

Newton Highlands Neighborhood Area Council Meeting Minutes, June 6, 2013

Attending: Bob Burke, Barbara Darnell, Paul Gilbert, Groot Gregory, Srdj Nedeljkovic, Robert Solomon

Ex Officio Aldermen: John Rice and Dick Blazer

Guests:

Mildred Hutchinson, 160 Lincoln Street
Ron Mauri, Newton Parking & Residential Development
Chris Steele, Waban Neighborhood Area Council

Several Council members and regular attendees were either absent or late because of a time conflict with graduation exercises at Newton South. In Srdj's absence, Barbara called the meeting to order at 7:40 after determining a quorum was present. A shorter and more truncated than usual meeting took place.

Bob presented the minutes from May's meeting that were accepted as presented.

The Treasurer's Report was then presented. As of May 24, 2013, there was \$6,818.00 in our checking account. During the month, \$500.00 was allocated for 2013 Village Day T shirts and expenses related to the Silent Auction. We are still waiting for a bill from the City for the \$300.00 that is owed for last year's Haunted House and \$100.00 for expenses related to the Council's Parking Survey. If the City does not submit a bill, we may be able to take these items off of future treasurer's reports.

1. Village Day and Silent Auction

All the main items appear to be falling into place for this upcoming Sunday's Village Day. Merchant booths, Silent Auction, kiddy rides and other entertainment for kids are on track, and a full list of volunteers for the Area Council Booth, Silent Auction and the other support activities have all been lined up. It promises to be a grand and successful day.

2. Update on Hope Fountain

The Hope Fountain is again up and running. The water system wasn't running because someone surreptitiously removed the existing pump. Paul was able to get a spare one from Wes Bockley and the Council prospectively voted 5-0 to reimburse Wes for the new pump.

3. Highlights from the May 21st Community Meeting

Srdj arrived at 8:05 PM and we began a short discussion of the May 21st Community Meeting at the Newton Highlands Women's Club. Every Council member thought it was a highly successful event. Bob felt the presentations by Area Council members and other community leaders were well organized and pertinent to the current issues facing the Highlands. There was a general consensus that we should seriously consider holding these meetings each year.

3. MBTA Accessibility Update and Related Items

Robert Solomon reported that the June 7th event recognizing T employees at the Highlands Station was a huge success. T employees and managers and members of our Council and the Waban Neighborhood Area Council personally thanked every driver on each trolley that pulled into the outbound stop and make certain they got refreshments and the package of coupons from Highlands Merchants. Robert hopes there might be a repeat of this sometime in the fall.

Robert also reported on an article he is preparing about his thoughts on establishing a citywide "Cell Free Zone" that would prohibit people from using their cell phones while driving in Newton.

4. Hyde Bandstand

John reported that Commodore Construction is still on target to complete the bandstand by Village Day. The formal dedication will take place on "Flag Day", Friday, June 14th.

5. Highlands Parking Proposal

Srdj reported that at an upcoming June meeting, some members of the parking subcommittee of the Transportation Advisory Group will “take a look” at the parking plan and proposal prepared earlier this year by our Council. Of major concern to our Council is the need for a structure to avoid administrative fees the City might want to impose from eating into money from the permit program that would otherwise come back to the Highlands for specific use here. Srdj will keep us posted.

6. Needham Street

Srdj noted that the State was holding a community meeting to discuss their plans for Needham Street that was taking place at the same time as this one. He expects that James Freas and others from the City will be present to discuss a Needham Street vision at July’s meeting.

7. Other Items

- Paul reported that the Rox Diner expects to be open by the end of June although that date may slip a week or two.
- Srdj reported that nomination papers are out and he hopes that many Highlands residents will step forward to run for a full term on the Council.
- The Brookline Bank’s Move into the old Bank of America Building is underway

The meeting was adjourned at 9:35 PM

Respectfully Submitted,

Bob Burke, Secretary,
Newton Highlands Neighborhood Area Council