

York Neighborhood Association Board of Directors Meeting

Nelson's Market, 514 Potter Street

August 28 2024 Minutes

Approved: Motion 2024-09-25.1 ✓

Present: Colin Beazley (President), Opie Knechtel (Treasurer), Mark Ellis Walker (Secretary), Kevin Cussen, Megan Doyle, Paul D'Agnolo, Todd Kleinbrook. **Quorum satisfied.**

Absent: Chris Donaldson (Vice President), Élan Engel, Jeremy Ferrera, John DeOrio, Mars Lindgren, Tom Scott.

Guest: Jonathan Schilk (Bellingham Parks Department).

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

The meeting began around at 6:30pm, but the Secretary was tardy and arrived six minutes later.

1. Rock Hill Park Refresh

Jonathan Schilk of Bellingham's Parks Department presented five (well, four and a half) playground-equipment arrangement possibilities from equipment makers and discussed many of their elements with the Board as well as indicating their anticipated costs. The price of playground equipment has increased tremendously over the years, and so have installation costs, so our use of the project budget has to be circumspect.

The initial concept sites the primary location for the new equipment at the south end of Iron Street, in the upper part of the park, rather than in place of the old equipment; this is in part for accessibility reasons but also because the existing playground is only about 12' in diameter and much more space would be needed for a worthy array of options.

Although a dinosaur theme was indicated as something hoped for by neighbors who participated in the preliminary concept stages (such as by voting with stickers for best-liked options on the Parks Department's presentation boards at the York/Sehome Spring Social in May), Jonathan indicated that such custom artwork is very expensive; Board members expressed hope that instead local artists could produce it, both cutting costs and enriching the experience for the neighborhood.

Both of the equipment arrays prepared by the Burke company were preferred over most of the other presented options, with the proviso that a tire swing would probably be preferred to a pair of parallel seat swings. Jonathan estimated that each of the Burke plans would cost around \$100,000, as compared to the first two presented options (which, with fewer "play events," were estimated at \$76,000 and \$90,000). A fifth option was only minimally sketched out and involved a suspended claiming net between large artificial rock formations which would be absurdly expensive, so the Board largely rejected it but noted that the climbing element was appealing.

After thanking Jonathan for his presentation, the Board decamped to a pair of booths inside Nelson's Market at 7:34pm to continue the meeting.

2. Annual-Picnic Planning

Colin went through the status of various elements of the preparations for the Annual Picnic, to be held on Sunday September 8: entertainment/games (Colin), rentals (Megan), sponsorships (Chris and Opie), PR & communications (Chris and Mark), merch/swag (Kevin and Todd), setup (Paul and Colin), and special invitations such as City representatives (Colin). The band, Wild Geese of the West, was booked for \$400, of which Colin will sponsor half himself.

Megan printed copies of the flyer Chris prepared and gave them to Board members to post throughout the neighborhood. Kevin passed around some printed pages featuring York-themed merchandise art ideas provided by Board members since our previous meeting and asked that each member indicate their three favorites; he will tally the result, and the winner will be featured on a short run of 50 hats to be available for sale at the picnic as a test run.

3. Treasurer's Update

Opie did not present a formal report but said that our budget's good right now. This was helped by the majority of our newsletter's advertisers renewing this summer (in addition to some new advertisers). She will also assign neighborhood-association grant monies from the City to pay for two issues of the newsletter.

4. Grants

Our Small & Simple Grants this year were for adding interpretive signage to the reverse sides of our two new park-kiosk bulletin boards and the purchase of locally appropriate trees to be made available to York residents for free as part of the City's push to improve Bellingham's tree canopy (York having one of the skimpiest in town). Approximately \$4,000 is available. Colin is readying the arrangement of the tree distribution and intends to pair it with a parks work party. Megan advised us that Jeff Jewell of the Whatcom Museum's archives should be reached out to for sign content.

Megan also suggested that a Small & Simple grant opportunity to consider going for in 2025 is a street mandala such as the one created in the Sunnyland neighborhood as part of the Sunnyland Stomp which incorporated cartoony chickens; Mark flippantly suggested that ours should feature images of York's signature abandoned couches.

5. Next Meetings

Wednesday September 25 will be our next YNA General Meeting, and then Wednesday October 23 will be a Board meeting for the planning of the annual Holiday Party event.

The meeting adjourned at 8:04pm.

Action items for all Board members:

- Post flyers to promote the Annual Picnic.

Individual Action Items:

Colin:

- Send Annual Picnic invitations to key City departments and people, including the Fire Department.

Kevin:

- Look into getting a short run of 20 York-themed hats produced to be tried out at the Annual Picnic.

Mark:

- Begin preparation of the November newsletter.
- Invoice Nelson's Market for a new cycle of four ads in the newsletter.
- Transcribe and distribute minutes for this meeting for Board review.

Opie:

- Use City grant/reimbursement money to pay for the April and August newsletters.

Respectfully submitted, Mark Ellis Walker, Secretary.