

Highland Park Neighborhood Association

January 2019 Minutes

Meeting Date: January 8th, 2019

7:00pm: President Sanfelippo called the meeting to order.

With no changes or corrections, December 2018 minutes were approved.

Announcements:

Sanfelippo shared that Mayor Woodfin's second 'State of the Community' address would be held at 6 pm Monday, January 14 at Boutwell Auditorium. She also stated the next neighborhood Trash & Brush Pickup (bagged leaves, limbs, furniture, etc) would be Monday January 14. She said she was aware of complaints from people about missed pickups and explained they were putting new trucks into service and that they sometimes might run a day behind. She also said she felt like they would be getting back to the previous schedule of twice per month.

Police Update:

Beat Officer, Officer King (11 am to 9 pm, Monday - Thursday) asked the group for any complaints of questions. He shared it had been a very quiet month. He said stats for the previous month were not yet available.

Citizen Concerns/Questions:

Neighborhood Checkpoint Stops: Officer King was asked to share about the neighborhood roadblocks. He explained the stops were constitutional, that they do them all over the United States, that they try to do periodic checkpoints where there's been a rash of break-ins, burglaries, robberies and such. They check licenses, if the driver doesn't have a license, they check them through the system. It's not been unusual for them to find firearms, drugs, the presence of outstanding warrants, etc. One checkpoint location that has consistently been productive is 33rd and Highland. Officer King said the checkpoints were also plus because they 'light up the neighborhood', that if someone were contemplating a break-in, the presence of the officers and cars is a deterrent. He said that if someone backs out of the line to avoid the check, they have a chase car.

Package theft: Several neighbors asked about package theft and the extent to which is continued to be an issue through the holidays. Jessica Powers shared she had talked to a UPS driver in our neighborhood and learned if drivers suspect someone is following their truck in an effort to steal packages the drivers will call the police. Officer King recommended that if someone was expecting a package that was of significant value that they made arrangements to pick it up at the shipper's office.

New 10 On/10 Off Scheduling Strategy: Officer King explained the new scheduling procedure would overlap the shifts ensure more officers on the street; that he used to be the 3 pm to 11pm Beat Officer, now he is the 11 am to 9 pm Beat Officer. The same Beat comes on shift at 4 pm until 2 am which means there is now 2 officers on the beat between 4 and 9 pm.

Public Works Update:

Public Works representative Tammie Wheeler attended the meeting and encouraged residents to report inoperable vehicles, overgrown yards, and furniture and large trash dumped on street by apt. dwellers without dumpsters. Dehryl Mason shared there was a couch and other furniture items near the dumpster for Hampton Apartments near the corner at 13th Ave and 29th St; and in the alley behind Unity Church there are bags of trash or leaves. The group briefly discussed places where pickups don't seem to occur regularly. Anne Sunkel pointed out that the trash/bagged leaves must

be placed where the trucks can get to it. President Sanfelippo reminded everyone that it is a city ordinance that leaves must be bagged, that our city has had major issues with stopped up drains and landscapers and residents should not blow their leaves into the street. Someone asked about Birmingham's street cleaner trucks, Councilor Abbott replied there were only 2 of these trucks for our entire 150 square mile city; that the rest were broken and can't be repaired. For additional questions or reported problems, Ms Wheeler can be reached tammie.wheeler@birminghamal.gov or 205-254-2061.

Fire Department Update:

A representative from the Fire Department was not in attendance.

AGENDA ITEMS:

1. Change in Liquor License Name - Clairmont Chevron:

Clairmont Chevron owner Charles Middleton introduced himself as the owner/operator of the Clairmont Chevron and then his two daughters. He explained he wanted to change the beer and wine off premise-license to his business name instead of his personal name, so that if something happened to him the business would not close. Jeff Wurst made a motion to approve the license change request, Alison Glascock seconded. Several neighbors made a point of thanking Middleton for the air compressor at the Chevron. The motion passed unanimously.

