

Minutes from IHLNA General Meeting November 4, 2021

Board members present: Marie-Claire Leman, Ashley Arrington, KC Smith, Jason Khan-Hohensee, Ceci Michelotti, Melissa Harley, Edward Reid, Doug Martin, Katie Clark, and John Tomasino (who prepared the minutes)

Board Members Absent: Charity Myers, Charlotte Stuart-Tilley

Other neighbors in attendance: David July, Betsy Tabac, Ryan Alton Wilke, Carol Burch, Karla Brandt, Mary Louise Bachman, Judith Rainbrook, Eli Wilkins-Malloy, Kevin Hattaway, Glen Gifford

The meeting, held via Zoom, began shortly after 7:00 pm. The attendees and Board members introduced themselves.

One of the purposes of the General Meeting is to elect new Board members. Board members serve for two years and none of the current members are in need of re-election. The Board has three open positions. Neighbors can nominate themselves tonight if they wish to join the Board. Marie-Claire explained the makeup of the Board. Ceci volunteered to become the point person for emails that are sent to the Board email address.

Treasurer's report: Melissa presented the Treasurer's Report. A couple of people paid their membership dues so the revenue column increased. For expenses, since the last Board meeting, two checks for the Halloween Party and the printer for the newsletter. The check to Southcity Foundation is in revenue but it will soon be dispersed. The current balance is \$13,511.87.

Before we moved to updates on neighborhood projects, Marie-Claire opened the floor for nominations. Eli nominated himself. Doug asked what nonprofits Eli is involved with. Via chat, Eli shared that he has a master's degree in nonprofit management from NYU. Currently, he works for an org called AODA, which is a coalition of lawyers in Latin America who advocate for environmental protection. Before, he worked for an organization called the Plastic Pollution Coalition, which advocates against plastic pollution.

Lora Dearman nominated herself prior to the meeting. Marie-Claire spoke with her on the phone before the meeting, which Lora wasn't able to make. She is a teacher at the School of Arts and Sciences and personally has three young children. She has been in the neighborhood since July 2021. She is very interested in getting involved as a Board member.

Jason gave an update on the idea of a **Neighborhood Beautification Committee**. This committee would be resident-led, not necessarily by the Board. Items that come to mind include keeping the signs and the areas around them maintained, adopting streets around the neighborhood, battling invasive plants. This isn't about anything dealing with private property. Main issue would be adopting the streets, per the program requirements, and making sure it is

done in a safe manner. We also need to maintain the signs and the areas around the neighborhood signs. Other ideas were trail cleaning and sustainability. So the idea is a resident-led committee, not under the direction of the Board, but as a liaison with the Board. The Board could help with contacts with the city when requested. Need to think about ways to recruit people to volunteer on the committee. KC asked if this concept has a name to help with the marketing of the plan.

Fruit Tree update: John and Marie-Claire recently met with city employees to do an overview of the locations and received their approval to proceed. All that is left is to draft and submit the application for the grant.

Basketball courts: Marie-Claire provided the context, which is our desire to not raise the lowered net unless the city agrees to allow us to install a lowered net elsewhere in the park. The goal tonight is to listen to neighbors on their position regarding this request. Doug began the discussion by reminding the Board as to the problems that the park experienced when the full court basketball games were occurring. The problems included cussing, urinating, and drug use. Doug canvassed his neighbors and no one has said they would support this. He relayed that with football practices and afterwards, there are bottles and other litter. He would like signs to remind folks to clean up after themselves. Doug asks that we heed the past experience and not raise the net. Ashley agrees with Doug and would like the baskets to remain the way they are. Jack McLean Park is nearby so Ashley would be against taking away more green space. Jason added that he saw on Facebook that there was an interest in our park not being exclusionary. Some residents who want to use full court access and that this is a city park, but not our park. If problems arise after raising the hoop, the hoop could be lowered again. Marie-Claire updated of the results of our site survey where we reviewed the current set up and agreed that the part between the baby swings and the softball field would be a good location. This location is not part of the green space. Ceci said that she isn't worried about the volleyball people smoking and drinking. Tons of little kids use the lowered hoops so she hopes we can continue providing that amenity. Via Chat, Eli's partner relayed that he is supportive of the full court access and that Eli regularly plays with men there and they don't smoke nor drink nor cuss. John added that since the original issues occurred, the bathrooms were installed and Jack McLean Park wasn't yet open. Since that time, much has changed and the problems were over 15 years ago so it's worth giving it a try. If it doesn't work, we can easily revert the basket to lowered. Marie-Claire suggested that the next step is to check with the city about the location we scouted and to survey the neighborhood.

Campaign Contribution Program: Marie-Claire provided an update about the city's Campaign Contribution Program. We received an email about this program. The goal of the program is to enhance engagement with local elections the program offers to refund up to \$25.00 if that money is contributed to a city commission or mayoral race. We were invited to have someone at a meeting to learn more information about this program. This is a program of the Tallahassee Independent Ethics Board. Its goal is getting more people to become involved in these local elections. Doug added some of the history of the program and he agrees these are important matters and there might be other ideas out there too besides just the ones being

offered by this one group. Edward asked for clarification on what this group is requesting and Marie-Claire replied that they are seeking engagement from neighborhood groups to increase the visibility of the program. Katie and Ceci expressed interest in attending the meeting.

At this juncture, we paused to vote on the nominations. Neighbors who are members of the association and Board members were free to vote. Both nominees, Eli and Lora, were approved as new Board members. Congratulations!

Three announcements: No update was provided regarding the Blirstone housing project. Marie-Claire did inform the group about an upcoming planned walk around the property.

The holiday bike ride is scheduled for December 17. We do our membership drive in January.

Doug advised about a planned development to our south where there is much greenspace and his concern about the impact of any potential development on our neighborhood. KC asked about the timing of this development approval process and unfortunately we don't yet know. Marie-Claire advised the city meeting to discuss this issue is scheduled for December 8th. Marie-Claire asked Doug to provide her with a brief description of the issue so she can send that out to the neighborhood email distribution list.

The meeting concluded shortly after 8:30.