

Lents Neighborhood Association Board Meeting

Date: 2/16/2021

Location: Virtual Zoom

6:32 pm-

Meeting called to order by Sabina Urdes

Board Members Present: Sabina Urdes, Nicole Williams, Katie Penna, Jason Bird, Jean Fang, Gerald Adkins, Natalie Adkins, Morgin Carpenter

Board Members Absent: Jennifer Breedlove

Others Present: Community Observer, Joanne Reese

Sabina started out by welcoming everyone and extended her appreciation for everyone attending in light of the difficulties brought on by the recent storm.

Action Items:

Board Meeting Minutes:

The board voted to approve the minutes from the January 21, 2021 LNA Board Meeting.

6:35 pm-

Motion by Sabina and seconded by Katie to approve minutes from last Board Meeting:

Motion carries unanimously

Sabina submitted a reminder that the meeting is a Board meeting and, although open to the public, is only for Board members to engage and to conduct Board business and participation in it is by Board invitation only.

6:37 pm-

Agenda for Next General Membership Meeting:

Sabina solicited suggestions for the agenda for the upcoming General Membership Meeting. Along with the usual committee updates and reports, two possibilities she'd been working on were scheduling a conversation with the [Shelter to Housing Continuum Project](#) and an update on the launch of [Street Response](#) in Lents and what concrete actions can the LNA and the community take to ensure the program is successful. Katie mentioned that she was in contact with the people from the Shelter to Housing Continuum Project and offered to contact them about attending the next meeting.

Jean mentioned that two written requests had come through the LNA email: 1) Steve Fosler, representing the development at 6335 SE 92nd AVE is willing to attend and present floor plans. 2) Joanne Reese requested a Finance Presentation with more time for Q&A. Nicole wondered about the status of the finance report for 2020 and Jean said she would forward all of Joanne's questions to the Finance Committee and to any interested Board members. Sabina explained that there had been some difficulties in obtaining some of the bank statements, as the online records only go back so far and they hoped to have them by the end of that week. There was also a request from [Unite Oregon](#) about the LNA endorsing a letter on police accountability. And an announcement that COVID testing is being offered on April 10th at the [WATTLES Boys & Girls Club](#). As this is a very full agenda there was concern that there would not be time for everything that was suggested.

6:44 pm-

Livability Committee Revival:

Katie Penna said that she had been approached by 17 community members about bringing back various committees that the LNA used to have, particularly the Livability Committee. She also stressed that the Board take measures to encourage community members to join committees, as one does not need to be a Board member to do so, and that the community members who initially approached her have committed to sitting on the Livability Committee should it be revived. Katie intended to make a motion for the March Board Meeting to officially bring back the Livability Committee. Sabina said that it would be helpful to have some names to start off the committee and a chair. She also stated that the only reason the LNA does not have such a committee now is because nobody has stepped up to do it. Katie said she would relay that information and see who would like to act as chair. Katie offered to be the Board sponsor for the reformation of the Livability Committee and sit on it, but she did not wish to chair it. Due to popular demand, she believed it would behoove the Board to reform this committee to ensure it stays involved, as it is the prerogative of every Lents community member to form a committee separate from the LNA, and to support community members, so they do not have to do all the work on their own. Jean expressed excitement in hearing more at the next meeting.

6:49 pm-

East Portland Resilience Coalition (EPRC):

Sabina decided, in the interest of time constraints, to shelve the discussion about sending a representative on the East Portland Resilience Coalition (EPRC) for a later date.

Updates:

Land Use:

No Land Use update, as the chair was not present.

Request from Community Member and Prosper Portland To Fix One of the 2 Lents Monuments:

Community member, Randy Dagal, Former owner of Lents Auto Body Shop, is working with PGE and Prosper Portland to help repair damage to the monument on SE Foster near SE 90th AVE that the LNA is responsible for maintaining. He is requesting the PGE account number for the LNA as the damage included one of the utility poles and PGE requires the information. Sabina wanted to make certain that no one on the Board took issue with giving out that information. There were no objections from the Board and Gerald Adkins shared that he had been playing phone tag with Randy Dagal and said that he would contact him with the pertinent information as soon as possible.

Finance Committee/Treasurer Update:

Gerald Adkins shared that there were only minor changes from the last Treasurer update:

Account Balance: **\$1,627.83**

PGE payment on January 29th: **\$37.70**

There is no activity in the LNA PayPal account. It has been at **\$0.00** since December 8, 2020.