2. Do Dah Day - Date, Park Usage, Special Liquor License Request

Barry 'Rusty' Russell from Do Dah Day introduced himself, said he was a 25 year resident of Birmingham and had worked with Do Dah Day for five years now. He explained Do Dah Day raises money and donates it to local animal shelters to include the Greater Birmingham Humane Society and Friends of Cats and Dogs. He shared last year was the 40th year of Do Dah Day and that several of the board members had served on the board for more than 30 years; that through that 40 years they had given away 1.2 million dollars. Russell explained that Do Dah Day audience preferences with respect to band watching and other activities had changed a good bit over the past ten years and as a result event attendance had declined somewhat. He said the board, in order to maintain a robust level of fundraising had decided was to reduce overhead expenses by condensing the event footprint to one park instead of two. He further stated there would be no changes to the parade or route. Russell explained the Board's choice was for Rhodes Park because of the shade, the layout and larger size of the park, their feeling that Rhodes was better suited for their 2019 goals of enriching audience's experience of the event. Residents expressed concerns about Rhodes' ability to bounce back from an event in the way that Caldwell had been engineered to do. Some residents expressed their support for the request. A question was asked if the event board had considered going to Railroad Park; Russell replied the event had an absolute preference to remain in Highland Park. Larry Contri asked Russell about their Zydeco 'King and Queen' event and whether they would consider using Rojo. Russell said there was no contract with Zydeco and he would be happy to take that suggestion back to his board. Larry Contri called for a motion. Eloise Vellucci moved to approve Do Dah Day's request to use Rhodes Park for their 2019 May 18 event. Joe Estrada seconded. The motion passed 22 to 5. Sanfelippo asked Russell to consider potential damage to Rhodes Park plants and trees as they proceeded with their planning. The suggestion was made that Russell return to the February neighborhood meeting and update residents as their planning progressed. Alison Glascock reminded Russell that they also needed to obtain neighborhood approval for their liquor license. Sanfelippo asked for a motion, Glascock so moved and John Somerset seconded. The motion passed without dissent. Interested volunteers should email kimba@aol.com or visit www.dodahday.org and click "Get Involved."

3. Poll Results - Meeting Time

Sanfelippo shared that the poll conducted showed the results were split but a clear majority wanted to try having meetings at 6 pm instead of 7. This means the February meeting time will be 6 pm.

4. Graffiti Task Force Update:

Report to Highland Park Neighborhood Association

Submitted by GRAFITTI BUSTERS Volunteer Committee, January 8, 2019

We continue to make progress to address and then remove graffiti from Highland Park. Since we last reported, our volunteers canvassed their assigned areas and sent in locations of graffiti, some addresses accompanied by photos. All the data and photos have been entered into a GOOGLE Document and a database report has been created.

Our volunteer committee will meet again this Sunday January 13, or January 20 it is proves more can attend.

We have begun contact with the City CRO to verify the process to acquire funds from our Neighborhood Association for different projects.

Submitted,

Dehryl Mason, Chairwoman

Anne Sunkel, Chair Assist

The committee was asked how many incidents of graffiti were found; Mason replied 150 separate items were recorded and that these ranged from a small mark on a stop to the larger and significant markings on the brick walls on Highland. Mason outlined the supplies totaling roughly \$576.00 needed to get efforts started (gloves, vests, paints, brushes, etc). Ashley Lewis made a motion to approve the request, Larry Contri provided the second. The motion passed without dissent. Sunkel and Mason also explained that once they had physically started eradications they would be sharing information on how residents could report new incidents, that their plan was to promptly get on any new taggings.

5. Formation of Committee to work on 501c3 for neighborhood

Sanfelippo shared she had talked with John Guin who had drafted initial documents to establish a 501c3 entity for the Highland Park. She asked for volunteers to form a committee to carry this effort forward. Jessica Powers said she would be happy to be the attorney for the committee. Mary Helen Crowe also volunteered to help.

Report from City Council President Valerie Abbott

President Sanfelippo introduced Valerie Abbott, District 3's council member and Council President. Councilor Abbott reported they'd had their first council meeting of 2019 and had voted unanimously to ask the Alabama State Legislature to undo the 2016 changes to the Mayor/Council Act that revised appointment and budget approval authority for the mayor and council. Abbott says she will be personally lobbying Birmingham's state representatives for these changes. She announced that Marcus O'Dell had resigned from her office and that her new Media Assistant is Treece Collins. She confirmed that her Chief of Staff, Darryl Lee, was still in that role on her staff. Sanfelippo asked about Collins' email address, Abbott said she thought Collins was almost too new to have one yet, but that she would get it to us when available.

A question was asked about density of neighborhoods and whether district lines would be redrawn. Abbott explained that district lines were only redrawn following census years, the next one being 2020. She shared that in the last census initiated district change, her District 3 had changed from having 14 neighborhoods to 7. She mentioned this made it easier for her to get to her neighborhood meetings, though if we changed our time to 6 pm, we'd bump up against East Avondale whose meeting was 6 pm on the second Tuesday each month. She explained that neighborhood lines only change if both neighborhood associations agree.

A question was asked about status of the project with James Fowler, the traffic study and neighborhood stickers. Abbott replied that she wasn't sure but she felt they were committed to

making progress especially since there were now more than just District 3 neighborhoods interested in it.

