



Minutes of the Meeting  
Of  
January 20th, 2022 at Northgate Wesleyan Church Annex, Salem, OR

Executive Board Members Present: Bayard Mentrum, Chair; Flora Morales, Community Outreach; Kaethe Mentrum, Secretary/Park Chair

Board Members present: Pennie Morley; Becca Strieper; Jess Cruz; Mike Hoselton; Timothy Beck; Joann Barnhart; Ross Black; Pedro Mayoral

Members: Vincente Coria; "Spiderman"

Absent with an excuse: Don Jensen, Land Use Chair

Absent City Liaison Coordinator: Irma Dowd

Absent: Speaker Shannon BJ Valdez

Present Speaker: Jose Gonzalez, Councilor

Present Guest Speakers: Courtney Knox Busch, Strategic Initiatives; Toni Whitler, Parks Planner

Present Guest Speakers: Rob Kellar, Aaron Edelman from City of Salem (Water and Sewer Lines)

1. Flora helped to start the meeting while Bayard and Kaethe had to go back home to retrieve something. The meeting started with introductions being made at around 6:05 p.m. When Bayard and Kaethe returned around 6:10 p.m., Bayard took over the meeting.
2. Bayard asked to approve the November, 2021 meeting. **Pennie made a motion for a vote to approve the minutes of the meeting of November 18<sup>th</sup>, 2021. It was seconded by Flora Morales. Everyone was in favor and the minutes was voted in.**
3. a. Jose Gonzalez, our Councilor, said the matter of street bumps for residential roads are in the plans. Although it will take a while, he believes this could happen and is a matter of time. He was feeling optimistic about it. He sounded positive and explained how the city works. He said he was trying new ways to speed up the process.

Michael asked about fining people for litter in their property. Jose said it's difficult to get citations on people because it's hard to take anyone's property away and by the time the city gets to them, it's probably cleaned up anyway. He **suggested Mike to write a letter suggesting a way to get it cleaned up faster. Pennie made a motion to vote to write a letter seconded by Flora. All voted "Aye."**

Spiderman (one of the members on zoom) said there should be a new law where an agreement ought to be made between police and owner so that it would enable the police to forgo all the red tape to remove unmanaged encampment from a private property.

Bayard suggested if people are struggling to keep up their property and paying taxes, maybe there is a way to work it out, wherein the City helps the owner by offering to buy the property. That way, it's not sitting there wasting away. It would be a win-win.

Pennie showed her frustration about all the filth piling up in the city. **She talked about DQ area on Lancaster St. She suggested writing to the owner. Kaethe made a motion to vote, seconded by Becca and Flora. All voted "Aye."**

4. a. Courtney Knox Busch, Strategic Initiatives, was the invited speaker. She showed a pie chart with percentages of all the \$300 Million and asked for ideas on how to use it. Bayard said he didn't think bike paths and sidewalk improvements are not that important right now. We should be spending the money, half the budget on other things that are more critical, such as 24/7 open drug, alcohol, and mental treatment facility. Then she said we don't spend money on staff salaries, only on buildings. Then Bayard said what about the City to build the building and work with Marion in a joint venture to have the county pay the employees who work there and other billings. Bayard also said in Portland they have wonderful bike paths but potholed roads and hoped Salem doesn't follow suit. Bayard also talked about a permanent place for the homeless to be able to go. He called on Toni Whitler, who is experienced in annexation of City properties with Marion County if she is willing to inform Gretchen Bennett, City Advocate for the Homeless, how to get annexations to be made to expand city limits and possibly use certain properties for the homeless. Bayard said a roofed flat property with hot shower stalls/restrooms be made using part of the infrastructure so that the unmanaged homeless will have a permanent place to go. Maintenance can be shared by different nonprofits.

Jose said who came up with the pie chart saying it's ridiculous. Bayard agreed.

- b. Toni Whitler, Parks Planner: She was focusing on Fisher Road and Ibex Park. Still working on the annexations and that will take about a year of a half. The property was donated by an owner who wanted to keep it natural. Toni talked about keeping the trees as they are. Neighbors chimed in and said they have issues with people camping there after hours. Bayard asked about the sign posted about the hours. One member said no and the other said maybe, and Toni will check into it. She said parks are open into three different categories: Neighborhood, Community and Regional. Neighborhoods don't get as much service because the City thinks people live around there so they don't need bathrooms. The other two get more service. We talked about Northgate Park improved or upgraded to Community and she said maybe. Toni said that parks with splash pads are considered Community. Bayard mentioned we have great utilization last summer and at Halloween, with hundreds of people there but Toni did not respond.

