

Brookline Together

Community Meeting Minutes: March 11, 2019

7:00 pm Brookline Teen Outreach

Board Officers Present:

President:	Caitlin McNulty	Membership:	Lois McCafferty
Vice-President:	Bill Kim	Business Development:	Jason Tigano
Secretary:	Ally Bove	Community Development:	Heather Fulton
Treasurer:	Bill Kim	Beautification:	Tony Griffith

Board Officers Not Present: Brock Boutwell (Newsletter)

Attendance:

38 attendees; all signed in on a sign-in sheet.

Proceedings:

Meeting called to order at 7:13 pm by Board President Caitlin McNulty. (Start of the meeting was delayed due to Pittsburgh Public Schools School Board candidate forum hosted immediately prior to the meeting.)

Approval of prior minutes:

March meeting minutes were approved by the board. (Motion: J Tigano, Second: L McCafferty, vote to approve unanimous.)

Committee Reports:

- Treasurer (Bill Kim)
 - Main checking account has \$32,556 and Newsletter account has \$1,420. We also have \$2,432 pending transfer from Paypal. Total is \$36,409. Most of the monies were transferred from the former SPDC and BCC accounts.
 - Money brought in this year: \$5,743 from membership dues, yard sale registrations, and Breezefest registrations
 - Money paid out this year: \$2,324

- It was discussed and agreed that we can set up our Paypal account to also allow newsletter advertisers to pay online for their ads.
- The Finance committee last met in April. They have finished setting up Quickbooks for accounting. They suggested transferring \$5,000 into a CD to earn some interest; the board approved that at their last meeting.
- Next Finance committee meeting is June 3rd. Contact Bill Kim for more details.
- Newsletter (Julia Mirek, on behalf of Brock Boutwell)
 - First issue will be in early July
 - Will feature a series called “The Scoop at Scoops”
 - They’ve asked our local elected officials to contribute content that is Brookline-specific and will be given ¼ page of free space to do so.
 - Looking for people to contribute ideas and copy – e-mail newsletter15226@gmail.com
 - Deadline for contributions to each newsletter will be the 2nd Friday of the prior month. The ad deadline will be the 1st Friday of the prior month.
 - The committee would like to have more direct access to the newsletter bank account – board will work on this.
 - Will be printing 1,000 copies to start, and will adjust as needed.
- Membership (Lois McCafferty)
 - Have been advertising on takeout/delivery boxes at local restaurants
 - Will have an information table at Breezefest
 - Beginning to work on a 2020-2021 Brookline Business Directory
 - Next meeting is June 5th, 6:30 pm at Melissa Distel Photography
 - Currently at 47 business, 43 community, and 8 “friends of” paid memberships
- Business Development (Jason Tigano)
 - Working on a list of priorities for the committee – it appears that delinquent/rundown business properties and landlords not caring for their properties is a major concern.
 - Will develop a fundraising strategy once priority lists are developed
- Welcome Wagon (Pam Grabowski)
 - Sent 18 packets in April and 23 in May
 - There is ad space available in the Welcome Wagon packet – contact Pam Grabowski if interested in advertising
- Community Events (Heather Fulton)
 - Next meeting is 6/3 at 6:00pm at Olive Oil’s
 - Bar crawl was postponed to fall – hosting it over Memorial Day weekend wasn’t ideal, so ticket sales were very low.
 - Yard sale 6/2. Currently 22 residents and 7 businesses signed up but likely will have more. The Brookline Knights will be running a concession stand at the recreation center.
 - Art on the Boulevard = last weekend in June
 - Breezefest: Vendor signups are open. Going to have some food trucks also, with different cuisines than what is already available on the Blvd.
 - Paul Drabick is spearheading planning of a new event called Bark in the Park (dog-friendly)
 - The committee is looking for additional volunteers! Contact Heather Fulton for more information.

