

NEN Minutes, Board meeting May 11, 2021

Board Members Present: Lynn Takata, Alan Scott, Jeremy Mills, Delana Beaton, Ken Simila, Joan Lloyd, Cindy Kimball, Nick Cantonwine, Ken Houghton, Jacqueline Schindele, Benjamin Witt

Meeting opened at 6:35 by **Chair Lynn Takata.**

Minutes of April 13, 2021 approved unanimously following motion for approval by **Jeremy Mills,** seconded by **Cindy Kimball.**

Treasurer's report submitted electronically by Treasurer **Jeremy Mills** as follows: I received an update from Irma Dowd on March 17, 2021 and am basing the treasurer's report on the attached spreadsheet. (summarized below.)

There is \$1,262.27 in the Northeast Neighbors Communications Fund. We have earned \$380.00 and spent \$209.90 since the fiscal year started on July 1, 2020. There is \$995.39 in the Trust & Agency Account. The Trust and Agency Account has two different funds. There is \$533.64 to be used in the Court-Chemeketa Historic District. The remaining \$461.75 are funds from the Neighborhood Cleanups that NEN and Grant neighborhood association held in 2018 and 2019 and are intended to support future Neighborhood Cleanups.

City Councilor Virginia Stapleton gave report from City Council. She reported that she is serving on a zoning subcommittee which is meeting for three months and addressing many issues on behalf of the Council. The city is actively searching for sites where unsheltered people needing to exit the parks on June first could legally camp, be housed, or be allowed to legally live in their parked vehicles. She reports that Marion Park is again being considered as one possible site for locating people leaving the parks. The state Department of Environmental Quality, due to concerns about impacts on water quality, will begin assessing fines on the city for each day after June first that the parks are used for camping. The clearing of Cascade Gateway Park and Wallace Marine Park will be gradual, beginning June 1. All campers will not be cleared on the same day.

Sergeant Matthew Gill of Salem Police Department now leads the downtown enforcement units, including the bicycle officers. Sgt. Gill responded to questions about a temporary closure of the downtown bus depot while a suspicious package was investigated. He also commented on the death of an unsheltered woman near the I-5 overpass on Market Street. He said currently a primary focus is helping the community prepare for the increased number of unsheltered as they must exit the parks.

The **Neighborhood Watch** program which operated last spring and summer in and near Englewood Park was addressed by **Lynn Takata**. She announced that she will be contacting NEN board members and volunteer residents who served shifts in the Watch program last year to see if they are able to serve again this year. Others will also be recruited. Last year Lieutenant Jason Van Meter served as police support person. His schedule no longer has him on duty during the hours of the Watch, so a new police resource person will be requested.

From the City of Salem, representing traffic engineers and City Parks, **Gary Myzak and Rob Romanek** presented a map and schema of the new city park on D Street. They mentioned that D Street from 23rd to Park will be closed to traffic for an extended time during construction. A four-way stop will be added at the intersection of 23rd and D Street. 23rd Street will be newly paved from D Street to Center Street. These projects recently went out to bid. Construction will begin in later half of June and is to be completed by October. Daily work may begin at 7:30 AM and may continue to 6:30 PM. Effort will be made to minimize night construction.

The Master Plan for Geer Park is in the final stages. A dog park is under consideration.

Action Item: The Board voted unanimously to approve a grant request be submitted by NEN to the Salem Parks Foundation seeking funds to help in the repair of damage in Englewood Park by the ice storm. The amount of the grant could be as much as \$2,000. Members expressing interest included Lynn Takata, Cindy Kimball, Jeremy Mills.

There was discussion of the two letters written by **Alan Scott and Jacqueline Schindele** addressing the need for repair of damaged and **dangerous sidewalks**. Both letters advocate for repairs and work to improve the safety of the neighborhood and the city. It was concluded that Jacqueline and Alan will work together to combine their letters and include all the strong points from both letters.

Lynn Takata announced that she had spoken with Greg Walsh, City of Salem Emergency Preparedness Manager, and learned that this year the **CERT** (Community Emergency Response Team) participants will face lower requirements for maintaining their certification.

Lynn Takata announced that eight **trees** are scheduled to be removed along D Street or Park in connection with the development underway there.

Nick Cantonwine reported that **a cleanup workday** on May first had been very successful. Nick will soon announce a cleanup date for June.

The **Englewood Forest Festival** plan for this year is unclear at this time. **Alan Scott**, chair of the Festival committee, mentioned that May 31 is the date the city will begin to consider permits for events in city parks. We will need to wait to learn if the Festival will happen this year.

Re **COVID**, it was announced that Governor Kate Brown has announced a county will be removed from restrictions when the county's vaccination rate has reached 65% of persons aged 16 and over.

Action Item: Alan Scott requested a three month **leave of absence** from the NEN board, as he plans an extended visit with family out of state. Several members expressed regret over the loss of Alan's service, but all wished him well! The vote was unanimous approval.

The meeting **adjourned** at 8:04. Next scheduled meeting will be Tuesday, June 8.