#### 4. Executive Board Member Reports:

a. Don Jensen has an excused absence.

b. Flora Morales, Community Outreach, said she has nothing to offer. She was busy taking care of the timing of the meeting, taking down attendance of members, communicating with members on screen via chat, etc. Becca also helped greatly in the zoom aspect. She was able to get the big screen going.

c. Kaethe Mentrum, Park Chair, said:

Northgate Park: Kaethe applied in Spring 2021 for the concreted bench which was funded by Salem Parks Foundation last year. It was to be installed by the east side of the playground, near a bouncy rider so a parent can watch the bouncing toddler closely. She has not received any responses from Director of City Parks and Maintenance Director. She assumed due to homeless in the parks they are being kept too busy to respond.

Kaethe spoke as Secretary and said Irma told her Affordable Towing Inc. was very helpful in removing abandoned RVs and other homeless vehicles for free of charge. The driver, Jack Conwell, who is also owner even helped block more homeless vehicles from coming in which delighted the surrounding residents. Irma suggested a framed certificate be awarded to this driver. **(The board voted to buy the frame online in December, 2021).** After Kaethe called his wife Kathy to inform of the date and time of the awarding ceremony, she found out that both Jack and Kathy were married 41 years ago at the very same church NGNA will be meeting. Several people from the City have been invited to celebrate this happy event. Jack and Kathy have retired last December 31, 2021.

d. Michael Hoselton made a brief report on the survey results made in Northgate. One was for metal detectors for which most people thought it was a good idea, a few thought the funds should come from donated money. As for the survey about whether the homeless pods should be only at Northgate already with 5 shelters, or to be spread about evenly and fairly with other parts of Salem where they have "0", 100% wanted the pods to be spread out evenly in Salem and not just all remain in Northgate.

5. Bayard mentioned State-owned old DMV building on Portland Road NE sheltering will end after contract expires on March 15<sup>th</sup>. Gretchen brought up five, but later turned into four as one of the properties sold, and they are:

- Central Salem, Peace Plaza, 555 Liberty Street
- South Salem, 2410 Turner Road SE
- Central Salem, NW Corner of Front and Hood Streets NE
- Central Salem, private owned property at 1280 Center St. NE

Bayard said he watched the city council session about the above. He said he heard Councilor Chris Hoy didn't think it was safe for the homeless to cross the street to go take a shower from 555 Liberty, then Councilor Tom Anderson didn't like the children having to deal with the homeless at the library, and our councilor Gonzalez just objected use of 555 Liberty as he went through other properties. Then, He said strong opposition was shown to use of 555 Liberty by both Pennie and Marlayne echoed by Kaethe at a zoom meeting that Gretchen hosted January 19<sup>th</sup>.

It seems the state street property is across from Safeway. Bayard told them about what happened to the Safeway store which was in front of a managed shelter in Portland. That it went bankrupt after all the stealing and had to close.

Bayard offered Gretchen an idea about how to get the county commissioners to use the annexation method to get some land from the county for the city to annex to it but to be sure she uses a land use lawyer. He later asked Toni Whitler, who is experienced in annexation of property with the county, to help Gretchen if she is interested in acquiring new property from Marion County through the annexation method. Bayard said, as an architect, he knew of one incident where Marion County was willing to annex with Salem if water and sewer improvements could be made.

Pennie moved to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Kaethe and all was in favor.

The meeting adjourned around 7:35 p.m.            The next meeting will be February 17th at 6 p.m.

Note, on-line voting:

- **Voted on 12/13/21 - Irma Dowd to purchase a frame for Affordable Towing Inc.**
- **Voted on 01/07/22 – For Michael Hoselton to start the survey with NG community re a) metal detectors in schools...how they feel about it. b) does the community want the managed homeless shelters to be dispersed around Salem or do they mind all to be in Northgate.**
- **Voted on 01/17/22 – Letter from NGNA board members to the Mayor, City Manager and City Councilors re 555 Liberty not to be used for managed homeless pods, plan for 24/7 open treatment center for the addicted homeless and mentally ill and asking for a permanent place for the homeless to live in the outskirts of Salem.**