- Beautification (Tony Griffith)
 - “Kick Butts” cleanup event scheduled for 5/26 at 8am
 - Plantscape is doing landscaping only – not trash pickup – along Brookline Blvd
 - Councilman Coghill and Mayor Peduto’s offices are working to ensure that all trash from Brookline Blvd goes out the BACK of the buildings, not onto the Blvd
 - Lowes in Bethel Park donated a leaf blower to Brookline Together
 - More people are starting to do trash pickup on their own blocks or in the business district independently
 - Working with the mayor’s office to establish some community “welcome” signs at major intersections that don’t already have artwork or official signage welcoming people to Brookline
 - Working on getting a new flag at the cannon
 - May consider doing a garden tour at the end of summer 2019, but will definitely explore this possibility for 2020. Will need some people to volunteer to plan this event!
 - Next meeting is June 17th, 6:00pm at Brookline Teen Outreach

Questions/Discussion

- What happens to the honey that the bees at the apiary will create?
 - We will follow up with Burgh Bees to get the answer to this question
- How is the organization’s money spent?
 - Bill Kim explained the budgets for each committee
- Can the organization offer grants for various purposes?
 - Jason Tigano stated that the Business Development committee is looking into starting such a program, but they also feel we can be helpful in helping businesses in Brookline obtain grants from other organizations with a lot more money available
- Is Brookline Together on Nextdoor?
 - Not currently, but we will look into this!
- Some garbage cans lack the actual can. What’s up with that?
 - Blake Plavchak from Councilman Coghill’s office will follow up on this.
 - Tony Griffith, Beautification Chair, stated that he’s trying to get the city to give us more and newer trash cans in the business district, but they’re expensive so it’s difficult to convince them.
 - Ernest from Mayor Peduto’s office stated that they’ll pass along a suggestion from the audience to get trash cans that are solar-powered and have a compactor built in
- Is it possible to “crowdsource” our landscaping needs?
 - Yes, the community shed we are looking into creating will help with that.
 - We can add a space to our website where people can tell us what needs to be done re: cleanups/landscaping around the neighborhood
 - Alex Toner suggested creating a map of the members of Brookline Together, so people who live near each other could choose to band together to clean up their piece of the neighborhood

- Block Watch has an Adopt-a-Block program. Annette Ferrieri will be glad to put people in touch with them; she provided her phone number (contact us if you'd like her phone number)
- How will the bees be monitored and protected?
 - Burgh Bees is constructing a fence and will also provide surveillance. Brookline Together will have a key to the fenced-in area.
- I noticed a "book box" in front of Brookline Teen Outreach. What's it for?
 - The kids at BTO started a free library. Please use it! It's open to everyone.
- Question: where are the meeting minutes available?
 - On our website, www.brooklinetogether.org

Updates from local elected officials:

- Blake Plavchak from Councilman Coghill's office:
 - DOMI (the city's Department of Mobility and Infrastructure) observed the intersection of Brookline Blvd and Stebbins at school dismissal time and rush hour, and said it'd adequate the way it is. Meeting attendees vehemently disagreed, particularly because of people speeding down the Blvd making it difficult for pedestrians to cross the street despite the presence of a well-marked crosswalk. Blake will follow up with the Zone 6 police commander about increasing monitoring of the intersection. He will also ask if we can get "yield to pedestrians in crosswalk" signs at the crosswalk. Annette Ferrieri stated that the police commander attends Block Watch meetings, so she can personally follow up with him about this. Finally, Blake will try to get access to the DOMI report; unclear if this is public or not.
 - Some complaints about car thefts in the neighborhood, so Blake provided the numbers. From May 1, 2018 to May 1, 2019, there were 43 reports of car break-ins in Brookline. 35 of those cars were unlocked. 0 reported actual damage to the car. Please lock your doors!
- Ernest Rajakone from Mayor Peduto's office
 - 5/25/19 spray parks and pools will be open.
 - URA is hosting small business capacity building workshops
 - PWSA is offering free lead line replacement for some homeowners. Call the Dollar Energy Fund at 866-762-2348 or PWSA at 412-255-8987
 - Paving map is available on the city website. The city is spending \$20 million on paving this year, which is the most in recent history.
 - Balancing Act is a tool where you can look at city budgets, see exactly where your tax money goes, and give input on future city budgets.
 - Citiparks will be hosting "Star Parties", which involves guided stargazing. More info is available on Citiparks website
 - The city is still hiring summer workers aged 14-21 through the Learn and Earn program. Go to jobs4summer.org to apply.
 - The city is also hiring lifeguards, with a starting wage of \$10.46/hour. Call 412-323-7928 for more information.

Meeting adjourned at 8:21 p.m. (motion by Bill Kim, seconded by Heather Fulton, all in favor.)