

The regular meeting of the Northampton Civic League (NHCL) was called to order at 7:06 p.m. by Selvin Walker, NHCL President. Six members and 1 guest were in attendance.

The meeting opened with reciting of the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

President Walker welcomed members and asked our guest, Jim Harris, to introduce himself and tell us a little about what brought him to our meeting.

League Business:

President, Selvin Walker distributed copies of the agenda.

Secretary Matt Asay reviewed the minutes of the March meeting (which had previously been emailed to the members). The minutes were approved unanimously as presented.

The President distributed the treasurer's report on behalf of Treasurer, Samara Walker, who was unable to attend. The report showed a beginning balance of \$456.00. A \$10.00 check was received and deposited on March 21 for membership dues for Matt Asay, The ending balance was \$466.00. There being no corrections, the report was approved unanimously as read.

Matters from Members

In order to accommodate a member who had to leave early, the President asked Chris Hosman to present his information first. Chris reported on upcoming activities of the the **Amateur Radio** group that he heads. The group is currently preparing to assist the Hampton Emergency Operations Center as needed in the upcoming hurricane season. Members provide reports during a storm so the EOC knows about issues in the various parts of the city and the city staff can concentrate more on addressing problems rather than riding around looking for them. The group is planning a Field Day to publicize amateur radio in June. Of the 269 licensed radio operators in the city, over 200 are supporting the groups efforts.

Selvin asked that Matt Asay again bring the large laminated map of District 1 to the next meeting so we can plot the locations of CERT members and ham operators in our area and look at who our members should contact in case of communication issues during a storm.

Matters from League Officers:

Selvin asked Matt Asay if the outstanding issues with the latest revision of the **NHCL Bylaws** had been corrected. Matt reported that the bylaws were now complete and correct to the best of his knowledge. He distribute the few copies he had on hand and promised to have additional copies at the next meeting. He noted that the bylaws were also available on the NHCL web site <http://www.nhcl.hamptonva.net/>

Selvin provided a brief update on the issue of property assessments. He noted that there was to be a **public hearing** on the **real estate tax rates** on May 13 at 7:30 at City Hall. He

suggested that interested members should attend as a group but be prepared to “listen first” to what the city had to say. He also suggested that you check the facts about your house as shown on Hampton’s real estate web site. Make sure that errors in their database don’t affect your assessment.

After a discussion of assessments and escrow account regulations and laws, it was suggested that we might want to have someone familiar with **escrow account law** speak to the group about how anticipated property tax increases might be dealt with.

He also noted that, as reported in the paper, **Phenix school**’s opening was being delayed until September of 2010 due to construction delays. Because of the city’s revenue shortfalls about 200 pink slips were going out to school district personnel. Phenix school is also intended to serve as an emergency shelter for our area. Because of the delay in opening, the rezoning plan may also be delayed. The city is considering going back to yellow school buses after HRT rate increases to the city for transporting students.

President Walker led a discussion about how to manage our upcoming **membership campaign**. Specifically we looked at some of the identified neighborhoods within our boundaries as we choose which one each member would adopt (in addition to his or her own). As time and circumstance permit, the member would distribute information about the NHCL and talk to neighborhood residents to find out their concerns and issues. Over the month before the next meeting we will solicit via email a neighborhood selection from each member. The selections will be shared with everyone so members would know which areas were already spoken for.

At our next meeting we hope to have recruiting packets (fliers, membership applications, business cards, and a “recruiting pitch”) available for members to use.

The president briefly touched on additional topics: He is serving on the board of a **domestic violence prevention group**. Hampton’s **teen center** (in the old Sentara health and fitness center on Butler Farm road) is opening soon and is looking for sponsorships (i.e. donations) to help. See <http://www.hamptonteencenter.com> for the latest information. The league is planning to host a **“Community Health” event** at the NHCC in June or July. The event will include information for the public and a 2-hour forum to talk about related topics. It will be scheduled for a separate time from the regular NHCL meeting.

Matters from Members and Guests

Area resident Jim Harris talked about his perceptions about how the area has changed, and not always for the better, over the 50+ years he has lived in Northampton. He expressed his frustration with trying to get police and city officials to address problems (drug use and sale, alcohol abuse, gangs) in his neighborhood. The group discussed possible strategies for documenting the problems and “encouraging” the city to address them. Many issues remain unresolved.

The meeting adjourned at 8:45 p.m. The next meeting is scheduled for May 5, 2009.

There were 2 membership renewals, Chris Hosman and Harold Pittman, and no new

members.

Attendees were:

Selvin Walker

Matt Asay

Cheryl McElraft

Carolyn Phaup

Chris Hosman

Harold Pittman

Jim Harris (guest)

Action Items:

(Items carried over from previous meetings)

- Karen Duncan to distribute information on the meeting schedules of other civic organizations.
- Karen Duncan to provide information on the new Neighborhood College structure and class schedule.
- Karen Duncan to provide information on the new Neighborhood Commission small grant process.
- Selvin Walker to distribute T-shirt ordering information to members via Matt Asay.

(New items)

- Matt Asay to run off additional copies of the NHCL membership brochures.
- Matt Asay to run off additional copies of the NHCL bylaws.
- All members to select (via email) a neighborhood to “adopt” for membership recruiting purposes.

Matt Asay

NHCL Secretary

As approved at the May 5, 2009 meeting.
05/26/2009