

MINUTES OF THE WEST NORWALK ASSOCIATION

FEBRUARY 3, 2013

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT WERE: Linda Forcellina, Gay Mac Leod, Regina Krummel, Anthony Carrano, Donna Dollé, Galen Wells, Brian Forschino, Mike Lesko. Phyllis Weisberg was a guest. **Absent were:** Ron Paladino, Ken D'Arinzo, and Candide Valadares. Ken and Candide notified the presidents that they would not be able to attend.

Welcome: Gay and Linda welcomed our new Board Members, Brian Forschino and Mike Lesko, as well as our guest Phyllis Weisberg.

Minutes: The January 7, 2013 minutes were approved with the addendum that Ken sent regarding the income and expenses of the Holiday Party.

A motion to approve the Minutes was made by Anthony Carrano and seconded by Galen Wells.

TREASURER'S REPORT: Ken D'Arinzo was unable to attend the meeting due to ill health. As usual, the Treasurer's Report was sent to each Board Member by e-mail. The total amount in the bank at this time is \$6, 233.08. There was a question about how much the Board members were asked to give to the Scholarship fund. It had been previously approved that each member would donate at least \$25.

Linda Forcellina mentioned that the Minutes and the Treasurer's Report are sent out each month by e-mail to the Board to save time at the meetings, so each member should read them before coming to the meeting.

A motion to approve the Treasurer's Report was made by Donna Dollé and seconded by Brian Forschino.

DISCUSSIONS:

Bob Wagman: Bob had surgery last week and a card from the Board was sent to him. Bob has been very involved with the flooding issue and was past President of the Board. Galen Wells has been in touch with him about the next meeting on 5 Mile River flooding which will be held at a park in New Canaan sometime this month. She plans to attend.

Linda Forcellina will leave for Florida tomorrow and will be away for three months. Galen Wells, Vice President, will stand in for Linda at meetings and at any other time Gay needs her.

Valerie Crowley added the names of new Board Members on the WNA website along with each Board Member's term limits. A Board Member has a two year term limit and is able to serve a second term after approval from the Board. After six years, a member must be off of the Board for a full year before being re-elected.

CNNA Meeting: Bill Krummel was ill with the flu so Regina Krummel did not attend. The meeting was a general meeting discussing taxes by the Tax Assessor.

Linda Forcellina asked for volunteers to go to future CNNA meetings. Brian will check the Town's website for the date of the next meeting to see if he will be available to attend.

WNA Scholarship Fund: Galen or Regina should contact the counselors at Brien McMahon next week. Gay MacLeod explained that students can look up their addresses on our map on the website to see if they live within the borders of West Norwalk. Any student may also contact either Regina or Galen by e-mail. It is the responsibility of the student to obtain the application from the guidance department.

Gay added that it is important to make sure that the guidance counselors are continually reminded about our scholarship by e-mail and/or phone.

In a discussion of ideas for getting donations for the Scholarship Fund, Gay MacLeod recommended handwritten notes specifically asking for donations for the fund. Donna offered to include handwritten notes as part of her normal mailings to potential real estate clients in addition to notes being sent out by the Board. Galen and Regina will follow through with notes asking for donations and Board members were asked to recommend names of possible donors.

Annual Meeting/Event: Anthony Carrano offered the idea of an ice cream social, similar to the one given by Fox Run School. This would be a low cost event and we could have a minimum charge for the ice cream. However, we need to pick a weekend and get clearance from Fox Run and the city quickly. Anthony will check the cost of a popcorn machine and bouncy house and will get back to Board members about all his findings since we will have to make a decision before the next Board meeting in March. We also need to find out whether electricity will be available at the school or if we need to have a generator. For the meeting section of the event, we will need to see if we can borrow chairs from the Meeting House. The budget should be in the \$600-\$800 range.

New Neighbors: In lieu of welcome baskets Linda suggested collecting names of new neighbors and sending them a handwritten invitation to one of our meetings and giving them a gift and a membership application when they attend. Mike Lesko offered to collect names from the closings listed in *The Hour* each week. The Board members agreed to follow this suggestion. After five or six names have been collected, invitations will be sent.

