

Laurel Park Neighborhood Association Board Meeting Minutes, January 20, 2025

Held at Tamiami Tap.

Attending: Matt Arcari, Steve Fantauzzo, Stim Schantz, Marc Epstein, Helen Habbert, Ron Kashden, Annette Liggett, Juliette Reynolds, and Ron Watts

The meeting started at 5 pm.

1. The Board approved the minutes from the December 2 meeting.
2. Treasurer's Report:
 - a. Stim Schantz reported that LPNA had \$13,763.20 in the bank as of 12/31/24.
 - b. Stim raised the question of whether we had the need to raise additional funds right now based on the strong bank balance. After discussion, the Board agreed to continue with the current plan.
 - c. The Board discussed and agreed by consensus to cover the cost of tickets to the upcoming Architecture Sarasota "Beyond our Borders" series for interested Board Members.
3. Membership Report:
 - a. Annette Liggett shared that we have typically raised between \$3,000-\$4,000 the last several years from our annual membership drive. We will use the newsletter to kick off this year's drive (ideally being delivered the first week of February), and she will focus on renewals as a second step closer to the general meeting in late February.
 - b. The Board briefly discussed the donation levels to be listed on the membership form, and what the need was to raise funds. After discussion, it was agreed to leave the form as is for the coming drive. Ron Watts noted that Ron Kashden had updated the online form so that folks can type into it before printing it off.
 - c. The Board also discussed the idea of requiring some basic donation for membership. After discussion, it was agreed to leave the option of joining without a donation this year, and the topic could be discussed more as part of the By-Laws change discussion at a future meeting.
4. CCNA:
 - a. Ron Kashden reported that the organization is looking for ways to develop policy positions more quickly and would like neighborhoods to consider allowing their CCNA representative to have authority to vote on topics prior to receiving approval at their respective local Board meetings. The change could reduce the turnaround time by one to two months for CCNA allowing them to react quicker with the city. After discussion, the consensus was reached that we will give our representative to CCNA the authority to either vote on a topic or decide to wait to discuss it with the full Board as they deem necessary.
 - b. After discussion, it was agreed that Ron Kashden will be the Board's representative to CCNA, with Helen Habbert serving as the alternative.
5. Realignment of Board Member Positions-after discussion, it was agreed that Ron Watts will serve as Secretary; Annette Liggett will continue with Membership and Ron Kashden will take on Communications.

6. Benderson-Matt Arcari recapped a phone conversation with a Benderson representative on the status of the County Admin building project. The County is now scheduled to move out by June of 2026. The current plan is to find a new tenant for the building; there is no timeframe for a new project for the property as of now. Matt did discuss with Benderson the problems with the fence line between the parking lot and Dolphin Lane, with no commitment for repairs yet. Matt plans to follow back up at the end of the month on that topic.
7. Laurel Park replacement sign for Oak Street-Matt reported that the city has it in the works, with its installation probably being held until the upcoming Oak Street renovation project is completed this spring.
8. Neighborhood General Meeting for Feb 24th-The Board agreed to finalize an agenda for that meeting at its next meeting on Feb 10th. Some items discussed:
 - a. Ron Watts will bring a microphone to test on the 10th that he has used for other events.
 - b. Potential meeting topics include:
 - i. Hudson Bayou update
 - ii. Silent Sunday discussion
 - iii. Street lights
 - iv. Potential speakers to invite might include Mayor Liz Albert or new Commissioner Kathy Kelley Ohlrich. (The Board agreed that it also would be a good idea to invite Kelley Ohlrich to a separate Board meeting to share with her the neighborhood's position on key issues to us).
9. Tunes in the Park update-
 - a. The name of the event this year is "Music in the Park", and Jolie McGinnis has arranged for it to be held Saturday March 29th from 6 until 9 pm in Laurel Park with the featured band "Big Night Out".
 - b. A motion was made by Annette Liggett to have LPNA purchase 6-8 new signs to temporarily post in the neighborhood to separately help promote both this event and the general meeting. Seconded by Matt Arcari. The motion passed unanimously. Ron Kashden will work with a vendor to make these two signs.
 - c. The Board also agreed to distribute a flyer promoting the event a week or so in advance of its date.
10. Newsletter update-
 - a. Ron Watts and the communications committee have prepared a 12 page issue that is ready to go to the printer. Estimating printing costs at ~\$1,200 with ad revenues at ~\$1,400.
 - b. After discussion, we'll print 450 copies to allow for extras to share with advertisers and for membership drive purposes.
 - c. The Board reviewed some suggested changes to the newsletter, which Ron will incorporate.
 - d. Matt agreed to check with another printer to see if the print price could be reduced.
 - e. Ron will walk it around the neighborhood once printed. Anyone else looking for some exercise should let him know.

11. Committee Reports

- a. Bayou Committee-Matt reported that the group has worked with the City staff to apply for matching grant funds for the project. They expect to hear a decision on the request sometime in March.
- b. Communications Committee-main focus at meetings has been on the newsletter the last couple of months. Ron Kashden took over the Communications role from Ron Watts as of January 1st and has been sending the LPNA emails out since. The two Rons will work together to hold another committee meeting in February.

12. By-Laws Review

- a. Due to the length of the meeting, it was agreed to defer this discussion to the next Board meeting.

13. Other topics discussed

- a. Crosswalks-Steve Fantauzzo reported to the Board the information (including past petitions) that has been shared with City staff concerning the neighborhood's interest in having a crosswalk recreated at the Laurel/Orange. Annette shared a note from Jolie McGinnis on the City having on their list the idea of painting crosswalk lines on Osprey Ave.
- b. Traffic Calming Ideas-the Board discussed what options may exist on Oak Street as it gets renovated. The belief is that existing speed reduction bumps will be reinserted, but nothing will be placed west of Osprey on Oak.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:15 pm.