



EAST MT. AIRY NEIGHBORS

EMAN Board Meeting Minutes Thursday February 11th, 2021 Meeting Conducted via Zoom Meetings

Attendees: Cherese Akers, Janet Amato, John Autin, Charlie Baltimore, Althea Banks, Linda Bell, Michael Burrell, Krystal Marie Caraballo, Tonyell Cook-Artis, Kristin Crandall, Brian Cullin, Nina Curlet, Elizabeth Dalianis, Michael Galvan, Jeffery Hayes, Dutch Klugman, Renee Mills, Kelly O'Day, Teri Ranieri, Brandon Ritter, Margaret Salamon, Solomon Silber, Susannah Stayter, Tiffany Thurman, Vearnessa Whigham

Absent: Amy Tanner

Excused: Sam Duplessis, Effie Heimann, Jimmie Reed, Barbara Twiggs

Community attendance: D. Bell, C. Gladstone, C. Green, J. Risch, S. Rivera, M. Tomlin, L. Holgash, S. Roberson

General Session

Meeting called to order at 7:00 PM.

Tonyelle begins by welcoming all who had come to tonight's meeting and acknowledged the rise in crime in the area. Tonyelle reminded participants to please get the Citizen app on your phone and that the 14th Police District also regularly posts about happenings in the neighborhood.

Minutes:

Dutch offered a correction to January's minutes, noting that they need to accurately reflect the rent and time period of 6-months for the \$3,000 cost.

Brian made a motion to accept January's minutes, with Jeff seconding the motion. The Ayes carried and the minutes were accepted.

Treasurer's report:

Dutch began by noting that he had sent out the Treasurer's report in advance. This month's income was \$387, which, Dutch noted, did not include the profits from the tree recycling event (roughly an additional \$300 dollars). Expenses for the month totaled \$3,600. The Eagles Worker's Compensation Dividend came in at \$4,417. Mentioning that this Dividend continues to dwindle, Dutch stated that EMAN can no longer really depend on this fund going forward, but that we have received nearly \$250,000 from this fund over time.

Brian made a motion to accept the Treasurer's Report, with Krystal seconding the motion.

The Ayes carried, and the Treasurer's report was accepted for audit.

Grants Committee:

Margaret began her presentation by introducing an EMAN grantee and neighbor to speak on a project that was funded through EMAN, and noted she will conclude the presentation by asking for the Board's approval on grants for the upcoming year.

Margaret then introduced Janis, the ED of the Mt. Airy BID. Janis summarized the project by noting that EMAN gave funds to the Mt. Airy BID to update the flags along Germantown Avenue. While they hit a couple of roadblocks related to COVID, they have successfully assembled a committee that has representation from property owners, business owners, residents of both West and East Mt. Airy, representatives from the BID, Mt Airy CDC, and EMAN. This group has discussed objectives for the banners, including: 1. placemaking and 2. driving customers and clients to Mt. Airy businesses and activities. The next step was agreeing on a design, with simplicity as the goal. The banners have recently been hung along the Avenue.

At the conclusion of Janis's presentation, Margaret began by noting that she was asking the Board for approval on two issues. Before discussing the approval, Margaret reminded the Board that we rolled over the Fund to an endowment, and will be receiving the first payment from the endowment in the summer. It's unclear at this time how long the endowment has been accruing, but assuming there was a 4% rate, the Grants committee assumed we would be working with roughly \$16,000 for this year.

Margaret then noted that we would continue to use \$10,000 for staffing for EMAN, which leaves \$6,000 for other projects. If there are additional funds, Margaret stated we could revisit this distribution in the fall. The Grants committee released a survey to all Board members three times to gather ideas for how to spend the remaining \$6,000 in grant funds, and had 1/3rd of all Board members respond. The Grants committee then reviewed these proposals in late January with the DEI and geographic inclusivity goal in mind.

