



NESCA MEETING MINUTES

May 16, 2023

1. Welcome, Introductions, Announcements, Approval of Minutes:

Due to a ZOOM update, there were a few technical issues that delayed the opening of the meeting until approximately 7:15 PM. Thanks to everyone who was able to join! Marilyn Moritz, Vice Chair, opened the meeting while Mike was attending to some ZOOM issues. A motion was made and seconded to approve the minutes of the April 18th meeting; motion carried.

2. Salem Police Officer Report: No report

3. City Councilors' Report:

Virginia Stapleton:

At last month's meeting a request was made for Virginia to do a presentation on Salem Bike Vision. Due to time limitations tonight, it was suggested that she do the presentation at next month's meeting.

Currently the Council has been busy with the budget season. Virginia said she is happy to report that the Budget Committee has worked through everything, approved it, and has returned it to the Council. Following what is described as a "lively debate," the Payroll Tax issue was approved and recommended to the Council for implementation. It will be set to sunset in 5-7 years and those on minimum wage will be exempt from this tax. Virginia said it hoped to have the vote taken at the first meeting in June or possibly even at the next meeting. The payroll tax will be enacted for 2025. There will also be an operations fee increase that will be effective in August of this year. The payroll tax and the fee increase are needed to maintain our quality of life with our police and fire departments, programs for our unhoused population, the Center50+, the library, and various youth programs.

Linda Nishioka:

Linda sent a report for the meeting with various updates which will be included as an attachment to these minutes.

Highlights of her report to mention tonight include:

- Emergency Alert System.
 - Encouraging everyone to sign up. Also, if you have signed up, verify that your information is still accurate, and check for any needed corrections.
 - It is also suggested that if you have kids or grandkids with cell phones, they should be signed up to receive the alerts.
- Budget
 - Approved by the Budget Committee. The motion to enact the payroll tax has been forwarded to the Council.
- Transportation Meeting
 - How to get equity in projects for traffic to 1) identify which projects/locations; 2) determine and rank the importance of each project; and 3) do so in a cohesive manner to provide the best possible workflow for the work crews.

Additional comments on Transportation from Virginia:

Equity is very important to this Council, looking at areas that are historically underserved. The hope is to ensure that these areas are included in all aspects of the upgrades that are being planned. The Transportation Committee has developed what is called an “equity score,” using census track information that includes:

- Poverty
- People of Color
- People with disabilities
- People who have no cars
- Senior citizens
- Youth ages 15-17 (old enough to be on their own, but without cars so mostly riding bikes and walking)

When projects are identified, then the equity score will be applied to ensure that all areas are being served.

4. Guest Speaker: Dennie Brooks, OSH Museum of Mental Health

Dennie introduced herself as the wearer of many hats at the Oregon State Hospital and one that she wears proudly is President of the Museum Board.

Background: in 2009 when it was known the old campus was going to be replaced, Hazel Patton (a name very familiar to many Salemites) took it upon herself to make sure that some of the buildings would be saved as a part of the National Historic Register. The “J” building, where the original entrance is (under the lovely, refurbished cupola), was one of the buildings and is where the museum is now located. The other buildings in that preservation effort were the Dome Building and Yaquina Hall, now owned by Salem Housing Authority. Yaquina Hall has been remodeled into 52 units of much-needed low-income housing.

Dennie attended the recent ribbon cutting ceremony at Yaquina Hall and told of Mayor Chris Hoy’s personal story, shared at that ceremony. Mayor Hoy said that, when a student at Willamette University, he used to sneak away to go to the hospital to be with his mother. At that time the stigma of mental illness was so great, that his openness and disclosure of that part of his life is so very important. Over the last 10 years, the museum has had 44,000 visitors from all over the world. Her one statistic she likes to share is this: Only 100% of us have mental health challenges and addictions in our families and our heart families.

- By sharing our personal situations, we can chip away some of the shame and stigma that Chris mentioned.
- Many groups are scheduled to visit soon, including a group of doctors from OHSU, a group from Beaverton, and students from North Salem High School. The opportunity to see the truth of the past is how we learn better ways of dealing with mental health issues in our families and in our communities.

At age 4, 76 years ago, Dennie’s father, Dr. Dean Brooks, joined the hospital as a Staff Psychiatrist and brought his family there to live. She and her two sisters grew up on the hospital grounds with patients and staff as their neighbors. At that time, and until recently, the hospital wards were “open”, meaning that patients were able to come and go and be a part of the community. There were, of course, some wards that were locked, but only a few.

