



## Minutes of the Meeting

Of

Thursday, October 19th, 2023

In Person at North Annex, Northgate Wesleyan Church

Executive Board Members Present: Bayard Mentrum, Chair; Jess Cruz, Community Liaison Chair; Shirley Robertson, Treasurer; Kaethe Mentrum, Secretary/Park Chair.

General Board Members present: Becca Strieper; Randy Ray, Bill Berry.

Absent with excuse: Phyllis Abbott-Cavota, Vice Chair; Don Jensen, Land Use Chair, Michael Hoselton, Joanne Barnhart, Pedro Mayoral, general board members.

Members: Jetta Ray; Terry Crawford, Leatha Krehoff, Sallye Mills.

Cricket Club Members: Dikshant Patel, President; Seshu Ganta.

Guest Speakers (in order of agenda) Chris Russell, Codes and Compliance, Mayor Chris Hoy, Rob Romanek, Manager of Parks Planning Dept., Raymond Joseph of Senior Planner, Nicole Whitfield and April Pena of Oregon Dept. of Human Services.

The meeting began about 6:05 p.m. in person.

Bayard asked each to introduce themselves.

Chris Russell, Codes and Compliance (C&C) Officer updated us regarding the private property by Fisher Road that Mr. Patel manages from Bend, Oregon. There are tents and debris which they caused at the property and unsafe. He said he is working with Mr. Patel to get them out of the property. Shirley said it's a big mess and not fair to the neighbors to be subjected to that. She asked why can't C&C get them out, clean the mess and get it fenced in. He said he can't legally force the fence and get them out unless the owner requests. Bayard asked what the update is on the fence with Mr. Patel and he did not have an answer. Shirley asked about the homeless camps on Stortz and Lancaster. Chris said he will look into it.

Mayor Hoy started by informing a bit about his personal history. He said homelessness was being dealt with at the City since six years ago and a difficult and complex issue as it is now nationwide. He mentioned more shelters are being made, and we cannot push them to use them because it's 'unconstitutional'. He said there are now 1000 beds available. He said it's easy to get buildings. But there are no people to manage them. He said the property taxes pay for 77% of the fire and police departments only. Everything else like the Library, 50+ Center, Parks have to come from somewhere else. Shirley complained about the overall homeless issues related to them being around the neighborhood. She also said there should be a permanent place for them to be instead of moving them around. The mayor said they cannot be ordered to go anyplace. Kaethe jumped in and said maybe the mayor can change the city law because many are mentally

ill and need help. Bayard talked about the unmanageable people not liking walls so to create a place similar to under the bridge at Market Street where they stayed on during covid times. Kaethe said more treatment centers are needed. The mayor responded medical issues are a county matter. So Bayard said how about the city using the money from the infrastructure to build a treatment center and have the county provide the rest? . The mayor responded saying it's easy to get buildings but difficult to get people to manage them. Then Kaethe chimed in saying a member suggested students be asked. The mayor responded saying students are great but need authorities over them. Bayard brought up the matter of Willamette River getting more syringes and contaminated. The mayor responded the US Navy recently helped to clean up the river.

Nicole and April were next to speak. Nicole stated Oregon Dept. of Human Services is a group that helps the poor in so many branches as employment related day care, family support and connections like helping with challenges of being a parent, medical coverage, helping to apply for supplemental security income or social security disability insurance benefits, monthly cash to help pay for living expenses during the application process, supplemental nutrition assistance program or SNAP formerly called Food Stamps, temporary assistance for domestic violence survivors as well as needy families as monthly cash to help pa for living expenses, refugee program.

April asked if anyone knows of people in need of help, to notify them. (1-800-723-3638 or [www.oregon.gov/dhs](http://www.oregon.gov/dhs))

Rob Romanek and Ray Joseph, park planning dept. were next. They informed about Fisher Road Park being next for improvement. They will get input from the surrounding residents as to what they would like implemented into this park. After they get the input, they will draw up a plan and see if it is up to their standards. They will be starting this in the winter of 2023.

Rob talked about the entry sign at Portland Road to replace the old one. This started in 2019 and Rob received the project in 2020. Due to covid, things were delayed. Plus dealing with the permit took a long time, then it had to go to ODOT for their approval as it is in their property. It was finally approved and the ground is going to be prepared in a few months. This will go to the artistic welder soon for completion. Rob will update us as to the schedule.

Dikshant Patel and his assistant Seshu Ganta were next to try to convince NGNA why the cricket club needed the screened enclosure for cricket practice to be purchased using the grant from Salem Parks Improvement Fund (SPIF). Kaethe, who is park chair, asked if they can do with one and not two as each costs about \$12,000. Dikshant said yes. The chair called for a vote. Kaethe made a motion to vote, seconded by Becca (and two gentlemen from the back), all said aye and the motion was passed.

Around 7:35 p.m., Bayard called for the meeting to adjourn, Kaethe made the motion for a vote. It was seconded by Shirley and Becca. All said aye and the meeting adjourned.

Note, on-line voting which always starts with Bayard calling for a vote and Kaethe makes a motion to start the vote:

- NGNA shall be sending the letter to Mr. Patel to ask him to build a fence on his property to keep the homeless, tents, debris out. On October 5, 2023, those who voted were: Bill who seconded it and voted yes, Don, Shirley, Randy, Jess, Phyllis and Kaethe.
- Poll on FB and other social media for artwork on graffiti at Northgate Park translated into Spanish as well. On October 16, 2023, it was seconded by Bill and voted. Other voters were Shirley (who voted 10/15/23), Randy, Don, Pedro and Kaethe.

**The next meeting will be Thursday, November 16<sup>h</sup>, 6 p.m., Thursday via zoom.**