At the February Board meeting, the Grants committee asked to approve three projects in total, one for the Zoning committee, one for the Safety and Placemaking (S&P) committee, and the final for the Anti-Racism committee. The total amount asked for was \$5,500, including \$3,000 to the Zoning committee for proactive historical research, \$1,500 to S&P for island beautification, and \$500 amount to the Anti-Racism committee for their speaker series. The Grants committee is asking for the ability to immediately withdraw these funds from the rainy day fund, with the intention to reimburse the rainy day fund when EMAN receives the endowment funds this summer.

Susannah then raised a question, asking if the money for staffing wouldn't be coming out of endowed payout? Margaret reiterated that every year \$10,000 comes out of the Fund to support staffing, and that the Board was in agreement that the endowment would maintain this \$10,000 for staffing.

Brian had a specific question regarding the S&P committee's focus on the triangle at Vernon and Sprague. Kristin noted that the neighbors have expressed energy to improve this corridor. Renee also mentioned that the person who used to care for that area no longer is capable of providing upkeep. Brian mentioned that the cost breakdown for this specific project seemed a little high, while Brandon responded that these prices are correct and, if anything, may be underpriced.

Susannah added that projects funded by EMAN's grants need a plaque or signage to acknowledge EMAN's contributions to the neighborhood. Margaret agrees, noting that in the survey, one of the criteria is how EMAN gets recognized in the process of grant making for neighborhood projects.

Linda raised a series of questions, including: 1. Did S&P think to offset costs by requesting supplies from various hardware stores as an in-kind donation? 2. How would committees report back to the Grants committee about how monies were spent? and finally, 3. Is the amount being borrowed from the rainy day fund the result of an overage of amounts being granted to various committees? Margaret responded by stating the reason to borrow from the rainy day fund is just time, since we don't know when we'll get the funds directly from the endowment. It was also mentioned that for the funds, EMAN would need a timeline of what committees expect to get done and when to keep people accountable to using the funds properly.

Kelly mentioned that he really likes the idea of EMAN getting involved in historic preservation. Kelly's specific focus was on the second paragraph in the first goal of the Zoning committee's proposal, noting that the work should be the goal of EMAN, not just the Zoning committee. Jeffrey noted his intent was that the survey part of his proposal would get a picture of assets, and would allow the committee to work on additional efforts. Kelly then had a second question, noting that in the proposal, the keeping organization is designated as a subcontractor, but that there was no scope of work for the subcontractor, so EMAN does not know what's coming out of this. Kelly's concern is the same the Board had with the S&P grant - that there may be different expectations of what's expected. Finally, Kelly raised a third question regarding details of the budget for the Zoning committees budget, inquiring exactly what the \$3,000 is for? Kelly also recommended using local organizations in Chestnut Hill and Germantown to start this process.

Overall, the Board felt there needs to be more time to review budgets and add a broader scope of work to the proposals as a whole. The goal of the next board meeting will be to review briefly and vote on this information. The Committees will send budgets and scopes of work to the Board at least 1 week in advance of the next Board meeting.

Marketing:

The Marketing committee will be beginning a process to develop "brand ambassador" trainings, which will include an overview of "seeing it", "saying it", and "being it". The Marketing committee specifically wants to extend an invitation to the rest of the Board to ensure that there is robust representation to develop these trainings. Please contact Michael or Linda if you are interested in joining.

Anti-Racism:

Tiffany led the update for the Anti-Racism committee, noting that the committee will be following up with Executive committee chairs by the next meeting and will follow-up on the status of the speaker series.

Tiffany also noted that the committee is thinking about how to have more engagement with members outside of the Board. The committee would like to find ways to acknowledge and recognize the good work neighbors are doing for the community. The proposal would allow EMAN to take time at the beginning of each meeting to recognize these neighbors, or find other ways to recognize community members through certificates, etc.

Susannah made a motion to begin a public recognition process for neighbors, with Brian seconding the motion. The Ayes carried. Susannah also noted the Marketing committee can loop this into a marketing campaign.

Fundraising Strategy Discussion:

Brian then introduced a conversation about a fundraising strategy. He noted that the way we're organized, every single committee should have a piece in fundraising for EMAN. The ultimate goal is how we go from fundraising ideas to fundraising execution.

