

## **NWACA Board Meeting Minutes**

**November 29, 2023**

**5280 Burger**

Attendance: Joyce Statz, Chris Bove, Carol Dochen, Teri Schock, Julie Rawlings, Ruven Brooks, Richard Grayum, Julie Waidelich, Charlie Galvin, Kevin Kott, Jessica Forrest, Dana Winer, Ben Luckens

Not present: Vicki DeWeese, Bridget Keating, Mae Levitan, Connie Lundgren, Mick Koffend,

6:33pm Call to order by Joyce Statz

### **Neighborhood Water Quality, Lynn Katz, Ph.D, P.E.**

A guest from our neighborhood spoke to address neighbor concerns about our neighborhood's water quality. Lynn has an extensive education and over 30 years of water quality experience. In looking at the Ullrich Water Treatment Plant, she believes Austin has good water quality utility. Austin Water has been producing good water for over 100 years. However, there have been concerns raised by a resident of our neighborhood recently. Lynn has looked at the 3 boil water incidents that have occurred and she has researched this thoroughly. All 3 incidents were due to either higher turbidity levels, low water pressure, or power outages at the city treatment facilities, but not the quality of the water. One of the concerns is whether the water quality we get from this watershed be stable in future years. In the flood of 2018, the turbidity levels of the water were very high which makes it very difficult to treat.

One important aspect of ensuring the water quality is good is to ensure there is not a change in the quality from the time it leaves the plant to the time it arrives at a home. Lynn stated the treatment plant does a good job and the quality has been very stable. In Austin, our water is hard, which means it has calcium and magnesium. As such, many of the pipes in our distribution center have a good coating as a result of our hard water. Austin Water has spent a lot of time looking at piping and there are very few lead service lines, but even so it's less of a concern because of the coating created in the pipes due to the hard water. Lynn noted the pipes in our neighborhood are older and many are cast iron, but should last 100 years. Richard Grayum noted that cast iron life span is typically 50 years. She noted that issues in homes can be caused by stagnation (i.e., vacant homes that have sitting water in pipes for an extended time.)

Overall, she thinks Austin Water does what they are required to do, and it goes above and beyond in many cases to ensure quality water is being dispensed. Our neighborhood is primarily served by the Davis Water Plant. Julie Waidelich asked about the notice related to fluoride in our water supply and Lynn noted that there are benefits and concerns with adding fluoride to our water supply. She was not aware of Austin making changes to the fluoride. Richard Grayum asked about concerns regarding the water quantity. Lynn wasn't able to comment specifically, but there is a general concern about water quantity. Richard stated that he received a certified letter from the city stating that they would be making changes to water supply to increase the water pressure for his home and immediate neighborhood. In addition, the letter stated that the city would install a PRV (pressure relief valve), but Richard would need to maintain the PRV. Lynn reiterated that our water plant has done a very good job of producing quality water and she has no reason to be concerned.

### **Consent Agenda**

Approval of last two month's minutes – Chris Bove made a motion to accept minutes and Kevin seconded. All voted in favor.

### **Membership**

At end of month October, we have 908 members vs. target of 975

### **Financial Report**

Mick was not able to be at our meeting tonight. Joyce share that he is focused on his health, but he is in good spirits and resting. He encouraged us to explore other candidates for Treasurer come July when his term ends. Joyce noted a currently liability of \$585, which is an unused donation of in-kind business member, Epoch Coffee. Additional details about the financial report are included in our meeting documents.

## **Old Business**

Kevin Kott explored signage options for special projects. He found one option that is \$45 without the stake and it's very clear and easy to read. The board agreed that it would be great to permanently affix the sign to the special project in some way to prevent vandalism. Teri noted that it would be a good idea to install a temporary one during park clean up efforts to recognize NWACA as the sponsor. We agreed to order 5 of the sponsor signs and 1 of the clean up signs for our parks.

## **November 15 Zoning Town Hall**

Joyce shared that we had approximately 180 people. Richard did a great job of organizing the questions and the neighbors seemed very appreciative of the information. Ruven noted there are 26 items on the City's schedule of potential zoning changes, so we will have more opportunity in 2024 to host presentations. Julie R. noted she's working right now to get homeowners' insurance in her neighborhood, but they are pushing back on insuring roofs.

