

Northampton Civic League Minutes 03/04/2008

The March meeting of the Northampton Civic league was called to order at 7:05 PM by NHCL President Selvin Walker with 20 people present.

The meeting opened with a pledge to the flag.

Secretary Matt Asay summarized the minutes from the February meeting. The minutes were approved with no corrections.

Treasurer Samara Walker provided a summary of the League finances. Our bank account had an opening balance of \$420.23. There was a deposit of \$18 for dues and \$50 in expenses for the newsletters for an ending balance of 388.23. The treasurer's report was also approved unanimously.

President Walker announced that we would be deferring consideration of the bylaws amendment until the end of the meeting in order to allow the Youth Engagement Workshop to begin. He introduced Terrell Kingwood who, in turn, introduced the other members of the Neighborhood Youth Advisory Board (NYAB) who were conducting the workshop.

YOUTH & ADULT PARTNERSHIP

The NYAB members began with an icebreaker, a "name game." Everyone present formed a large circle and a ball was provided. The first person said his name and then tossed the ball at random to someone in the circle. That person said the name of the person they received the ball from and then their own name and tossed the ball again (preferably to someone who hadn't received it yet). This continued until everyone had gotten a chance to participate. Then a second ball was added and briefly a third! The purpose of the exercise was to allow everyone to loosen up and to learn the names of some new people.

This was followed by a short discussion about the NYAB and what its purpose and activities were.

A second activity came next entitled "Find someone in the room who..." Each person was given a list of 18 items such as "Spoke before City Council" and "Was born in the same month as you". The participants had to circulate among the other people and find someone who had done one of these things and get them to sign the sheet next to the item. The object was to collect as many signatures as possible within the time limit. Everyone had a great deal of fun, while meeting new people and finding out interesting things about them. Some people had nearly the whole sheet signed off in the 10 or so minutes allotted.

The next section was a discussion of the different levels and types of Youth/Adult partnerships, ranging from cases where the young people are basically acting as a labor force for activities planned and organized by the adults to situations where the youth are treated as equal partners in the planning and organizing of projects and may be the leaders rather than simply followers or supporters.

A new exercise followed called "Smallville." The attendees were split into two groups. Each was given the same role-playing scenario involving youth responses to adult actions after a spate of vandalism and graffiti in a small town. The members of each group brainstormed with each other and developed a list of ways to deal with the problem. Then the attendees got back together and one or two spokespersons from each group presented the groups deliberations to the combined audience. We learned about the ways different people would handle the problems and saw how sometimes youths were just assumed to be part of the problem instead of contributors to the solution.

Finally the NYAB team presented several handouts to the group, covering things like developmental assets for youth and ways to strengthen them. Members of the audience shared some of their experiences with interactions between young people and adults.

President Walker (and the rest of the adults present) thanked the NYAB members for their presentation and invited them to stay for the remainder of the meeting if they wanted to.

VOTING ACTIONS

President Walker led a discussion of the proposed amendments to the league bylaws to raise the dues from \$9.00 to \$10.00 and clarify some of the wording on membership renewals. The Secretary distributed

copies of the bylaws with the changes highlighted and noted that the dues had not changed since 1999. A motion to accept the amendment was made and seconded and approved unanimously.

NEW BUSINESS

Vice President Wendell Midkiff noted that on the past Saturday he had seen some activity in the drainage canals just off Todds Lane. The city seemed to be cleaning them out and removing debris. The members expressed their wishes that perhaps this was a sign of a more concerted effort to improve drainage in our area.

The Secretary also circulated a “Thank You” card for the NHCL from Karen Ducan, our District 1 Neighborhood Commissioner, who was back with us again after her recent illness.

The meeting adjourned at 8:54 PM. The next meeting will be on April 1st.

Memberships: There were no renewals and no new members.

**Matt Asay,
NHCL Secretary**

As approved at the April 1, 2008 meeting.