In 1973 Dennie came back to Salem and was asked to be the location coordinator for “One Flew Over the Cuckoo’s Nest”. That book and subsequent film is the draw that brings many student groups as well as individuals to visit the museum. The museum also has a relationship with all the nursing schools in the state and they bring classes – often having watched the film first. The nursing students are always asked to look into themselves when they see “Nurse Ratchet.” The reality is there is some Nurse Ratchet in all of us: the tendency to know what’s best for others without even asking them!

Hours at the museum are:

- General public: Thursday, Friday, Saturday from 12:00 – 4:00
- Community groups, churches, etc.: Off hours
 - Also in off hours, current patients and those who are a part of their therapy team can tour the facility.

It was mentioned there is a plaque in front of the Dome Building about the movie being filmed there. There is also one at the museum and another one in Depoe Bay at the docks.

Dennie closed her presentation by mentioning there are many firsts associated with the Oregon State Hospital and there is much to be proud of. When the hospital formed in 1883, it was state-of-the-art clinical offerings for mental health care, built on the concept of “moral therapy”. One part of that therapy is “looks from the heart and soul to another heart and soul and says a human being is a human being is a human being.”

Thank you Dennie for such an informative presentation and discussion about the Oregon State Hospital that is such an important part of our NESCA neighborhood.

Question: Is Hazel Patton involved to help with the future of the Dome Building? Dennie isn’t aware of anything current. Ian Johnson, Land Use Chair who talks regularly with DAS (Department of Administrative Services), said there is nothing new about the Dome Building as far as he knows. Ian is aware that the Governor has asked DAS to identify surplus property for possible conversion of some of the space into other uses, for example housing. The State is in a bit of a freefall with a lot of empty office space and they’re still trying to figure out what to do with all of it. With the Legislature not showing up to work, there is not a lot getting done. He will follow up with DAS again next month.

4. Guest Speaker: Pamela Short, Salem Softball League

Pam introduced herself to everyone and let us know about the State Agency Coed Softball League, of which she is the administrator. She has been with the League for 20 years, during which time they have always used the D Street Field. She is visiting with NESCA to determine if it is still okay for the League to use this field now that the City of Salem has designated it as a city park. She has tried to call Jennifer Keller or Melinda Moon at City of Salem Parks, but so far has not heard back.

The first scheduled game is June 6th. She has ordered a Honey Bucket, to be delivered to the site on June 5th. The port-a-potty will be kept locked unless the City requires it to be left open.

Pam has 10 teams signed up this year with each team paying \$80 to help cover expenses. The schedule has been set with games on Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday evenings beginning at 6 PM. The game that would normally be played on Wednesday June 21st will be moved to Thursday June 22nd to allow the field to be used for the Make Music Day. Pam is mainly hoping to learn that the League will still be welcome to use the field as they have been for the last 20 years. If it is determined that they cannot, Pam needs to know so she can remove her lockbox with supplies that is currently padlocked to the backstop.

Irma Coleman, City of Salem Neighborhood Association Coordinator, told Pam she needs to go through Melinda Moon because she keeps the facility rental calendar. Melinda is currently starting with summer camp registrations for kids and in the middle of hiring seasonal staff. Regarding the port-a-potty, Irma told Pam that she will definitely need to get permission before having it delivered and that, when delivered, it will need to be kept locked. Irma asked Pam to include her on any emails as she may be able to help facilitate things for her.

Counselor Stapleton left her email address in the chat box for Pam if she doesn’t get a response from the Parks Department.

Ian Johnson worked very hard to keep the D Street Field as open space and ultimately the City agreed to acquire the property as a city park. Mike reiterated that NESCA’s main goal for the park was always to have the field kept and maintained exactly as it is and has been used for so many years by the softball league, rugby teams, and others.

5. Committee Reports:

a. Land Use

Ian Johnson

- Nothing to report.

b. Transportation:

[Chair position open] No report

- Mai Vang, who is a new neighbor who attended our last meeting, has expressed some interest in this position and has been in touch with former chair Julie Redden. However, Mai could not be here this evening.

c. Parks

Eli Brody

- Eli thanked Marilyn and Gary for participating with the street cleaning on 4/22. Marilyn mentioned that the Arches location at the former Super8 motel has said they have people clean up around their area every day. Eli felt the area still had a great deal of trash.
- The next street cleaning will be June 24th, the Saturday following the regular NESCA monthly meeting.
- Eli did a tour of the parks. He found that the lower half of Geer Park is in use and looking great. The upper portion of the park is completely overgrown and doesn't appear that anyone is using that part of the park, possibly due to the weather. He will check on this again once it has dried out a bit more.
- There was conversation about whether the overgrown area could be a place for homeless camps, Eli didn't think that was the situation. Marilyn mentioned there are campers staying on the south side of Park Avenue on Corrections property. Corrections moved them out once, but they have returned. The trash thrown by the campers onto the Geer park side of the road has been cleaned up by the city.
 - Mike mentioned his concern about the RVs, cars, and camping that is beginning to appear on the east edge of Geer Park along Hawthorne. Besides the obvious problem of having the campers along the roadway and at the park, they are also using park facilities which will likely cause problems as well. He has mentioned this to our Code Enforcement Officer.

