline serve them and in what ways.
 - Community surveys were distributed to BT members by e-mail last week, and are available tonight at the food table – please scan the QR code to take the survey! Paper copies are available if needed.
 - Committee signups are available at the tables during tonight's meeting
 - Board positions needed
 - Special election: We are seeking a new Secretary to begin in January 2023 to complete Ally Bove's term; Ally will be stepping down from the board to take care of family for a while.
 - Up for election in the coming months: Business & Community events chair and co-chair, Vice President, Treasurer, and Finance co-chair. Nominations will be made at our November community meeting. Please reach out to us at brooklinetogether@gmail.com if you'd like more information, or feel free to reach out directly to any current board member to learn more.
 - Each of the 3 BT committees briefly spoke about their committees' work, and each committee is available at tonight's meeting to chat 1-on-1
 - Beautification (Lisa Wilson): Reach out to Lisa if you're interested in making Brookline Blvd look nicer! Brookline Together is very aware that the city's contractor has not been performing regularly scheduled maintenance recently, so we are doing our best to pick up the slack while simultaneously pursuing a long-term solution with the city.
 - Folks are "adopting" landscaping plots on the Blvd to take care of them. Reach out to Lisa if you're interested in adopting a plot!

- Garbage Olympics is this Saturday, September 17. Information has been posted on our Facebook page and is typically shared in all of the Brookline-related Facebook groups.
 - Fall cleanup: Saturday, October 22
 - Holiday wreaths: Pole maintenance is ongoing, and wreath hanging will be coming up in November. We will be seeking lots of volunteers for wreath hanging day to help reduce the workload on each volunteer.
 - DogiPot bags are hanging along the Blvd to clean up after your dogs do their business. Please use them!
 - Cigarette butt receptacles are along the Blvd. Please use them and encourage others to use them!
 - Fall/Winter Beautification Fundraising Drive is live! Go to our website www.brooklinetogether.org and click on “Beautification Fundraising Drive” to donate. (Note: it’ll automatically input the minimum \$5 donation; just change the “quantity” to donate in any \$5-increment you’d like.)
 - Business & Community Engagement (Melissa Kilmer)
 - Volunteers always needed! Please reach out to Melissa if you’re interested.
 - All of our community events are listed on our website, www.brooklinetogether.org
 - Finance (Bill Kim and Mark Hopkinson)
- Other Announcements
 - The Festival of Trees at Tree of Life is in its planning stages, and this year will be on December 1-4, 2022, which will coincide with Brookline Lights Up. Please contact Kris Rhoades if you’re interested in decorating a tree on behalf of yourself or your business. kris@godlovesbrookline.com
 - Dan Gladis, Chief of Staff for PA Rep. Jess Benham. After upcoming redistricting, Rep. Benham’s district will envelop a lot more of Brookline than previously.
 - September 24, 10am-1pm: 320 Brownsville Rd in Mt. Oliver: Health fair. UPMC, Highmark, Allegheny County. Up the street at the fire hall, 120 Brownsville Rd, will be a free flu shot clinic.
 - October 8, 9-11am: shredding event at Concord Presbyterian Church, 1907 Brownsville Rd, Carrick. There will also be a flea market happening simultaneously.
 - One-time increase in property tax rent rebate: checks are coming out now and continuing to come. With questions, contact the office at (412) 881-4208 or e-mail repjess@pahouse.net.
 - Whole Home Repairs Act: incorporated into the state budget this year to help low- and moderate-income homeowners and landlords make upgrades to properties. The program hasn’t rolled out yet but will be forthcoming, and Rep. Benham’s office will share information via their newsletter and social media.
- Social & Chats
 - Tables:
 - Business & Community Engagement Committee
 - Beautification Committee
 - Finance Committee
 - Mayor’s Office: Neighborhood Services
 - Common Cause Consultants
 - Brookline Teen Outreach (survey & general info)
 - 2022 Brookline Neighborhood Survey
- The meeting was adjourned at 8:30 p.m. (Motion: Bill Kim, 2nd: Melissa Kilmer)

Notes for upcoming community meetings:

November Community Meeting Focus – TBD

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

Goals for 2022:

1. Increase community involvement
2. Increase tangible community impacts
3. Improve communications
4. Create generative funding streams