

**Brookline Together**

**Community Meeting Minutes: July 13, 2020**

**7:00 pm Meeting held via Zoom and Facebook Live**

**Board Officers Present:**

President:	Caitlin McNulty	Membership:	Lois McCafferty / Samantha Melhorn
Vice-President:	Blake Plavchak	Business Development:	Jason Tigano
Secretary:	Ally Bove	Beautification:	Tony Griffith / Lisa Wilson
Treasurer:	Bill Kim / Mark Hopkinson	Community Events:	Melissa Kilmer
		Newsletter:	Brock Boutwell

**Board Officers Not Present:** n/a; all present

**Attendance:**

12 board member/committee co-chair attendees on Zoom

Guests on Zoom: Ariam Ford-Graver from Grounded Strategies, Rebecca Mizikar from Grounded Strategies, Leon Ginn (Compassionate Counseling).

20 attendees streaming on Facebook Live.

**Proceedings:**

*Meeting called to order* at 7:02 pm by Board President Caitlin McNulty.

*Correspondence:*

- Business Development committee working to resolve a parking issue in the neighborhood

*Treasurer Report*

- Current bank account balances: \$31,852, around \$6,500 in grant money that will be used for specific purposes.
- Breezefest refunds have been issued but not yet calculated in the above balance

#### *Committee Reports:*

- Finance (Bill Kim)
  - Most recent meeting was to be in-person but had to be cancelled due to spike in COVID-19 cases.
  - Next meeting: Virtual meeting on July 27<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 p.m. Link to attend the virtual will be provided on our Facebook page.
- Newsletter (Brock Boutwell)
  - No formal report; new issues still on hold due to COVID-19 restrictions with printing and distribution
  - Committee will be contacting current advertisers and promoting them individually on Instagram
  - Still working on identifying a new committee chair
- Membership and Business Development (Lois McCafferty and Jason Tigano)
  - Membership:
    - Directory is in proof phase; waiting for 2<sup>nd</sup> proof within the next week or so
  - Business Development:
    - Healthy Streets initiative: sponsored by City of Pittsburgh, Department of Mobility and Infrastructure. Working on temporary street modifications and opening of sidewalks to allow businesses to have more outdoor seating during COVID-19 pandemic.
      - Awaiting some clarifications from DOMI, then Business Development committee will reach out to our business members to gauge their interest
      - Should be a positive way to allow our local businesses to be more productive; we want to do everything possible to support them during these difficult times
    - Some new businesses getting ready to open on Brookline Blvd!
- Welcome Wagon (Pam Grabowski)
  - 17 new resident packets sent out for June
  - No notable transfers
  - Advertising space is available in the Welcome Wagon packet – contact Pam Grabowski or the general e-mail [brooklinetogether@gmail.com](mailto:brooklinetogether@gmail.com) if you'd like to advertise your business, or if you want to advertise a community event or other happening
- Community Events (Melissa Kilmer)
  - Breezefest 2020 is cancelled due to difficulty ensuring attendance restrictions and social distancing requirements. E-mails were sent to all vendors and refunds have been issued.
  - Tentatively moving forward with plans for Halloween Parade (October) and Brookline Lights Up (late Nov/early Dec)

- Beautification (Tony Griffith)
  - Committee met in mid-June
  - Mini clean-up near Cannon Park was very successful
  - Second clean-up and re-planting of the area near the Brookline mural on the Blvd was done on July 9. Some residents have offered to keep the plants watered. Thank you to volunteers and local businesses (including DMC Greenhouse and Lowe's of Bethel Park) who donated to this project!
  - Another clean-up tentatively scheduled for early August, but details will be ironed out with current COVID situation. We'll post volunteer opportunities on our social media.
  - We received a Love Your Block grant for 2020, but chose to defer it to 2021 due to our inability to gather large groups of people together to work on clean-up activities
  - Holiday wreaths:
    - Received 3 examples of new bulbs. After a vote on Facebook, Option A won. Working on how to get the bulbs as cheaply as possible.
    - Brookline resident Kevin O'Toole is an electrician and has kindly offered to donate his labor to install and uninstall the wreaths; Brookline Together will pay for the use of the box truck.
    - Tim and Sheryl Reitmeyer have offered to donate \$100 toward new ribbon and to assist with new bows on the wreaths.
    - We will do a fundraising campaign for the expenses; given the challenges to small business owners COVID-19 pandemic, we do not want to ask our local business owners to contribute like they typically do.
    - Lance Rhoades informed us via Facebook Live that Facebook for Nonprofits will cover the fees for fundraising initiatives for approved nonprofits.