Tonyelle noted that this is important for us to spend a full Board discussion, as every individual should have a role in this. It was moved to further discussion at the March Board meeting

Attendance:

Tonyelle then noted that three Board members who were terminated due to lack of attendance at Board meetings. Jimmie's attendance issue was not discussed at the January Board meeting, since he was in attendance at the meeting, but the by-laws are vague about how to address attendance and termination overall. If Jimmie's Board membership is terminated, there would be a vacancy on the Board. With this vacancy, would the Board vote to re-appoint him to the Board?

Natalia noted that in the by-laws, there's no set timeline for you to respond to stay on the Board after missing your third meeting - this issue will be discussed in more detail at a later Board meeting.

Dutch noted that the by-laws state in Section 4.3 that the Board has the power to fill vacancies, and made a motion for Jimmie to fill one of the vacancies on the Board, with John seconding the motion.

For discussion, it was noted that Jimmie could use this time to maintain his participation with the Board and then run again during the next Board election. It was also noted that Jimmie had multiple extenuating circumstances that hindered his Board participation, and that as volunteers, there are exceptions to the rule. There was also a request for Jimmie to provide a formal statement to the Board about his absence.

After debate, the motion went to a roll call vote:

Janet - Aye

Charlie - Nay

Michael Burrell - Nay

Krystal - Aye

Tonyelle - Aye

Elizabeth - Aye

Teri - Aye

Vearnessa - Nay

Cherese - Aye

John - Aye

Althea - Aye

Linda - Nay

Kristin - Nay

Brian - Nay

Nina - Nay

Michael - Nay

Kendra - Nay

Jeffery - Nay

Dutch - Aye

Kelly - Nay

Brandon - Aye

Margaret - Aye

Solomon - Aye

Susannah - Aye

Tiffany - Aye

The motion carried, and Jimmie will fill the vacancy of the Board.

Public Comment:

Kelly then raised an issue with the development at 6717 Chew Avenue. The neighbors wanted to see what the possibility is of EMAN establishing a GoFundMe account for the neighbors to retain legal help in this process. Carla noted that the neighbors have met with the developer three times to present him with raw data, and at their next meeting on the 18th, the applicant intends to bring an attorney with him. Kelly also issued a reminder to the Board that there are two cases where EMAN has served as legal interveners in the last year, including the 318 Sedgwick and 80 E. Sharpnack processes. Kelly emphasized that EMAN will need to establish policies about how EMAN will work with near neighbors once an RCO vote has been made. This needs to be done before the 6717 Chew property before the May ZBA meeting. Kelly recommended that the GoFundMe for 6717 Chew be tabled for tonight, but that this should be addressed as soon as possible.

Brandon inquired about the 6717 Chew Ave project, wondering if the meetings are open to the public, and if so, how we would find that out? Jeffery addressed that all these meetings have been open to the public to date. However, after meeting with Cindy Bass and Chris Rabb's office, there was an agreement to move forward with a working group of individuals including EMAN, 6717 developers, and representatives from Councilmember Bass's office.

Dutch noted that he was very uncomfortable with the establishment of a GoFundMe without a bookkeeper and legal counsel, as he feels he is unqualified to monitor a 501c(3) account with GoFundMe. Tiffany noted that EMAN needs to remove a wall of separation between neighbors and EMAN to work on behalf of our neighbors. Kendra reiterated Kelly's point about how we address these issues, and noted that she was working with Jeff on how we can best work on zoning issues going forward.

Carla noted that this development is a risk to the neighbors losing their playground, and that it's a danger for the neighbors not to have legal representation at the ZBA. Brian noted that the most immediate need is the meeting on February 18th, with a bigger need around representation at the ZBA. Brian indicated that he would be willing and able to support the meeting on the 18th for the time being. Tonyelle asked for EMAN to revisit this after the meeting on the 18th, and asked Dutch to reach out to Dan Muroff for advice or referrals.

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Meeting was adjourned at 9:12 PM