

Brookline Together Board Meeting Minutes October 12, 2020

Board Officers:

President: Caitlin McNulty

Vice-President: Blake Plavchak

Secretary: Ally Bove

Treasurer: Bill Kim; co-chair Mark Hopkinson

Membership: Lois McCafferty; co-chair Samantha Melhorn

Business Development: Jason Tigano; co-chair Jason Shymoniak

Community Events: Melissa Kilmer

Beautification: Tony Griffith; co-chair Lisa Wilson

Newsletter: Brock Boutwell

Attendance:

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

Regrets:

Note: [Items in blue text involve potential by-law changes being discussed by the board.](#)

Caitlin McNulty called the board meeting to order at 7:04 p.m.

- Correspondence
 - Thank-you notes are in the process of being sent to those who donated for the holiday lights fundraiser.
- Treasurer Report
 - Budgets – Finalization – Q&A
 - All committees have submitted budgets, and the Finance committee will review them at their meeting later this month.
 - Please make sure your estimates of expenses are as accurate as possible.
 - In addition to committee budgets, we have General Fund expenses that cover things such as insurance costs, mailings, etc.
 - Financial considerations
 - Compared to 2019, we have brought in around \$6,000 less this year.
 - Membership is fairly level or slightly down for this year.
 - Taxes
 - See below re: 501(c)3; all are caught up.
 - 501(c)3 Status
 - Was auto-revoked on 8/31/2020 because of issues with tax filings from our predecessor organization, South Pittsburgh Development Corporation. (To clarify: Brookline Together has filed taxes for each year of our existence; the issue was only with our predecessor organization not filing taxes.)
 - We have now completed filing prior years of taxes for SPDC, so those tax filings are caught up.
 - Bill has submitted the updated documentation the IRS requested and will follow up with our contact at the IRS to reactivate our 501©3 status.
 - Current bank account balances
 - \$25,079.49
- Committee Submissions

- Review Session
 - Finance
 - See above under Treasurer's report
 - Newsletter
 - The committee suggests restructuring due to insufficient volunteers to continue creating 6 printed issues/year.
 - Plan to move it mostly online, and add more and more articles to it as they are created, but not promise a certain amount of content each month
 - Will take content quarterly and turn it into a print newsletter version for distribution in the neighborhood
 - The Board was generally in agreement with this plan, so Caitlin and Blake will continue working on plans for the restructuring.
 - Membership & Business Development
 - Membership
 - Met earlier this month to finalize budget
 - Business Development
 - Several City dropped off barricades and put up No Parking signs for the businesses who received permits for temporarily taking over sidewalk and parking space for outdoor business
 - We'll share some info on our social media to highlight these
 - There may be more temporary permits forthcoming for other businesses in Brookline
 - Jason Shymoniak has accepted the position of Co-Chair moving forward (Alex Toner is stepping down as Co-Chair due to family obligations)
 - Welcome Wagon
 - 7 notable transfers in June 2020 that sold for more than double what they were purchased for
 - Sent out 22 new resident packets on October 1 for those who moved to Brookline in September
 - There are blank ad spaces in the Welcome Wagon
 - Community Events
 - Food Truck Tuesdays are in full swing!
 - In lieu of Halloween Parade, we're doing a Halloween Decorating Contest open to residents and businesses. Flyers and social media posts went out today, and full information is available on our website. Submissions are online and will be routed to Melissa to share with the Community Events committee for judging.
 - Brookline Lights Up – committee is working on ideas and seeing what other communities are planning.
 - Our Brookline Together holiday party for the membership will not be held in 2020 due to a combination of COVID concerns, lack of space to host the party, and budget restrictions due to all of our community events being cancelled.
 - Beautification
 - Wreath Lighting
 - There are 15 broken ties that hold the brackets that hold the wreaths. DOMI has been contacted for assistance; they can give us cable ties but they aren't long enough. We'll likely need to purchase heavy-duty ties.
 - Home Depot is considering our request to donate the new light bulbs for the wreaths; will update!

- Total from fundraising drive is \$5,041!!! Great job everyone! Our goal was \$4,000. HUGE THANK-YOU to Phil Behr, Farmers Insurance Agent for his incredibly generous \$2,000 donation.
- Important Dates
 - Saturday 10/24: Fall Clean-Up. Plan is to remove weeds and overgrowth in Trelona Way (the alley behind many of the businesses on Brookline Blvd)
 - Holiday Decoration Dates
 - Fri 11/6 at 2:30pm: moving wreaths from Community Bank to BTO
 - Sat 11/7 at 10:00am: changing the bulbs on the wreaths @ BTO
 - Sat 11/21: wreaths will be hung along the Blvd
 - Sun 11/22 at 11:00am: tree @ Cannon Park will be decorated
 - Have a membership table @ the tree decorating party!
- New Business
 - Proposed coffee shop at 2415 McNeilly Rd – people involved with the project will be coming to our November community meeting to present their plans as required by the city’s Registered Community Organization legislation
 - Concern re: resident
 - Brookline Together has heard concerns from many residents regarding unsanitary behaviors of an older adult resident of Brookline Blvd, including urinating and defecating in shrub beds along the Blvd
 - Others have approached the adult child of the resident regarding the behavior, but there has been no improvement
 - Brookline Together installed netting over the shrubbery but the resident removed it
 - Discussion amongst the board re: what Brookline Together’s responsibility / role should be here.
 - Interest in keeping the resident and her family safe
 - Interest in keeping the Blvd clean and sanitary for everyone
 - Board & Committee Structure
 - Some board terms coming to an end in December – VP, Treasurer, Newsletter, Community Events. We are already working on identifying additional Newsletter volunteers and restructuring that committee.
 - Potential for some committee restructuring to decrease redundant work and increase productivity – perhaps having 3 committees (instead of the current 5): (1) Finance, (2) Business & Community Engagement (which would encompass Community Events, Business District, Membership, and Newsletter), (3) Beautification
 - Discussed merits of having 7 vs. 9 board members:
 - If we stay with 9 -- potential new board position titles: President, VP, Secretary, Treasurer (who also chairs Finance), Finance Vice-Chair, Business and Community Engagement Chair and Vice-Chair, Beautification Chair and Vice-Chair.
 - If we decrease to 7, it may be difficult to have people available as backup in case a board member needed to step away temporarily for personal reasons.
 - Consensus to keep it at 9 board members but make the changes detailed above.
 - Motion by Caitlin to transition board position titles to President, VP, Secretary, Treasurer (who also chairs Finance), Finance Vice-Chair, Business and Community Engagement Chair and Vice-Chair, Beautification Chair and Vice-Chair; seconded by Bill, all board members present voted “yea”, motion carries. This issue will be moved forward to the November community meeting for a full membership vote.
 - Potential to make public meetings less frequent -- quarterly or semiannually?

- Consensus to transition to 4 public meetings per year. If there's a special presentation that is needed, we can always add a special meeting.
 - Motion by Caitlin to transition to 4 public meetings annually, seconded by Blake, all board members present voted "yea", motion carries. This issue will be moved forward to the November community meeting for a full membership vote.
- Consensus that committee meetings don't have to occur every month when not needed; less frequent meetings are OK!
 - No motion needed; the by-laws call for committee meetings to occur in months when there is not a public meeting (therefore, 6-8 per year per committee)
- Will plan to forward this information to all members in advance of the November community meeting so that members can read about the proposed changes and come ready to have a discussion and a vote during the meeting.
- Announcements – see below.

Motion by Caitlin McNulty to adjourn at 9:07pm, seconded by Bill Kim, all in favor; meeting adjourned.