

MINUTES of the REGULAR MEETING
of the
WALNUT GROVE HOMES ASSOCIATION

December 12, 2018
6:30 p.m.

Stark Company Realtors
702 N. High Point Road
Madison, WI 53717

Present: John Pinto (President), Katherine Bidwell (Vice President), Elizabeth Albano (Secretary), Amelia Tastad (Communications), Diane Littman (Social), Susan Ames (ACC Chair).

Excused: Liz Fenster (Block Captains), Birgitta Larson Gamez (Treasurer), and Dave Phillips (Greenways)

Convening of Meeting J. Pinto opened meeting at 6:34pm, distributed an Agenda and requested approval of the draft Minutes of the last regular Board meeting previously e-mailed to the Board by B. Larson Gamez.

Secretary's Report/Quorum/Approval of Minutes J. Pinto recognized a quorum. D. Littman moved approval of November 14, 2018 Board meeting minutes as presented; seconded by A. Tastad. Approved unanimously by all members present.

REPORTS

Treasurer's Report: B. Larson Gamez was not present at the meeting but sent the below update via email:

Treasurer Updates 12/12/2018

Checking Account (as of 12/12/2018): \$29,063.08
Savings Account: \$3,156.01
Park Fund: \$2,821.03 – must be used for Walnut Grove Park
Income: \$160 – 2 lots paid their dues!!

Disbursements: (Since 11/14/2018) \$706.34
\$165.80 – MG& E
\$456.00 – Diane (Social)
\$37.34 – Mr. Sadeghain – Circle Reimbursement
\$50.20 – Kim O'Brein – Chips for Greenways

Outstanding:

Davey: I did send \$427.28 to Bunders for Lawn Care for Greenways. Not cashed yet.
Annual Meeting:

I am still working on the budget – I should get a draft out to everyone on Friday.
Please let me know if anyone has any updates / pictures for the PowerPoint. You should have all received a copy.

D&O Insurance:

Nicole from Harms sent me a quote. I sent this information out to everyone previously via an email. John gave me some additional questions – which I have out to Nicole. Please let me know if anyone has any other questions you would like me to send her way.

Playground Meeting:

I am attending the playground meeting tomorrow night. From the NextDoor poll, the neighborhood voted on wood chips.

Safety in the Community:

I was happy to read Ald. Skidmore's post re: the Tree Lane Apts. I am also a believer in Housing First; however, the two car-jackings seem to be related, unfortunately, because the stolen cars were disposed of on Tree Lane. Do we need to provide a safety update at the annual meeting? Or will Ald. Skidmore and the Police Officer do that? I just want to advise that this may turn into a heated conversation, so we may want to put some parameters around the conversation.

Because the annual meeting really isn't the forum for that discussion. There is still some chatter on NextDoor. I think a short update from Ald. Skidmore and the Police Officer; however, would be appropriate. Thoughts on this?

J. Pinto noted D&O insurance will be discussed at January board meeting. Would be an additional \$364 for D&O coverage.

President's Report: J. Pinto reported he will be resigning as President of the Walnut Grove Association Board. He will not be running for the board at the annual meeting on January 27, 2019. He will conduct the election of the new officers at the annual meeting for the association at the February 13 board meeting. At the end of the February meeting his term will be over and the new President will take over. Message to the new President includes not taking on too much and delegate when possible. Also advised treasurer should sign all of the checks.

Caleb Van Horn and Hayden McCann will be running for the Board.

Architectural Control Committee Report S. Ames reported received application from house on Farmington Way to put up a fence. In the process of assessing request.

Greenways Report: J. Pinto motioned to put D. Phillips proposal (see below) on the floor. S. Ames seconded motion. Not approved unanimously by all members present.

J. Pinto also reported a proposed annual due increase from \$70 to \$80 to help cover Greenway project.

DRAFT PROPOSAL

FINANCING WALNUT GROVE SIDEWALKS AND PATHWAYS

BACKGROUND

Walnut Grove Neighborhood is one of the more unique and desirable neighborhoods in the City of Madison. The varied topography is a result of geologic forces that shaped the landscape at the end of the final retreat of the Wisconsin Ice Age. Almost immediately after the ice disappeared, hunter gatherers found sustenance in the area and various peoples populated the area continuously, transforming the post-glacial woodlands into an oak savanna. When European settlers arrived in the 19th century, farmers found a rich resource for growing crops and grazing. Another transformation occurred in the 1970's as the City of Madison experienced a rapid population growth.

Walnut Grove became one of the numerous housing developments that were carved out of previous farmland. Fence lines have all but disappeared and trees and shrubs have reestablished themselves. Walnut Grove was developed to maintain a sense of community by creating open space and quiet pathways to join all members of the community. The Walnut Grove Greenways have added great value and have been a consistent selling point for the neighborhood.

Over the past five decades maintenance of the Greenways has become a persistent issue for the Walnut Grove Neighborhood Association. The majority of our association dues is spent on lawn maintenance, tree pruning and invasives control. Recently the Board of Directors has been grappling with the imminent need to repair and replace the aging pathways in our greenways. The Board has approved resurfacing of about 40% of the pathways but this work will deplete most of our financial reserves. In the near future, parts of the pathways will have to be completely replaced.

In addition to the greenway paths, some of our neighbors are periodically assessed by the city for repairs to the sidewalks adjacent to their properties. All properties on thru streets have sidewalks. Approximately 160 properties in Walnut Grove are connected to sidewalks and are liable for expenses related to their upkeep. The combination of sidewalks and greenway paths is an asset that increases the value of all neighborhood properties and raises the quality of life for all of the residents of Walnut Grove. All homeowners are responsible for the upkeep of the Greenways through Association dues but only a percentage of homeowners are responsible for sidewalk repairs. Since we all have equal access to sidewalks and Greenway paths, it seems unfair that some homeowners are paying significantly more than others.

A PROPOSAL

The Board of Directors for Walnut Grove Neighborhood Association would like to propose that all homeowners share the expense of sidewalk repairs and Greenway maintenance and path repairs and that the annual dues for homeowners be adjusted to cover these expenses.

UNRESOLVED ISSUES

- Association covenants would have to be addressed for possible legal restrictions.
- The City of Madison would have to be consulted for a possible variance to their policies.
- Possible city takeover of Greenway paths should be explored and implications thereof.
- A restricted fund would have to be established that reflects the anticipated costs over a multi year period.
- Legal consultation would probably be prudent.

Block Captains/Communication Committees Report: L. Fenster was not present at the meeting but sent an email reporting:

WEBSITE: The website is updated to reflect the Playground Replacement meeting this Thursday, December 13 and the Save the Date for the Annual Meeting on Sunday, January 27th. November meeting minutes are also added.

NEXTDOOR: Posted the Playground meeting on Nextdoor.

Social Committee Report: D. Littman had nothing to report.

Old Business:

>No new business to report.

New Business:

>A. Tastad reported mailers for annual meeting on Sunday, January 27, 2019 from 1:00pm-3:00pm at Stark Company Relators will be sent out the first week in January. Save the Date reminders will also be posted on the website and Next Door.

ADJOURNMENT J. Pinto noted that the next regular board meeting will be Wednesday, January 9, 2019 at 6:30pm.

The regular meeting adjourned at 7:18pm.

Submitted by E. Albano