Oak Hills Driving Range: Linda Forcellina and Gay MacLeod sent an opinion piece regarding the board's neutral position on the driving range to *The Hour* and *Daily Norwalk*.

Linda asked Dave Davidson, former Board Member and Board of Estimate member, to attend Bill Wrenn's Walk in the Woods last week. He and his wife enjoyed the walk but did express concern about the size of the range. When he was on the Board, the position to oppose the driving range was not unanimous and reflected the views of members rather than the community. Dave offered to provide information we may want about the driving range issue that was presented 13 years ago.

Linda attended the January 31, 2013 Oak Hills meeting which was supposed to be about rates only. However, some people interrupted the meeting and others referred to the range although Bob Virgulak made it clear that the range was not to be mentioned. After the meeting, Linda spoke to Bob Virgulak and Ernie Desroches who said that the proposal will be on the city website and will be about "50 pages" long, but that we need to read only the first two sections.

The public hearing on the RFP will be held on February 13, 2013 and Bob Virgulak promised that it will be "civilized."

Anthony Carrano said that there are more supporters than not at the meetings. Gay MacLeod pointed out that Bill Wrenn's concern is the trails and the excavation that will need to be done. In fact, he recently went on Oak Hills property and put trail markers on trees without the permission of the Authority so now it may be stated that trails exist. She said too that in the new proposal quality trees will be planted to replace scrub and invasive species and that trails will be protected from the driving range. She questioned what would happen if the golf course fails. It is zoned for housing which would be the obvious outcome. Anthony stated that this possibility has been mentioned at meeting of the Authority.

Some questions: Can we send a mailing to get opinions? Would the responses only come from the people who are passionate about the issue? Would a non-response be considered a yes vote? Could we afford sending a mailing?

Brian Forschino said that we need to know more about what is going to be done before we can make a decision one way or the other and Donna Dollé mentioned that the Larchmont, NY driving range brings in a lot revenue. Galen Wells brought up the need for an environmental study which Gay stated has already been done. Mike Lesko questioned where children would go to school if the park was turned into housing.

Anthony Carrano said that the February 11, 2013 meeting will be to discuss the request for the loan to carry them over until the annual golf fees come in. The \$150K figure is an estimate and may not be needed; however, Oak Hills wants to make the request in case it is needed. Anthony will attend this meeting.

Linda Forcellina suggested that we read Bob Virgulak's letter that we posted on our website. In it he states that there is no taxpayer burden for Oak Hills Park. The Authority is committed to working within environmental guidelines and will consider other suggestions made by the community. .

Brian Forschino, Galen Wells, Regina Krummel, Ron Paladino and Anthony Carrano agreed attend to public hearing meeting on February 13, 2013.

Miscellaneous: Brian asked for a list of dues paying members. Donna Dollé will provide it to all Board Members.

A discussion was held about how to get more members to pay dues.

One suggestion was to have a specific time of the year for fund raising. Donna Dollé suggested making phone calls, but this is a problem because we do not have phone numbers. Our guest and others also agreed that people resent telephone solicitations.

Finally, Board members concluded that a mailing was a better choice. Gay MacLeod recommended hand-written notes and a return envelope. Anthony Carrano suggested that we write the letters halfway through the year (the middle of the low season.) Regina suggested doing a test and Board members agreed that a test was a good idea.

Linda Forcellina asked Donna Dollé to provide the names of the larger donors: \$50 - \$100. Regina Krummel and Galen Wells will work on the notes asking for Scholarship donations. Gay MacLeod and Linda Forcellina will write notes about the annual meeting/event along with a request for membership dues. .

Linda mentioned the change of the company providing the use of credit cards for membership dues on our website. Ken will pursue other choices.

THE NEXT MEETING WILL BE HELD MARCH 4, 2013

A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Galen Wells and seconded by Anthony Carrano.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:00 PM.

Respectfully submitted, Donna Dollé, Secretary