A question was asked about what seems to be a mostly abandoned apartment property on Clairmont - 3015. Sanfelippo said she would follow up on it.

A. Sunkel told Abbott that Traffic Engineering had been extremely responsive to a recent request that she had placed. Abbott thanked her - and shared that with the major ALDOT project downtown, the city had actually had difficulty keeping contractors to do that sort of work. She reported that the Mayor's office had come out with the paving list and that very surprisingly, District 3 and 6 were touted as having the best paved streets in the city - and as a result, we didn't need as much street paving as the other districts, that District 3 might have had 3 streets on the list (one of which was the remainder of Clairmont Ave). Abbott said she expected this would change for the better next year. Jessica Powers shared that sidewalks were almost always the number one issue in Highland Park and asked about the process residents could use to lobby for more funding than we got for paving this year. Abbott said she had already told the Mayor's office that since we were last on the street paving list that she wanted us to be first on the sidewalk repair list. Her suggestion was that Highland Park residents concerned about this issue should contact the mayor's office with their feedback and requests. Powers shared Mayor Woodfin's email address: Randall.Woodfin@BirminghamAL.gov Abbott shared the 311 service continued to limp along but would be back fully in service soon. She reported the new 311 would be revamped and include a record and follow-up.

Abbott was asked about the Highland property that Western was on. She said she wasn't sure yet about the property or the plans for it, but that Western was indeed closing.

Joe Estrada asked Abbott about the passage and follow-up for Birmingham's comprehensive nondiscrimination ordinance that included LGBTQs. He pointed out that the Human Rights Commission, the advisory board to the mayor and council created by the ordinance, as of September 28, 2017, was still not appointed. Abbott said while she had made her Commission appointment (Scott Capps), the other council members had not yet made their appointments. Abbott said she would send an email to the council members, ask them if they had made their appointment - and if they had not, to please proceed with making them.

To contact City Council President Abbott, email Valerie.abbott@birninghamal.gov.

Old Business:

None

New Business:

Alison Glascock presented a request for purchase of 7 white crepe myrtles to be put along Clairmont to replace a number of lost or damaged Foster Hollies put in several years ago. It was agreed to defer the request so the spending committee could review all current requests and make recommendations.

1. Structure of Meetings:

Sanfelippo explained the general structure of meetings for new attendees - that we welcome and announcements, our city representatives in attendance give their updates, go through our agenda items, a report from Councilor Abbott's office, then old business items and any new business items. Generally speaking, agenda items would get 3-5 minutes, new business about a minute. It would be best to send in agenda items at least 24 hours ahead of meetings via email to

HighlandParkNeighborhoodAL@gmail.com

2. Committees: Sanfelippo shared the neighborhood has three standing committees - Beautification, Design Review and Zoning and Planning. The head of the Design Review Committee, architect Chris Rogers and architect Bruce Lanier, will attend our next meeting to share a presentation on the design review process for the neighborhood, how does it work, what do we need to keep in mind if we want

to make adjustments to our houses - with a goal of putting together a list of FAQs so people can reference it in the future. Sanfelippo expects this to provide people with insight into what being on this committee involves as she expects to be soon taking applications to restock the committees we have and potentially create a couple of new ones. More information is expected on this at the February meeting.

A question was asked about the status of the expenditures discussed last month using monies from Councilor Abbott's office - trees and doggy bags. Sanfelippo shared those expenditures were still being processed by the city and that Marcus O'Dell had told us we had until the end of January (2019) to finish getting any needed paperwork. Community Resource Officer Andrea Watson shared the procedure for setting up a new vendor for the doggy bag source. Alison Glascock said that she had just sent in the discretionary fund tree request and that she had sent it to Darryl Lee; she asked for clarification from Abbott who explained it was only discretionary expenditures that would come to her office, not requests of neighborhood association monies. Ray Davis was recognized and shared that he and Horace Hulsey had identified nine locations to put the trees, that they had done a walk through of the parks and everything was ready to go once the proper approvals had been obtained.

Announcements:

Judy Jones announced the first event for the monthly 'Path to Compassion' speaker series would be 3-4:30 pm Sunday, January 20 at the Clubhouse on Highland. The first speaker would be former Birmingham mayoral candidate and Highland Park resident, Brother Sims. Jones said her personal goal related to the series was to put together a group of interested people to discuss making Highland Park a 'compassionate neighborhood'.

Adjournment: With no further business the meeting was adjourned at approximately 8:30 PM.

Next meeting will be Tuesday, February 12, 2019 at 6pm upstairs at Highland Golf Clubhouse.

Respectfully Submitted,
Judy Jones
Secretary, Highland Park Neighborhood Association