d. Hoover School

Teri Lupoli

No report

e. Watershed

Gary Pullman

- He has mostly been working at Bush Park and Englewood Park.
- Trees have been planted on 23rd and on D Street. They are small trees so it will take quite a while before we see any value.
 - An aside: Gary mentioned that on June 3rd at noon, the City will be renaming the Riverfront Carousel in honor of Hazel Patton. Later that afternoon at 3 PM, the Salem Community Chorus will be performing at the library.

f. North Campus

Ian Johnson

- Ian has been in regular contact with Robert Underwood, DAS, who is always willing to provide information but, so far, hasn't responded to our invitations to attend our meeting. Ian will not invite him for a while, but will try again, especially if there's a perceived need by NESCA.

6. Other Business: Old Business

6. Other Business: New Business

For those wanting to make input regarding the paint job on the new Dave's Hot Chicken, comments can be emailed to Keith Bondaug-Winn, City Staff Liaison to the Salem Public Arts Commission at: kbondaug@cityofsalem.net

Guest for the June 20th meeting will be:

- Officer Chris Wolfe, City Code Enforcement

7. Discussion/Questions/Comments

- Marilyn mentioned that with all the rainy weather, a population of frogs have been living in the D Street Field. As result, a heron was recently seen in the park.
- When asking the City for a schedule for street cleaning on 25th (between Center and D Streets), it has been learned the street is a private street and will not be maintained by the City. While the street was originally put in by The Jory developer, it is assumed the street is now the responsibility of the developer of the private homes.

- Eli asked when we are ever going to decide on whether to continue with ZOOM meetings or go back to in-person meetings. Mike said that he will soon be calling an Executive Board meeting to discuss this issue.
 - Irma Coleman mentioned that she has some very nice kits to help with hybrid meetings (combination of ZOOM and in-person). There is a projector, screen, chrome books with Wi-Fi and one with built in internet that are available for use.
- Irma also reminded everyone that last summer she was provided with extra funds to support Neighborhood Associations with efforts in community connections. She is also available to help.
- A meeting idea from another NA that was mentioned was to have a CPR training course in the place of a regular meeting. Irma said that the NA who did that had about 30 people, some who then wanted to learn more about the group, signed up for the emails, etc. It was felt this might be a very good idea.
- Ken Gettys announced that he will be moving out of the NESCA area at the end of the month. As such, he resigned his board position. Ken said he has enjoyed his time on the board and appreciates the work that we do and the opportunity to meet everyone. We wish Ken well in his new neighborhood and thank him for being a part of the board.

There being no further business, Mike thanked everyone for their attendance. The meeting was adjourned at 8:20 PM. **The next scheduled NESCA meeting will be held via ZOOM on June 20 beginning at 7:00 PM. The ZOOM meeting link will be provided to those on the NESCA email distribution list prior to the meeting.** The link will also be available on the city website. Next month's guest will be Chris Wolfe, City of Salem Code Enforcement Officer.

Submitted by: Teri Lupoli
NESCA Secretary/Treasurer

Attending:

Mike Beringer*, Marilyn Moritz*, Lynn Cardiff*, Gary Pullman*, Eli Brody*, Ken Gettys*, Stacey Vieyra-Braendle*, Ian Johnson, Linda Nishioka Salem City Council, Virginia Stapleton Salem City Council, Dennie Brooks President of the Oregon State Hospital Museum Board, Pamela Short State Softball League

*NESCA Board Members

- **Other Website Information:**

- To report homeless camping: <https://form.cityofsalem.net/s3/homeless-camping-complaint>
- To report homeless concerns: <https://www.cityofsalem.net/pages/report-concerns-about-homeslessness.aspx>
- To sign up for weekly updates regarding homeless: <https://www.cityofsalem.net/pages/tracking-progress-on-homelessness-efforts.aspx>
- To report graffiti: <https://www.cityofsalem.net/pages/report-graffiti.aspx>
 - [503-371-4262 Graffiti Response team](https://www.cityofsalem.net/pages/report-graffiti.aspx)
- The link for the crime statistics: www.cityofsalem.net/crime-stats