A neighborhood Survey about the first phase of the HOME resolution is still underway until December 4<sup>th</sup>; approximately 130 people have responded so far. Based on the responses thus far, it seems to indicate that most residents are opposed to the proposed changes. Ben will present a statement at the December 7<sup>th</sup> meeting based on the results of the NWACA survey that was distributed to our neighbors.

## **New Business**

**Constable Update** was presented by Kevin Kott. Sam has contacted Connie to let her know he has another representative who is willing to help, but Sam would like to remain the main point of contact. Kevin noted Connie has tried numerous times to contact Sam regarding surveillance and he has offered to patrol the neighborhood, but no one has seen a patrol in the neighborhood. It was noted that we used to have much better support and reporting when we first started this initiative, but we haven't had much activity recently. Joyce noted we may want to be in touch with Constable Ballesteros from Precinct 2 in person to discuss patrol support.

## **Ideas for funding newsletter distribution not in postal routes**

Joyce and Julie R. have had several conversations about gaps in distribution for our newsletter. One idea was to form a committee within NWACA to distribute newsletter to members of NWACA and others who do not currently receive our newsletter. Dana noted that she received two newsletters this month – one addressed to her and another that was delivered due to the postal route. There are approximately 50 paying members who are not receiving the newsletter. It was discussed that we pay the publisher to send the newsletter to paying members who are not currently receiving the newsletter. Julie R. motioned that we increase our budget for 2024 to allow the publisher to bill us each month for the delivery of the newsletter to paying members. Charlie seconded the vote, and it was approved.

For residents of apartments, it was proposed that we do a test, sending the newsletter with an insert explaining the mission of NWACA, and find out the level of interest in apartment dwellers in receiving the newsletter. There was a lot of discussion about the best way to distribute the newsletter to the apartments, but it would double the costs to deliver a physical newsletter to every resident in our area. One suggestion was to include a direct mail piece with a QR code that would allow all residents to access the online newsletter. Dana offered to head up the effort to study the matter, and Teri, Richard, and Joyce offered to be part of the committee.

## **Draft budget for 2024**

Joyce presented the draft budget for 2024, the details of which are included in our budget document. Joyce stated that we have a lot of leftover shirts from July 4<sup>th</sup> and that we may want to explore other options in the future. She shared that Custom Ink will only print the amount we sell, plus charge a set-up fee. This allows us to manage our costs better. The proposed budget is essentially a balanced budget. It appears to show a deficit, because our special project funds, help reduce our large bank balance. Carol D. asked about redesigning the signs for our Neighborhood National Night Out, Annual Meeting, and other yard signs as they are difficult to read by drive-by traffic. We agreed to create a basic template that can be used for future signage that's clear and easy to read. Teri said we typically order 50 signs at a time (double sided). Joyce noted we need to add \$1,000 for each event in our budget to cover these costs. Ruven asked about city regulations about an electronic marquee. There was some question about where we could post a marquee,

but would need to find a location and make sure it is city approved. Carol D. was able to provide the name and contact information for the man who owns the building at the southeast corner of Spicewood Springs and Mesa. Julie W. offered to reach out and discuss the possibility of installing a sign at this intersection.

Austin Neighborhoods Council (ANC) has many neighborhood associations as members. NWACA was a member for a while, but we decided it wasn't worth it because they were not focused on the issues we cared about. We have been told they are in better shape at this point, and they have done some deep analysis on the zoning issues. Ruven noted the Friends of Austin Neighborhood (FAN) is another good organization to consider. Ben asked if we were a member of these organizations, would we need to agree with all of their policies, but Joyce assured us we would not. There is a plan to bring a representative from ANC and from FAN to speak at one of our upcoming meetings.

#### **Holiday Yard Contest**

Judges are needed for the holiday yard contest – Chris Bove and Ben Luckens offered to help. It is possible Robert or Bridget would also help and Joyce will reach out to inquire. The judging would take place on December 16<sup>th</sup> or 17<sup>th</sup>.

#### **Other Business for the Board**

Announcements and Updates – We agreed to change the monthly meeting date to the third Wednesday of the month, starting in January 2024.

#### **NWACA Holiday Party**

Carol offered to host the party at her home on December 13<sup>th</sup> at 6pm. Spouses will be included. Joyce asked about catering vs. potluck and the board agreed that catering would be better.

8:58pm Meeting adjourned. Joyce made the motion to adjourn the meeting, Kevin Kott approved and Carol seconded it.

Minutes by Julie Waidelich