

## Newton Highlands Neighborhood Area Council

### Meeting Minutes – March 4, 2010

Attending: Janice Bourque, Srdjan Nedeljkovic, Paul Gilbert, Rodney Barker, Bob Staulo, Scott Gordon, Barbara Darnell, Groot Gregory, Peter Meyer, Alderman John Rice and Alderman Richard Blazar

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Janice called the meeting to order at 8:15pm

- Minutes from previous meeting were approved with one correction, the Board or Aldermen President was misidentified and should have read Mr. Scott Lennon.
- Funds have been received from Whole Foods Market as promised, and will be used for the Walnut Street bridge beautification project and other Area Council projects to be determined. John Rice will be working with Justine to coordinate. An idea was mentioned to have Janet Fagan get involved as she maintains the flowers on Lincoln Street in the spring. John will contact Justine to coordinate.
- Review of the Winter Social:
  - Very large turnout this year (weather was great, ice skating rink was popular).
  - Food supply needs to be increased next year. Scott suggested that we expand our horizons and try to get additional restaurants which are technically part of the Highlands involved in the event (including restaurants on south side of four corners).
  - Honoring a merchant at the event continues to be popular and very much appreciated by the honorees. The Council decided to continue this feature of the Winter Social.
  - Potential nominees for next year were also discussed.
  - The honoree for the 2010 winter social will be Limited Editions.
- Treasurer's Report:
  - Scott shared the beginning and ending balance of the NHNAC balance. The only expenses incurred this period related to the ice skating rink which totaled approximately \$750.
- Ice Skating Rink Review:
  - Rink was very popular and used by many Highlands residents and perhaps some from outside the area.
  - Rink will return next year, the plan will be to have it available from mid-December until the end of February.
  - Thanks go out to Paul Gilbert and his crew for their hard work in getting the rink ready for use.
  - The placement of the rink will be changed next year, hopefully to a spot that is more level in the playground. Perhaps rotating the rink by 90 degrees will help.
  - A "skate swap" will be organized one week before the rink opens next year for residents to easily obtain skates.
  - The size of the rink, 50 x 150 is fine.

- Need to improve the maintenance schedule for next year. Many people aren't aware of the daily work required to keep the ice suitable for skating. An idea was brought up to have a signup list available at Village Day in June.
  - We will consider offering skating lessons next year.
  - Finally, we will consider how the signage is posted to improve the sight lines for both the sponsors and for the rink itself.
- The idea of a signup list for ice maintenance volunteers began a broader discussion on how best to stay in better contact with the residents and businesses in the Highlands. How can we collect email addresses from residents to keep people informed about Council activities, raise awareness and build a larger volunteer pool?
- Village Day 2010 – June 13, 12p – 5p
  - Wes Bockley has been nominated to be the honoree this year. Janice will be in touch with him.
  - Peter will assist again this year with scheduling bands to play during the event.
  - We still need to determine if we will hold the annual road race. Though it is popular with some, it may not be something we should continue due to the expense and significant effort required. Hugh Starkey will no longer be leading the event. Barbara Darnell has volunteered to check out groups that may be interested in organizing the race for us.
  - This year, Janet Fagan will be working on the silent auction with Barbara Darnell, representing the Area Council. This auction is one of the main sources of income for Village Day.
  - John brought up the subject of how to raise additional funds from Village Day. A discussion followed with several ideas passed around, though none immediately adopted.
- Srdjan gave the group an update on the Walnut Street reconstruction project. State funds have now been made available for the Walnut Street upgrades. The Area Council, along with other interested parties will be given the opportunity to give feedback prior to the design phase. Srdjan will notify the group when a meeting can be set.
- The Bradford Road case is officially being appealed and attorney Hugh Starkey will be representing the plaintiff. It is expected that the process may take two years.
- At our next meeting, we will discuss plans for our first “annual” council meeting. This meeting will be held in order to highlight the work of the council, get additional residents involved and consider big picture initiatives.
- John also mentioned that he is working on getting a large inflatable movie screen for the summer music/movie series held at the Hyde Center playground. He is hoping to get the screen sponsored by Newton Wellesley Hospital.

Meeting adjourned at 10:15pm