

**Final Retreat Minutes
NWONA Board Meeting
January 10, 2015**

Board Members Present: Rip Heminway, President; Erica Guttman, Vice President; Dorothy Gist, Treasurer; Cathy Visser, Secretary; Bruce Coulter; Kendra Sawyer; Monica Gockel, Zach Osborn, David Moseley, Daniel Einstein, Scott Bishop, Jerry Parker, and Susan Tuzzolino. Andy Carter resigned from the Board due to other obligations.

Overview of the Day: The group agreed to add a pocket park check-in to the agenda if time allowed. As requested at the last meeting, Bruce Coulter brought a sample permit required by door-to-door salespeople, cab drivers and locksmiths. Bruce will post a photo of the required sample permit on NextDoor for future reference.

1. Feedback from Annual Meeting: Susan

Susan reviewed the four categories of information collected (see minutes from the annual meeting) and the board reviewed the comments to determine the themes and how these might inform the work of the board over the course of the next year.

Code Enforcement: This rang true for many members in regards to derelict cars, sidewalk giveaways (trash) and other minor infractions that neighbors seem to need help from the City to enforce.

Considerable work has been done regarding code enforcement by neighborhood member Patricia Pyle; Erica and Bruce volunteered to work with Patricia to facilitate this topic and present it to City leaders as a concern of the neighborhood. The desire is that the resulting information compiled by this study and potential action items will be vetted by members and taken to the City.

Traffic issues: Neighbors present at the annual meeting expressed concerns about traffic issues (crossings, intersections, speed). Ideas ranging from adding stop signs where they didn't exist to a speed cart in the neighborhood were suggested. The consensus was that a group needed to focus on getting all traffic-related concerns from the neighborhood, list and prioritize and then take this to the City so they would have our biggest concerns presented in a prioritized list. Susan volunteered to lead this effort with help from Kendra and Jerry.

Accessory Dwelling Units: Desire for allowing more ADUs was expressed at the annual meeting. This is seen by the board as something that is viewed as a positive aspect of the neighborhood that the City should be making easier to permit and build than it currently is. Erica volunteered to draft a letter to the City on behalf of the neighborhood articulating support for this planning and development priority. This would then be vetted by the board and membership before being forwarded to the City.

It was also discussed that it would seem useful as other neighborhoods had done, to try and get some representation from a council member for NWONA--one who we could connect with to build a bridge to the council and articulate specific concerns to the City. It was also expressed that inviting potential candidates to NWONA meetings would be helpful. Rip volunteered to contact Cheryl Shelby to see if she would be willing to attend a NWONA meeting.

2. Membership: Rip

1. **Legal Status of NWONA:** The question of the status of NWONA arose in regard to our ability to write certain grants and around liability issues. NWONA is not a 501(c) (3) nonprofit nor are we currently incorporated with the state of WA. Rip is going inquire with the City about the type of liability protection they offer to us as a member of the Coalition of Neighborhood Associations (CNA). Note: It was later discovered that the organization was registered with the State of Washington as a nonprofit organization. This license has since lapsed, but it would make sense to re-initiate this status with the state.
2. **What makes someone a member?** Susan suggested that voting members pay dues – in full or in any amount that the person can afford. Rip brought up that this means we then need a mechanism for voting. Erica used the Boys & Girls Club building proposal on the Garfield ball field as an example of a divisive issue on which NWONA leadership felt pressure to take a stand, but where there was no way to adequately speak on behalf of the neighborhood because there were strongly held views on both sides. With voting members, we could bring issues to a vote by the membership and then present the results of our vote to the City so as to inform them of the overall level of consensus for any given concern. **A motion was made by Dorothy, seconded by Erica, and all were in favor of developing a method to poll membership views on issues so they can be presented to the City.** The Board will develop criteria as to what types of issues will be brought to a vote. We will reflect the neighborhood's views on issues regardless of the level of agreement on a given issue. **Rip made a motion to develop a Membership Chairperson for NWONA; Cathy seconded and all were in favor.**
3. **Dues?** Daniel suggested that folks pay membership dues or volunteer at least 4 hours of time per year to neighborhood projects to be a member. Project coordinators could be asked to track volunteer names and time for each project and then provide this information to the Membership Chair. Cathy suggested alternative in-kind membership activities for low-income people who are not able to do physical work. The Board agreed that we should have voting and non-voting members. Zach had looked at other neighborhood due levels and felt that we might get more membership if we lower our fees. Rip suggested \$10 per member. Erica suggested a higher dues option for folks who would like to contribute more. Jerry suggested that all memberships be tied to the fall meeting so we can inform everyone at the same time. The Membership Chair would track new members, track dues and remind folks of their dues. S/he would also remind members of the benefits of membership. Dorothy suggested requesting a sliding scale fee of \$5-\$25 per year or in-kind time, and to set up an online method for payments. If people say they want to give their time, we have them sign up for a project immediately and their name is given to the project coordinator. **Rip made a motion to have one class of membership, Jerry seconded and all were in favor. To be a member of NWONA, you need to pay \$5-\$25/year or give 4 hours of neighborhood service annually. Membership expires at the October annual meeting.** Monica volunteered to be the Membership Chair with assistance.
4. **Voting at fall meeting:** One exception to paying dues in order to vote will be to allow all neighbors present at the fall meeting be eligible to vote to elect the new board members. Logistically, it would be too challenging to manage otherwise.
5. **By-Laws Update:** Rip agreed to update bylaws as a result of our work at the retreat and then send a draft to members for review.

