

MINUTES OF THE WEST NORWALK ASSOCIATION

MARCH 4, 2013

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT WERE: Gay Mac Leod, Galen Wells, Regina Krummel, Anthony Carrano, Donna Dollé, Brian Forschino, Mike Lesko, Candide Valadores, Ken D'Arinzo, Ron Paladino. **Absent were:** Phyllis Weisberg and Linda Forcellina. Guests: Bill Krummel and Frank Forker

WELCOME: Frank Forker

MINUTES: The February 3, 2013 minutes were approved with changes adding Regina Krummel and Ron Paladino as agreeing to attend the Oak Hills meeting.

A motion to approve the Minutes was made by Galen Wells and seconded by Ron Paladino.

TREASURER'S REPORT: Ken reported that there was no recent income or expenses . The balance sheet shows a total of \$6,153.08 in our bank account. The P&L shows a net income of \$13.97 for the period January 1, through February 28, 2013.

DISCUSSIONS:

Gay reminded the Board Members of their pledge to give a minimum of \$25 to this year's Scholarship Fund, and of course welcoming more than the minimum if possible. This way we will know how much we have for the upcoming scholarship program. Gay also reminded the Board members that 2013 membership's dues should be paid by everyone now.

Ken reported on the new Click & Pledge Company that bought out the previous company used for collecting donations on our website. C&P can manage our member list and send blast e-mails. They do not coordinate with Quick Books. They download payments directly into our checking account. Ken's concern was the work it would take to enter the information into QuickBooks and suggested that we no longer use QuickBooks to keep our records, but rather to just use Excel.

The concerns that the Board had were the costs of the program if we decided to use it to manage our membership list and if able to take checks along with credit card payments, the cost would be too high. The processing fee is 3% along with a .30 transaction processing fee and a \$20 per month fee. Brian mentioned that the costs of the new software package Click and Pledge would come to over \$200 a year for process about 7 or 8 residents who use the website to pay the dues. Gay's concern was that we still need a "modern way to process payments" and we should not walk away from this payment method. She also noted that as of now, we do not have any online method of taking fees.

It was decided that Ken would look into other options that would cost less, PayPal being one of them. Ken will confer with Anthony on this project.

WNA SCHOLARSHIP FUND:

Galen and Regina have drafted a letter to supporters of the WNA who may contribute to the scholarship fund. They will also contact the Guidance Counselors at Brian McMahon High School to remind them about our Scholarship Fund for the upcoming graduating class. They have contacted them by e-mail and will follow up by phone if they do not receive a timely response. Both Gay and Ken stated that the timing for applying scholarships is now, and that Guidance Counselors are very busy and probably do not promote our scholarship.

ANNUAL MEETING/EVENT:

Anthony spoke to Fox Run about having a Bouncy House for an event on their grounds. Fox Run's insurance does not allow them to have one for their events. Ken will check with our insurance to see if we can get a Certificate of Insurance to cover for the Bouncy House.

Anthony thinks the cost of the Bouncy House would be around \$200. He will also get prices for a popcorn machine and cotton candy machine. Brian will look into getting a vendor for the Bouncy House.

The budget for the annual meeting discussed in the February meeting was between \$600 and \$800 for the event. Other thoughts were hiring socks the clown. Gay asked Anthony to put together a proposal with costs – ice cream/cones/toppings etc. She suggested working on guess of 100 people attending.

Anthony also mentioned that we need a sign promoting our events. Gay stated we have looked into this, and a plastic banner the size of our clean up sign is about \$200-300. The banner last about one or two days and is usually ripped from the wind, so may not be used again. Gay suggested checking into a heavy cloth or canvas sign or a less expense version of the plastic banner. Anthony will check it out

NEW PEOPLE MOVING TO WEST NORWALK:

Mike was able to find that there were 11 new people who purchased homes. Many of the homes are not in West Norwalk. He will work on the list to pare down the West Norwalk home owners. Gay suggested looking at the boundaries on our website as a reference guide.

CNNA MEETING:

Ron reported on the different items discussed at the meeting, including "Keeping Norwalk Beautiful," "Pie and Politics sponsored by the League of Women Voters," "Noise Ordinance" and upcoming meetings.

There were questions at the meeting about the West Norwalk Association's neutral position on the Oak Hills driving range. What are we doing to get input from the community and will we have a position

when we get the input? Some other questions; how do we feel about losing 7 acres of trees and wild life? Was it written into the RFP that there would be no lights or just that it would be open dusk to dawn leaving future lights a possibility? The CNNA will support our final position.

They also wanted to know if we had any input on the building of Lowe's since it can impact traffic on West Norwalk roads.

OAK HILLS DRIVING RANGE:

Anthony and Ken stated that the driving range RFP is missing a lot of items and that the Board still needs to be educated about what is to be done concerning the driving range and the land surrounding it.

Bill Krummel stated that the Oak Hill Authority is poorly managed, and the people running it are not honest. He suggested that another Golf company would be better at managing it, and his thoughts were that by raising the fees to competitive prices, the financial crisis would be solved.. He said the Driving range would not make the Oak Hills Golf Course more profitable. Gay asked what did he think would happen down the road if another golf company also failed. She stated the land is zoned for housing. She stated that the city is still liable for the loan and it would not make sense to hold on to a valuable 144 acres of land. She said she thought a situation where part of the land is developed for housing and another part for land conservation would be viable option poised to the city if the golf course fails. Bill Krummel responded back, that the idea was ridiculous, that anyone in a political position would never agree to sell the land to a development. He stated again that the golf course is just poorly run, and a driving range is not the answer, they should raise the fees.

Ken stated at the Oak Hills Public meeting, Bill Krummel suggested putting in more clarification in the RFP, such as budgets etc.

There was back and forth discussion about how to get a survey done from our membership. Ken and Regina felt that we should do a survey right away so as to let people know that we are doing something and not just sitting on our hands. Donna suggested that we have Valerie set up a place for a survey on our website that requires, name, address, phone and e-mail address, so that we can get a report of the community's response to the driving range. Anthony did not want to require a phone number. However, a zip code of 06850 would be the only zip code that would be allowed to go to the survey site.

It was decided by vote of 8 to 2 that in about two weeks, when the updated RFP is done, we will conduct a survey and have a link to the RFP. The survey will ask one question and that question will be cleared by the board. The board decided that once we have our results, we would announce the results and take that position. Meanwhile we will write a letter to the Hour stating our intent about sending out the survey. We will also send an email blast stating the same thing.

Candide made the motion to accept this decision, Brian seconded it and the vote 9 to 1

NEW BUSINESS:

WNA spring cleanup date is Saturday, April 6, 2013 with a rain date of April 7. Anthony will put up the signs to announce it.

Gay suggested and it was agreed that we, as Board members would spend our time helping with the actual cleanup and not have as many people at the check-in table. Gay will organize, bring the supplies, and send around an email with details. Anthony noted that this is the time to be visible within the community and we should wear our t- shirts and be out there.

Our guest, Frank Forker is interested in joining the Board. He gave us a little personal history including his time as a coach, among his many other accomplishments. He is currently a speech writer and motivational speaker.

The next meeting will be April 1, 2013 at Fox Run School at 7:30PM

Candide motioned to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by Ken.

Respectfully submitted, Donna Dollé, Secretary