

NWACA Board Meeting Minutes
January 17, 2024
Waterloo Ice House

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

Not present: Vicki DeWeese, Bridget Keating, Mick Koffend, Jessica Forrest

6:33pm Call to order by Joyce Statz

Guest speaker – Marc Duchon, Austin Neighborhoods Council

Austin Neighborhood Council presented to speak about their organization and the benefits of joining their council. He noted that the group is composed of members from around the City of Austin – now about 60 HOAs, Neighborhood Associations, and Contact Teams, but aiming to get to about 100, where they were before the pandemic. About 40 people attend the monthly meetings, now held on Zoom. The Executive Team is composed of 17 members, ANC officers and 10 sector representatives, which plans the programs and drafts resolutions for the whole membership to consider. Marc is now VP of Programming, so he needs to leave the role of Sector Rep for our part of Austin; he's looking for a replacement. The Sector Rep brings forth local concerns to the Executive Committee. He cited the 6-element mission statement of ANC, which is captured in documents he provided at the meeting and sent later via email.

Consent Agenda

Approval of November 2023 Minutes – Carol Dochen made a move to accept minutes and Chris Bove seconded. They were approved unanimously.

Membership

At end of 2023, we had 914 members vs. target of 975 members; for 2024 our target is 900 members.

Financial Report

Mick was not able to be at our meeting tonight. Joyce shared his end of the year 2023 financials. Mick created a balance sheet comparison between 2023 and 2022. We have a lower checking account balance, but this is because we moved a portion of our funds into CDs. More detail can be found on the financial documents for this month.

Old Business

Review and approve 2024 budget. Joyce walked through the changes to the budget from the draft we saw at the November meeting. The budget now incorporates the additional expenses for new yard signs for our major events. A new addition was also made for the expenses we agreed to cover for our publisher to send out individual newsletters to members not covered by the postal distribution routes in use. Joyce entertained a motion to approve the budget. Carol Dochen approved; Julie Rawlings seconded, and it was approved unanimously.

Dana reported on the Status of the newsletter distribution committee. The committee is composed of Richard Grayum, Teri Schock, Joyce Statz, and Dana Winer. Lynette, the publisher, clarified that the costs and revenues for producing the newsletter is approximately \$5,000-\$6,000 per issue. Currently we produce 8100 newsletters including 50 put in newsstands. Costs vary by issue, but on average it costs \$2100 to print 24 pages and \$1600 to mail to the current distribution. Design/management is \$1500. To distribute to everyone in NWACA boundaries would be about 13k addresses. Cost would be ~\$3k for printing and \$2700 to mail to full list. Design/management would stay the same. Lynette confirmed that sending newsletters to specific people is ~\$2/person.

Currently we are excluding some single-family homes due to proximity to apartments – i.e., we are excluding that full route. If delivering to apartments, each individual unit would get the newsletter. We would have to increase our circulation from 8,000 to 13,000; currently we are delivering per specific routes, which don't align perfectly with the NWACA boundaries.

There were several ideas proposed to improve our system, which are outlined on the NWACA Newsletter Distribution document included in our board documents. The Recommendation to NWACA board: Pilot for three months sending the newsletter to all residents within NWACA boundaries. Some of the cost difference will be covered by increased ad revenue (raising rates + adding new advertisers). NWACA would fund the gap which is expected to be <\$1k per issue. Re-evaluate after the pilot to see if we continue this approach.

There was a lot of discussion among board members about a potential solution. It was suggested that we consider increasing our membership dues \$5 to \$30. Julie suggested coming up with a partnership whereby new Business Members could potentially get some type of discount if they subscribe as an advertiser in the NWACA newsletter. This would have to be discussed with Lynette. Ruven noted that 50% of our neighborhood is renting. Kevin asked how the success of this experiment would be measured, but there was agreement this would be difficult. Currently, we are excluding routes that are made up primarily of apartments. We have 28,000 people living in the NWACA area and we are distributing this to approximately 8,000 households. Charlie suggested we used part of our balance to fund the extended distribution.

Dana moved to approve the motion and Joyce seconded. The vote was 6 in favor; 4 opposed; 2 abstained.

