

RPIA Board Meeting Minutes – November 18, 2019

The general meeting of the Ryan Place Improvement Association was held at St. John's Church on Monday evening, November 18, with President Tim Keith presiding and Sarah Geer as secretary. A quorum was established and the meeting was called to order at 7:16pm.

Board Members in Attendance: Tim Keith, Ryan Scharar, Sarah Geer, Jen O'Connell, Chris Ebert, Chris Gee, Josh Gardner, Terri West, Hayley Wateska, Joyce Davidson, Jake Neal, John Belknap, Kipp Baker, Barbara Forshey, Chrisy Van Dyck

Others present included: Ruth Karbach, Edward Furber, Douglas Cooper, Mary Ebert, Jason Jones, Jeff Schroeder

Report Summary/Notes

- Tim mentioned that there was a reporter in the neighborhood today doing follow-ups on the May kidnapping.
- Sergio was not in attendance but sent Tim an update: Sergio is not seeing any uptick/concerns regarding crime. Some burglaries, most involving unlocked vehicles.
- Tim is recommending that RPIA establish a neighborhood service award for residents who go above and beyond in contributions to the neighborhood. Fairmount has something similar. Tim would like to establish a committee to determine the criteria and other details of the award. Terri West has volunteered to chair the committee. Tim is requesting that the board approve creation of the committee.
 - **Chris Gee moves to establish a committee for the Ryan Place service award. Jen O'Connell seconds. Motion passed.**
 - Resident question: it's more of a merit/emeritus award as opposed to recognizing current service, right? Yes.
- Chris Gee updated on Candlelight Christmas in Ryan Place (CCRP) – all but one sponsorship has been paid, CCRP has doubled their income from sponsorship over last year. There are still decent volunteer and ticket booth volunteer shifts open (but tracking similar to what we have in past years). We should expect additional pleas for volunteers in the coming days/weeks.
 - Chris reminded everyone that this year there are lots of extra activities for kids and featuring community businesses/orgs. Also, an opportunity for Christmas croquet.
- Nominations update
 - Several positions are renewing for a second term, including communications, secretary, and vice president.
 - Tim presented the following slate of nominees:
 - Public Safety nominee: Jason Jones
 - Director of Infrastructure nominee: Douglas Cooper
 - Resident question: are there any street directors on the slate? Not at this time.
 - **Terri West moves to approve the slate as is. Jake Neal seconded. Motion passed.**
- Daggett Park update
 - Tim shared that progress is slow.
 - Resident question: could you provide a recap on cost and how much we've raised?
 - Tim summarized that the park pavilion project was approved with \$65,000 from the RPIA budget in 2018. The original design would have put us right at budget. We've since

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decided to go with a simpler design that leaves about \$11,000 cushion in the budget.
We are waiting on updates re: timeline and electrical work needed.

- Resident question: does the city run and manage the project and just send us a bill? Do we need a formal agreement re: any shared responsibility with the city?
 - Tim reminded everyone that the master plan for updating the park will involve many additional changes besides the pavilion, and public funds were raised as part of a past bond project. RPIA wanted to put additional skin in the game to support improvements. Tim's understanding is that things like maintenance will be managed by the city and FWISD.
 - Residents asked Tim to pursue a written agreement to confirm/clarify responsibilities including maintenance. It was recommended that we do this before we spend any money.
 - A board member provided the following clarification: the RPIA board is making decisions about allocating funds that the CCRP raises.
- Tim noted that he is still working with small group on Triangle Park project.
- Resident question: any update on safe routes to schools? Construction won't start until 2021. It will replace curbs and sidewalks within ¼ mile of schools, update crosswalks, etc.

Director Reports

- VP: nothing to report
- Secretary:
 - Sarah noted that we still need to get September minutes approved but, unfortunately she forgot to bring copies for review.
 - Sarah reminded the board that there are no official minutes for the October meeting since we did not have a quorum.
- Treasurer
 - Jen shared that newsletter expenses are final and are down for this year thanks to cost savings from the new printing arrangement. We can expect even less cost next year.
 - Jen noted that membership contributions are lagging significantly and suggested that we brainstorm creative ideas to boost donations.
 - Resident question: do we have a list of past donors? Could we do outreach to past donors? Yes.
 - A resident noted that personal outreach is more impactful than mass communications.
 - Jake will work on strategy based on past donor list.
 - Josh offered as street director to help with outreach.
 - Resident question: Given the healthy balance of funds available, why should we keep raising money?
 - Resident question: what are the direct results of donations?
 - Tim shared that funds raised by RPIA are used for neighborhood events/activities, landscaping, communications, and infrastructure (i.e., park projects).
 - Jen noted that since CCRP is our only major fundraiser and it happens at the end of the year, we need to make sure we have liquidity to bridge from year to year.

