

Northampton Civic League Minutes 01/08/2008

The January meeting of the Northampton Civic league was called to order at 7:02 PM by NHCL President Selvin Walker with 6 members present.

The meeting opened with a pledge to the flag.

Secretary Matt Asay distributed draft copies of the minutes from the December meeting. The minutes were approved with 4 corrections.

Treasurer Samara Walker provided a summary of the League finances. Our bank account shows a balance of \$420.23 after a \$36.00 deposit.

LEAGUE REPORTS

Civic

President Walker provided some updates on recent civic activity.

Regarding the upcoming **NUSA conference** in May, he indicated that he had received calls recently from the coordinators who were in the process of finalizing the speakers for workshops at the conference.

Concerning **flooding**, he reported on the December 19th meeting of the City Council. Dredging is planned in the Old Wythe area. Studies are ongoing for the Northampton and Backriver areas. When the studies are completed the recommendations will come back to the council for approval. Noting that the Northampton Study is not completed yet, he asked Vice President Wendell Midkiff if he could get involved with the study group to see that our concerns are addressed and report back on progress. The point of contact for the city is Chuck Fleming and the consultant they have hired is Lambert Logan.

Flo Randall reported on her efforts to identify hazardous or unsightly public property within our area and have the problems addressed. She has reported on light poles and utility poles to Public Works. The report she put in last February 12th was repaired within 3 days. She reported on two problems on December 31st and emailed in pictures of the problems. Two separate tickets were opened up by the 311 operator. The person she spoke to said that these light poles were Vepco's responsibility, but that the city would contact them seeking resolution. President Walker suggested that if we don't see a response by the February meeting, the league should draft a letter to Vepco with a copy to the city. Someone noted that there was another telephone pole with a problem across from Bethel High.

Publications

Tanis Mowery distributed a sample newsletter she had designed after a brainstorming meeting she held with Matt Asay and Samara Walker. She was seeking feedback from the members on the design and content and suggestions about additional items to include. She also noted that the newsletter would be posted on the NHCL website as well as being distributed to members and prospects.

The members provided several suggestions on the layout and items. Tanis will incorporate the suggestions (possibly meeting with Matt and Samara for a final review) and have a new version ready for copying and distribution at or before the next meeting.

To the question "what else to include?" members suggested: minutes for the last meeting, issues the league is working on, some words to "draw in" people who might become members, and a "President's Corner" as has been included in past newsletters. Initially we'll see if we can make it a monthly publication. If that turns out to be too big a load, we may back off to bimonthly. As to the question of whom it should go to, we agreed that it should go out (in PDF form) to members with email and be posted on the website. Paper copies should be mailed to members without email.

As far as copies for distribution to the public, initially each member would be asked to distribute copies to their block or immediate neighborhood. After some discussion of black and white versus color copies and how they would be paid for, a resolution was unanimously approved to have 200 color copies made at a cost not to exceed \$50 with funds from the league's treasury. Future issues may be funded, all or in part, by ads from sponsoring companies in our area.

Other Issues

Matt Asay reported that he had discussed the planned Youth Involvement workshop planned for the next meeting with Wakili McNeill of Alternatives. She has asked that we postpone it from February to March due to activities they already had scheduled for February. The change was approved by the president and the membership.

It was noted that the membership forms have not yet been updated to indicate that applications should be sent to the Secretary per the bylaws. This led to the question of whether the current \$9 dues were sufficient and the possibility of other changes or addition to the bylaws. The members decided to make a review of membership, dues, and the bylaws a topic for next months agenda and defer any large scale update of the membership applications until after that meeting.

The policy for league action for recognition of member's illness and bereavement will also be included in the bylaws review.

One member asked if there was a Neighborhood Watch program in the area. Members were unsure if there were any watches currently active. Selvin noted that the city's Crime & Grime initiative was intended to be tied to Neighborhood Watch efforts and that more neighborhood participation was needed. We decided to make Crime & Grime another topic at the February meeting.

City sponsored hearings about the upcoming Hampton Budget are being held at three locations, including one at the Northampton Community Center on Saturday, January 19th from 11:00 to 1:00 pm. A number of fliers were provided to each member for distribution in their neighborhoods.

Tanis Mowery also noted that Hampton's Animal Control office has been moved from Public Works to the Police Department.

Organizational Assessment

President Walker distributed two forms to the members present. The first was an "I expect..." worksheet to help members focus on their personal reasons for joining the league and their expectations for the officers, the other members, and the league as a whole. Members were asked to fill it out by the next meeting and we would share them at the meeting.

The second was a "Civic-Effort Needs Assessment" questionnaire intended to provide each person with insight into their personal preferences and orientation with regard to the civic environment. The results of this worksheet don't need to be shared with others unless the member wants to.

Selvin indicated that he would send electronic copies of both forms to Matt for distribution to members who were not present, by email or mail. He also asked that they be posted on the website.

The meeting adjourned at about 8:45 PM. The next meeting will be on February 5th.

Memberships: There were no renewals and no new members.

**Matt Asay,
NHCL Secretary**

As approved at the February 5, 2008 meeting.