Carol Dochen suggested those who abstained from voting reconsider or we restructure our plan so it's not so equally divided.

Julie R. moved that we select specific multi-family complexes that we think have long-term rentals, and distribute to those for 3 months, paid for by NWACA. Insert a method of evaluation during this period, such as a QR code asking for a response, accenting membership, etc. Re-evaluate after the pilot to see if we continue this approach. This motion undoes the prior motion.

Julie made the motion to approve and Ben seconded. It was approved 10-3.

New Business

Joyce moved to name Jessica Forrest as Treasurer; Charlie seconded. We will ask for Bank Authorization for her on all Frost Bank accounts. New bank signature card likely be needed, and we plan to have Jessica, Mick, and Joyce as active signers going forward.

We are looking for leaders and proposed venues for our 2024 Activities

- Earth Day co-chairs, Dana and Mick
 - Dana noted that last year the event was hosted at Doss and Murchison. The feedback from the committee was that it would be better to have the event at one place. Dana mentioned it would be good to rotate this event between 78759 and 78731. However, Murchison has already reached out to offer their garden for this year's event and the board was in support of having the event at Murchison Gardens.
 - Dana noted April 20 and April 21 as potential dates for the event. The board felt Sunday may be slightly better.
- July 4th co-chairs. Chris Bove offered to be one of the co-chairs; we continue looking for the other.
 - It was recommended that we host the July 4th parade in 78759
- Neighborhood NNO chair, TBD (Connie Lundgren would like to pass this role onto someone else)
- Recycling Event, we need someone to be an understudy to Joanie (BOPA, Shredding Summer, Electronics); Teri will check with someone she knows who could drive the truck; Dana also has a potential lead. We need to know by the spring recycling event, likely to be in March or April.

Carol and Connie noted that we may want to rethink our Neighborhood NNO event and push it to be more distributed throughout NWACA, with locations in the neighborhoods. We could leverage Neighborhood Watch so it becomes more hyper-focused on individual neighborhoods. Charlie suggested we could provide free pizzas to participating neighbors. It was decided that Connie, Carol, and Kevin would head up a committee to plan for this year.

Joyce noted we need to identify a chair for the Board Nominations Committee. Ben Luckens and Richard Grayum offered to be on the committee, but did not want to chair. Joyce also offered to join the committee. Joyce asked our board to be thinking about potential board members. We will need new members as both Ruven and Charlie are rolling off because of term limits.

We also discussed the opinion on a few other activities for 2024

- Neighborhood Garage Sales
 - It's a low-cost event and low maintenance, so we decided to continue.
- Halloween and December Holiday decorating contests
 - The board felt we should continue with these contests
- Election forums – in-person or virtual
 - It was suggested that we meet in person
 - Dana noted we may have had better attendance given the event was virtual last year
 - Joyce suggested we offer hybrid (both in-person and online)
- Annual Meeting May 15 – speakers suggested?
 - Joyce suggested we bring in a speaker to talk about homeowner's insurance and format in a Q&A manner
 - It was suggested we bring someone in to discuss sewer line replacement, which is happening in the area
 - Tax Protest Deadline? Deadline to protest is May 15, so that may be problematic; we'll avoid this year
 - Talk about new park developments in/near our neighborhood – ask Alison Alter to address this
 - Have an expert give a Spicewood Spring project overview
 - Have an expert available to talk about 183 North – Spicewood Bypass
 - Perhaps have a discussion about protecting your home in extreme temperatures (freezing or heat)
 - We talked about the program “We All Belong” to bring attention to hate crimes; Carol suggested we get someone from the ADL.

There is more information about “We All Belong,” encouraged by CM Alter – see pre-read and <https://austin-against-hate-austin.hub.arcgis.com/>

Other Business for the Board

Deed restriction sub-team – Independence Title has offered to pull deed restrictions for each subdivision within our neighborhood. Mae felt it would be beneficial to post a link to our website so neighbors could access the information. It was suggested that we may make access to the information limited to paying members, which could be accomplished by password protection.

Next Board Meeting, **February 21, 2024**, 6:30 p.m. with venue TBD
Meeting adjourned at 8:36pm. Minutes by Julie Waidelich