3. Communication: Erica

- a) **What do we need to communicate?** We need to let people know how the dues are used, how we are representing the neighborhood to the City, and what we don't do as an organization. We get out invitations to meetings, promote events and recruit for project work parties.
2. **Communication Tools:** We use the Gmail list, blog, website, Nextdoor, sandwich board, fliers, and signs on posts. Dorothy is currently storing and managing the sandwich boards. Our NWONA website is currently down. Scott reported that NWONA lost its domain name. We need the registrar and user name to renew the domain. Rip will look into finding the original owner of the domain. If we can't find it, we will need to come up with a new domain name, register and pay. Bruce asked if the Coop helps promote NWONA. We could reach out to them for more promotional support and space. Rip suggested that we ask people currently on the Gmail email list if they still want to be on. He stated that it makes sense to use Gmail account to track votes, to keep a list on Gmail of paid members; basically to use the Gmail as our primary way of making contact with paid membership. The group agreed to let go of the blog as Nextdoor has replaced it and is more interactive. The NWONA website serves as a public access point and we post our minutes and by-laws there as well. Rip suggested that we simplify the website. Zach reported on his research of other association websites. SWONA has a photo gallery on their website. Daniel will lead an effort along with Zach and Scott, to determine what should be on our website, including photos and walking maps. Kendra felt that we should have laminated fliers or posters up all the time in the neighborhood at key places about how to join and participate in NWONA. David suggested that we have a kiosk as an official "community center." Kendra and David will explore where NWONA can establish a community communications center. Scott suggested that we consider having a mailing address for NWONA for folks who do not use computers. For flier distribution we have 1,100 households that need to be reached. Kendra volunteered to make NWONA name tags to help us look more legitimate when we go door to door. We are going to target a flier for the spring meeting that includes our by-laws changes, membership information, and recruitment for the spring meeting.
3. **Meetings:** Rip will do a Doodle poll of the group on when to do the spring meeting.
4. **Communications Manager:** Do we want to have a person do this? It was decided that the Board as a whole would share responsibility for managing communications. We decided against having a Webmaster, rather opting for a more collaborative Board process. We also added that the VP can help facilitate communications around publicity -- not to manage them all -- but to be sure that timely communication is happening and someone is taking charge of it for the various events. That can be added to the VP's job description (see below).

4) Role of the Board: Dorothy

1. **How do we give input to CNA and City?** Rip as Board President, goes to the CNA meetings, and Erica as VP goes when she can or in his place.
2. **Who speaks for NWONA?** The by-laws state that the Board President or designate is the spokesperson for NWONA.
3. **How do members speak to us?** Annual meeting, Nextdoor and Gmail. We will be coming up with an online voting mechanism to get input from voting members.

5) Board Roles: Rip

1. **New Officers**

- Membership Chair: Monica Gockel volunteered to take on this position.
- By-laws Chair: It was not felt that there is a need for this.
- Publicity Facilitator: Rather than creating an officer's position for this, the group felt that these duties might best be served by the Vice President. The VP will be aware of and coordinate our various modes of communication. S/he will help get meeting fliers and information out about events. Daniel would like us to develop a communications tool kit to make this easier. We agree that publicity facilitation is part of the VP's role and the bylaws need to reflect this.
- Past President – yes, this position will be helpful with transitioning.
- Grant writer, Work party coordinator & Web-master are all responsibilities that the group agreed to share.
- Project leads: Could include FunFest, Pocket Park, Pathways Projects, etc. Scott suggested using Doodle polls to increase participation and agreement on times to meet. Susan would like to have time at the April annual meeting to see if people still want FunFest and whether they are willing to help. Dorothy suggested that Susan ask for a certain number to sign up and show up or the event will be cancelled.

Bruce suggested job descriptions for roles of Officers. This could be posted on the website. Rip requested we elect a new VP at the next Board meeting, as Erica becomes the Past President. The changes to the bylaws will be made and hopefully presented at the April annual meeting. It was suggested that we include in the bylaws that you need to pass on information and roles to the next Officer.

Announcements:

Work party at heronry: Monday, Jan 19th heronry tree planting 10 a.m. to 5 pm.

Urban Density meeting at Harbor House, Wed, Jan 21st, 7 pm. Must RSVP. Space is limited.

Adjourn: The meeting adjourned at 12:15 pm. The next meeting will be February 23rd from 7-8:30 pm at the Garfield Elementary School library.