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- Tim agreed that it was overall a good point: we don't need to be taking in money just to sit on it.
- A resident noted that recurring operating expenses are \$12,000-\$13,000/year.
- Jen shared that our annual insurance premium has increased by \$53.51 this year. We need board to approve \$1,400 for the premium. Jen also noted that this year timing issues made it hit twice in 2019 but that won't happen again.
 - **John Belknap moved to approve funds needed. Terri West seconded. Motion passed.**
- Jen made an appeal to the board to use \$500 of community engagement funds for Daggett ES coat drive.
 - Resident question: does RPIA need to buy coats? No, the funds go to the Daggett PTA and they purchase coats – typically from Walmart, Costco, etc.
 - **Chris Gee moves to approve expense \$500 from community engagement funds for a donation to Daggett ES coat drive. Joyce Davidson seconded. Motion passed.**
- Membership
 - The recent newcomer event was very successful (13 new residents from 8 households)– big thanks to Ruth, Eric and Carlos! Ruth mentioned that the event is targeted to new residents in 2019 who indicated an interest in volunteering or otherwise getting involved with the neighborhood.
 - Ruth shared that we made 41 total welcome visits for 2019 – 40% were to renters. She also shared a trend of houses staying on market longer or shifting to rental.
 - Resident question: Why don't we invite all newcomers to newcomer event?
 - Ruth noted that since we typically host the event in a private home, there are sometimes concerns about capacity. Also, this event is more focused on nurturing relationships with newcomers trying to find ways to plug in to the board or other neighborhood activities. All newcomers receive an events calendar and are encouraged to come to RPIA events.
 - A resident noted that it could be awkward if we post photos about the newcomer event on Facebook but not all newcomers were invited.
 - Tim echoed that purpose is to network with RPIA board for those who express interest in more connections.
- Communications
 - Kipp noted that 72 candlesticks were ordered under the initial deadline. We made an additional order of 100 and 21 have already sold. 79 are remaining from the second order and are available to purchase online or at CCRP.
 - For CCRP sales of the candlesticks, it was recommended that we have a tabletop sign with pricing/details. Kipp investigated with FastSigns and recommends a small sign with a built in stand. He expects the cost to be \$75-\$125 and noted that the hardware is reusable and the cost includes graphic design.
 - **Kipp Baker moves to allocate up to \$150 for tabletop sign for events. Chris Gee seconded. Motion passed.**
 - Kipp requested more details on compensating a sponsor who was left out of the CCRP brochure. Historic FW is helping promote CCRP and there was a longstanding agreement for an ad swap. Since Historic FW missed the deadline for this year's CCRP tour brochure, we wanted to offer some space for a newsletter ad. An equivalent value would be to offer a half-page ad all year in the newsletter.
 - Ruth requested an update to the web homepage – the CCRP volunteer link is outdated.

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- Kipp noted that Constant Contact only reaches ~35% of the neighborhood based on open rates.
 - Tim recommended trying to do an email validation.
- Resident question: for what percent of houses in Ryan Place do we have valid email addresses?
 - Kipp noted that the peak open rate on Constant Contact was 47%
 - Tim noted we don't really have a firm handle on this issue.
 - 416 emails are signed up for Constant Contact out of >900 households.
 - Candlestick ordering has generated new contact info for us.
 - Resident question: Do we verify that all people on Constant Contact are RP residents?
No.
- Activities
 - Tim reminded everyone that the October movie night was rained out. If weather cooperates, should we try a holiday movie in Triangle Park on Friday, 12/13? The board expressed interest.
 - Tim noted that the Christmas party at Winehaus is the same as past years but no valet.
 - Resident question: when people show up to an event are we consistently collecting contact info?
 - Some events lend themselves to this more than others. Crawfish boil is the main event where we focus on this because we charge for admission. We need to think about how much capacity/interest we have in managing data.
- Historic Resource
 - Chris received a call regarding a home on Elizabeth Blvd where there was an interest in painting brick. Chris confirmed with city historic preservation officer that the recommendation is not to paint brick.
- Public Safety
 - Tim reminded everyone that the special committee is looking into some data and continuing to work on follow-up from events in May.
- Infrastructure
 - Terri shared that all lighting outages have been reported, and new lamp posts are coming but not before CCRP.
 - Terri will work on a formal hand-off to Douglas.

Other Updates:

- John reminded the board that we need a home for our fire truck. The storage space needs to be nearby, enclosed and secure. The truck is roughly the size of a Ford F250.
 - Resident question: would the new storage facility on west side of 8th be an option?
 - Resident question: do we know what we would be willing to pay/offer? Tim noted that we are seeking pro-bono help, but could offer advertising in RPIA newsletter or other incentives.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:23pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Sarah Geer
Secretary