

York Neighborhood Association Board of Directors Meeting

Nelson's Market, 514 Potter Street

January 25 2024 Minutes

Approved: Motion 2024-04-18.1 ✓

Present: Colin Beazley (President), Chris Donaldson (Vice President), Opie Knechtel (Treasurer), Mark Ellis Walker (Secretary), Élan Engel, Kevin Cussen, Megan Doyle. **Quorum satisfied.**

Excused: Jeremy Ferrera, John DeOrio, Mars Lindgren (had to work in the kitchen, as there was much business).

Absent: Tom Scott.

Guests included Board prospect Paul D'Agnolo and a young fellow named Brady who had some suggestions regarding the Rock Hill Park renovation.

Action Items for specific Board members are listed at the end of the Minutes.

The meeting got started at 6:37pm.

1. Annual Holiday Party Recap and Feedback

Positive feedback in general despite tremendous rain. There were around 200+ attendees, and the horse-drawn wagon made eight rides each seating 24 people. Opie's Lionel train set was also a hit.

Suggestions for next year:

- Élan recommends a big tent be set up and well ahead of time in case of such heavy rain.
- For the organization of the wagon rides, go with numbers and not colors (which are hard to discern at night and can get soaked by such rain).
- Promote the café's grab-and-go food options specially prepared for the event.

2. Treasurer's Report

Opie had a handout summarizing 2023's YNA Cashflows which indicated a bottom line of us having a little over \$2,000 in the bank after January adjustments, and she noted that we've basically been coasting along on what funds had already been raised in years past but now are long overdue for a fundraising push. Also, as a general operations note regarding the winter event, she suggested that donors should pay in the same year (for year-end cashflow purposes).

She raised the possibility of us cutting the *Yorker* newsletter to a three-a-year cycle and increase the price of ads. Megan countered that four issues is barely enough to keep people informed about what's going on and what the YNA is up to and that she personally gets that kind of information gratefully from the newsletter, a sentiment Mark echoed from his 12 years as a York resident. But the matter remains open for investigation and discussion.

There was a lively discussion of initial fundraising possibilities, among them making a deal to license the York Neighborhood name for a local brewery's special-edition beer and a neighborhood-versus-neighborhood fundraising competition. Élan said he will check with his print company regarding costs

to produce York-themed merchandise. It was agreed that fundraising options/needs should be a topic at our next Board meeting, and Opie agreed to compile suggestions and ideas sent to her by Board members ahead of that.

Mark also noted that it has been a long time since the YNA did a fundraising campaign addressing residents directly and that, while he doesn't know if one had been done during his first years on the Board (a possibility), Tom or Anne Mackie would probably be best to consult on what materials were distributed for it and via what means.

Opie also suggested that flyers for events be sponsored to cover their print costs. Colin added that he will be negotiating with Christ the King Church to see if we can lower our payment for the use of Norway Hall.

3. Historical Preservation - Walking Tour Update

Chris reported that he met with Katie Franks of the City of Bellingham on Tuesday. It's anticipated that there will now be two months of compilation of content ideas, then checking with the neighborhood for feedback and further input. Permission will be obtained from owners of properties featured before inclusion. The City will be paying production costs.

It is intended that the map and the Rock Hill Park renovation launch concurrently. Thoughts for promoting it include and hosting a period-dress event and/or having the Good Time Girls do some local tours.

4. Annual Planning and Board Elections

Colin asked that Board members write to him with their passions/interests, both major and minor, for activity planning in the coming year, along with any recommendations as to changes to what the YNA Board does and how we do it.

He also noted that, according to the new mayor, Small & Simple Grants will be continuing.

Regarding event planning for 2024, Megan opined that the Yard Crawl be shifted from midsummer to the day before Dumpster Day, as people will then already have stuff out to go away. She also suggested that we invite June Hathaway, who founded the Yard Crawl, to the February General Meeting as a possible Board candidate.

5. Agenda for February General Board Meeting

Parks, and specifically the Rock Hill Park renovation, will be the focus of this meeting, which will be attended by Parks Department staff (at least Laine Potter). Although they already have our initial suggestions, Élan will prepare a document of ideas and preliminary research from the YNA Board and a recent local online survey and provide this to Laine ahead of the meeting. There is an estimated \$250 million available for the project.

There was an open discussion of further park-idea possibilities, though it was noted that we're not looking to plan something that will "draw cars" to the neighborhood. Young guest resident Brady likes the idea of a slide down the rocky hillside but also suggests a small bike track in the upper area.

Lighting was discussed as being desired but not to any extremes. Climbing areas/things were reiterated as desirable activity options.

6. Status of Upcoming Newsletter

Although Mark gave a brief rundown of possible content, this item largely got sidelined to a discussion of news that the York Farm's leadership situation has recently changed again and that apparently Mary Loquvam is once again in charge of it despite having retired from it last year; the matter's status is very unclear at this point.

Mark asked that content be supplied from Board members by mid-February.

Sometime after this portion of the meeting, the minutes for the most recent General Meeting (October 25) and Board Meeting (November 16) were approved by consensus. The meeting had devolved into a lot of overlapping conversations and the paying of dining checks by this point, so it was difficult to hear all that was going on.

Meeting Adjourned at 7:49, although Mark and Megan and Opie stayed for a while to discuss ideas for *Yorker* content, funding, and distribution.

Action item for all Board members: Send fundraising ideas/suggestions to Opie

Individual Action Items:

Chris:

- Send Mark information on the historical archives being promoted on our Facebook page, for him to post on the YNA website
- Get access to our Google Drive account arranged for Élan

Colin:

- Write the President's Corner feature for newsletter
- Invite June Hathaway to the February General Meeting

Élan:

- Check with your print company regarding costs to produce York merchandise for fundraising
- Compile a document of ideas and preliminary research for the Rock Hill Park renovation and supply this to Laine Potter ahead of the February 28 General Meeting

Mark:

- Continue compiling and writing content for the newsletter
- Transcribe and distribute minutes for this meeting for Board review

Opie:

- Compile fundraising ideas/suggestions of Board members for discussion at an upcoming Board meeting.