And there are still pending invoices for Mayoral Candidates, Ted Wheeler and Sarah Innarone for **\$50.00** each. Gerald reported that the 2020 LNA Financial Report is close to completion.

Communications Committee Update:

Black History Month:

Jean and Sabina wanted to post a statement on the LNA Facebook page to acknowledge Black History Month and although she had no formal statement prepared at the time of the meeting, Jean had done some research on [Allen Ervin \(A.E\) Flowers](#), a black pioneer residence of Portland who owned farmland around Mt. Scott near the Lents area. Flowers arrived in Portland in 1865 and Jean was attempting to determine his address and hoped to have a formal statement ready soon.

Street Response:

In light of the launch of [Portland Street Response](#) in Lents and media requests for comment on it, Sabina and Nicole brought forth a proposal: A statement, in draft form for the LNA Board to review and edit. Written in collaboration with Street Response Program Manager, Robyn Burek, former Portland City Council Candidate, [Candace Avolos](#), and Raven Drake from [Street Roots](#), the letter acknowledged the role Neighborhood Associations have played historically in contributing to systemic injustices against those experiencing houselessness in Portland. Most importantly, Sabina said, it was intended to be a unified statement from the LNA Board alone, as leaders in the community, regarding what concrete actions the organization could commit to undertaking and promoting in order to do better in supporting houseless members of the community in the future.

Katie expressed concern that the tone of the letter was overly critical of the historical actions of the LNA and did not wish for it to be pushed through without time to digest it further. She held that many of the statements were historically inaccurate and said that she could name years and meetings where the LNA did involve houseless neighbors, i.e., the Town Hall in 2017 and, given time, could come up with many other examples. Sabina encouraged Katie to indicate which specific sections she took issue with and wanted edited before it went out. Sabina said that with the exception of two or three, she had been present at every Board meetings since 2017 and maintained that the letter was an accurate depiction of how houseless neighbors had been largely overlooked with little opportunity in the LNA to advocate for themselves. Sabina asked Katie to name how many times houseless folks had sat on the LNA Board. To which Katie did not respond.

Nicole thought it was important for individuals to separate themselves from the actions of the LNA in that the statement was not suggesting that any one individual is a bad person or did not advocate for the houseless. Katie had to leave for a work commitment, but said that she was fine with the Board voting on the letter in her absence, although stressed that she was uncomfortable with the perceived historically inaccurate statements in the letter, maintaining it required further editing. Nicole went on to state that she had witnessed actions by the LNA that were not supportive of houseless people and counted herself among those who had historically done harm and wanted to emphasize that everyone makes mistakes and coming to terms with past mistakes is a part of how people and organizations grow.

Sabina made it clear that this letter was to be a statement from the Board alone and not representative of the entire community or even the Membership. Sabina added that she supports bringing an edited version to the Membership at the next General Membership Meeting to discuss and brainstorm what steps the community might like to take to help make Street Response a success.

7:09 pm-

Motion by Sabina and seconded by Nicole to publish a letter on behalf of the LNA Board regarding Portland Street Response and what commitments can be made to ensure it succeeds.

6 Yes

1 abstain (Jean citing the need for further edits, putting actions forward and more data. She stated that she fully supported the program, but found it interesting that it seemed to be focused on people specifically calling authorities on houseless people.)

Motion Carries

Nicole stressed that she wanted to hear all opinions on the letter and wished for the meeting to be a place where everyone feels at liberty to share their views. She also wondered if the letter would be received more positively if the language regarding the LNA's past actions regarding the houseless were toned down somewhat, stating that it's hard to accept personal responsibility for harming people. Sabina said that she agreed, but believed that collectively people are ready to come to terms with that. That said, she was open to changes. Gerald wanted to see it substantially shortened. Perhaps no more than a paragraph? Morgin chimed in to say that it was important to be aware of the time constraint, as the media was looking to hear from the LNA Board the next day and that no amount of wordsmithing is going to make everyone completely happy. She went on to state that if ending houselessness is, in fact, the goal then bold and broad statements would need to be made by the Board and she was in support of that.

Sabina hoped that since the motion passed, an acceptable version of the letter would be achieved and could ultimately be brought to the Membership.

Jean reminded everyone that a March Board Meeting was necessary in order to deliberate on the Grievance Committee's report.

7:18 pm-

Meeting adjourned