#### *Old Business*

- Census Grant – COVID-friendly plans are in the works to distribute Census materials along with lunches to residents of Mazza Pavilion and Parkside Manor, as well as dinners at 1-2 restaurants within the community (takeout only, since dine-in is currently not permitted)
- Flag Receptacle has been installed at Brookline Teen Outreach next to the community bulletin board. It is currently covered until it is formally unveiled. There will be a dedication ceremony, but the date has not yet been set. Thank you to Dan McKeever for all of his work in obtaining this for the community!

#### *New Business*

- City Farms Presentation – Ariam Ford-Graver, Executive Director of Grounded Strategies and Rebecca Mizikar, Director of Design and Placemaking
  - Grounded Strategies is working with Councilman Coghill on the idea of an urban farm in Brookline/Overbrook
  - Site: behind the lower baseball field in Brookline Memorial Park (which was formerly the Anderson Farm)

- Presented the design of the farm –
  - Fences
  - ½ acre planting zone
  - 5 structures: office/barn, pavilion/farmstand, outdoor classroom, greenhouse, and hoop house
  - Spaces for apiary, composting, children’s garden, orchards
  - Will tie into existing water lines and add new rain barrels off of proposed structures
- Presented images of other local projects with some similar features
- Next steps:
  - Phase 1: assess existing site conditions, additional soil testings
  - Phase 2: develop Master Plan, create workforce development / stewardship / maintenance plan
  - Phase 3: Implementation strategy for spring 2021 planting and summer harvest
- Please take this City Farm survey to provide your input:  
<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/J6LRNKZ>
- Responses to meeting attendee questions:
  - City regulations will not allow us to guarantee keeping all of the food that is grown at the farm within District 4; the benefits would need to be available citywide
  - Access to the woods behind the park will not change
- Leon Ginn from Compassionate Counseling
  - Mental health services in Brookline, same building as Brookline Teen Outreach
  - Serves adults, adolescents and children, families, and couples
  - Distance counseling is available (via, telephone, internet, videoconferencing)
  - Adventure-based counseling is available
  - Offer a sliding scale payment based on income for those without insurance or whose benefit plans do not offer mental health coverage within their budget.
  - Accept major insurances such as Highmark, UPMC, Cigna, United, and Employee Assistance Programs
  - Contact info:
    - 520 Brookline Blvd, Pittsburgh PA 15226
    - 412-447-1876
    - [dfischerkeller@ccpa.hush.com](mailto:dfischerkeller@ccpa.hush.com)
    - [Compassionatecounselingpa.org](http://Compassionatecounselingpa.org)

*Announcements:*

- Facebook talk being hosted this Thursday, July 16 to help people gain skills in having difficult conversations around race. More info:
  - 'Complicated Conversations at the Center: Racism' is the first stream in a series of discussions by the licenced counselors and therapists at the Center for Relational Change. Their goals are to publicly talk about tough topics with a diverse group of

licensed Mental Health professionals. I've provided their synopsis below and a link to their facebook page:

- <https://www.facebook.com/events/876484086193444>
- Brookline Teen Outreach has been doing socially distanced meetups Wednesday and Friday afternoons from 3-6pm. Masks are required. If you have any kids 10-18, it's free for them to come!

*Additional Questions, Comments, Concerns*

- None
- Contact us at [brooklinetogether@gmail.com](mailto:brooklinetogether@gmail.com) if you'd like to add anything!

Community meeting adjourned at 8:12 p.m. (motion by Caitlin McNulty seconded by Blake Plavchak, all in favor.)

Next meeting:

- Next community meeting Monday, September 14<sup>th</sup>, 7:00pm, Brookline Teen Outreach