

MIRAMONTE NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION

Board Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, November 9, 2022

Ellen Wheeler, President, called the meeting to order at 6:05 p.m.

Present: MNA Board members Ellen Wheeler, president; Ann Baldwin, treasurer; Jan Howard, secretary; Ravi Bewtra; Linda Dobbyn; Sam Behrend; Richard Webster; and Brenda Kazen. Absent Joanna Dinan, vice president, Morris Palter, and Anne-Marie Laurian.

Ward 6 update - Steve Kozachik

Two upcoming events:

- 6 p.m., Wednesday, Nov. 16, a Tucson Police Department led presentation will be held at the Ward 6 office in person and on Zoom about fentanyl and opioids laced with fentanyl. According to Steve, the illegal product is less expensive than a can of beer.
- 10 a.m., Saturday, Dec. 3, Ward 6 is hosting a holiday party and invites the public to help build a holiday tree out of 72 ByFusion recycled plastic construction blocks. After the blocks are used as a holiday tree, the plastic “lego-like” blocks will be used to build planters and tables in local parks. Since the plastic recycling test was started at the Ward 6 office, more than 22 tons of plastics have been recycled. The project has been well-received by the City of Tucson, and research is underway to identify the financial resources (\$1.5 million) to purchase and install the block-making equipment in Tucson.

The City of Tucson will be establishing new Ward boundaries based on the most recent US Census data, to ensure the Wards are in population balance. Wards 2, 4 and 6 have too many residents and Wards 1, 3 and 5 have too few. The population allocation goal is to have approximately 91,000 residents in each Ward, but the law allows up to a 10 percent disparity. The effort is also aimed at keeping together communities of interest within each Ward. .

Pocket Park Update:

The shade structure for the Miramonte Neighborhood pocket park is waiting on a city permit. The new play equipment is expected to be delivered in January. Once the new shade structure and play equipment are in place, we hope to hold dedication at the park. Ellen said timing is still uncertain, but we hope to have everything installed by February.

Ellen thanked Theresa Webster for her leadership in cleaning up the park for the Halloween Party and asked her to talk about plans for future social events in the park. Theresa said we are looking at having a social event each quarter, starting with the third weekend in January.

Brenda Kazen mentioned that “Devil Dan” plays in a band that is quite good and might be available for an event. Morris Palter previously offered to help with music for events. Brenda Kazan, Ravi Bewtra and Linda Dobbyn volunteered to help Theresa with social events.

Ellen also brought up the need for neighborhood participation in maintaining the park and suggested scheduling a quarterly cleanup day. She said that city park staff come by twice a week to pick up trash and check on the park. Ellen asked for volunteers for a quarterly clean up committee. Sandee Reynolds, Linda Dobbyn, Theresa Webster and Ellen Wheeler volunteered.

Halloween Party

Charles Casey said that “Devil Dan,” Halloween parade leader and a resident who has attended the parties for more than a decade, said that this year’s event was the most successful in his memory, with about 35 trick-or-treaters plus parents. All felt the increased attendance was thanks to the colorful newsletter and the beautiful weather, as well as flyers distributed and posted around the neighborhood. Charles said having stations along the parade route to distribute candy/toys/oranges was successful and recommended that next year’s event include a specific time for the parade, to make sure kids were there in time. Lots of photos were taken, and Terry Borg contributed chalk for the kids to decorate the park sidewalks. The only mishap was that one child stepped in cholla, but he recovered quickly.

St. Mark’s Presbyterian Church

Merrill Evans, church liaison to the MNA, asked the board and other attendees what the church could do for the neighborhood. She acknowledged the work underway to revitalize the area of the neighborhood near St. Mark’s and said the church is seeking to be a part of that. Merrill added that the migrant assistance work at the church has moved to a new location and that there is now additional space for meetings or other activities. The church is very near the Royal El Con Apartments, and parishioners are aware of the issues surrounding the property.

Ellen suggested that MNA form a small committee to come up with ideas for how St. Mark’s can better engage with the neighborhoods nearby and about services that might be offered there. She said she would reach out to the Peter Howell neighborhood (just across Alvernon) for their participation as well. Ellen, Linda and Sandee indicated their interest in the committee.

Neighborhood Outreach

The board is seeking ways to expand contacts with new residents as well as re-engage current residents. Ellen suggested all board members be aware of new residents and provide them with a copy of the most recent MNA newsletter as well as a Newcomers Guide, which is in the process of being updated. As events are planned at the park, inviting new residents to attend, as well as other neighbors who do not usually participate, will facilitate an increase in MNA connections.

Updates

- Treasurer's Report: As of 10/12, balance was \$6,418.81. On 11/4, expenses were \$180 for the 1-year rental of the PO Box. Still awaiting charge for newsletter printing. Balance 11/9 is \$6,801.81.
- Traffic calming/pedestrian safety committee: Brenda said that the 411 is an important number to remember for pedestrian and bicycle safety and that the Ward 6 office was seeking a Complete Streets representative. The traffic calming committee was told by City Transportation representatives Ryan and Jesse that MNA has an opportunity to seek Prop 411 funds for pedestrian safety, such as the addition of sidewalks in the neighborhood.) In addition, the neighborhood can look to collaborating with the Ward 6 office to identify our Complete Street's representative to help access Prop 411 funds. Another project could include planting trees in cooperation with Clean & Beautiful along Miramonte.
- Alvernon/5th St crime working group: Next meeting is planned for 6 p.m., Wednesday, Nov. 30, at the Ward 6 office. Neighbors are encouraged to attend to report specific crime issues, including properties where crime is occurring. Lieutenant de las Ossa of TPD attends the meetings to listen to residents' concerns and reports back at the next meeting.

The MNA will not hold a board meeting in December.

Ellen adjourned the meeting at 7 p.m.

The January MNA Board meeting is set for 6 p.m., Wednesday, Jan. 11, at the Ward 6 office, 3202 E. 1st St. in person and by Zoom.