

Northampton Civic League Minutes 10/02/2007

The October meeting of the Northampton Civic League was called to order at 7:00 PM by NHCL Vice President Wendell Midkiff with 9 people present.

The meeting opened with a pledge to the flag.

Secretary Matt Asay summarized the minutes from the September meeting. The minutes were approved with four corrections.

Treasurer Butch Heath provided copies of the NHCL bank account statement. As of the end of September the balance in our bank account was 338.23. Mr. Heath also noted that he thinks he has additional \$18 in dues money not yet deposited.

New Business

Vice President Midkiff reported that he had received a call from President Bernice Jackson's husband indicating that he had taken her to the hospital this morning. Wendell had no further information on the cause or her status at the moment.

Neighborhood Office representative Jonathan McBride indicated that his new baby was a son named "Nolan David McBride." He said he was now sleeping through the night most evenings.

Secretary Matt Asay initiated a discussion of the procedure for distributing the minutes.

The current practice is to circulate the draft minutes by email to the members who were present at the meeting for review and correction. The minutes are then read, corrected if necessary, and approved at the following meeting. At that point they are posted on the NHCL web site and an email is sent out to everyone to alert them that the approved minutes are now available.

This procedure means that someone who misses a meeting may not find out what happened at that meeting until after the following meeting. He solicited suggestions for how we could get minutes out to the members sooner, while still preserving the formal approval process.

After some discussion the following procedure was adopted:

- The Secretary will send the draft minutes out to the attendees after the meeting.
- The attendees will have 3 days to send in any additions or corrections.
- After making any corrections received within the 3 day period, the Secretary will send out the minutes to everyone, noting that they are still "draft" minutes.
- The minutes will be read, corrected if necessary, and approved at the next meeting (as before).
- The corrected and approved minutes will be posted on the NHCL web site and an email sent out to everyone alerting them to the posting.

The Secretary noted that he has received a letter from the City soliciting volunteers for two events: The Holly Days parade (on December 8th, although the date wasn't listed anywhere on the letter or the enclosure!) and "Santa Calls" a program to provide telephone conversations with "Santa" to area children on December 18th. For contact information call Joanne Russ 727-6387, Chuck Costas 728-2085 or Cyndi Masterstaff 727-8414.

Hampton School District Superintendent Patrick Russo will be conducting a public meeting about Gangs at the Convention Center on Thursday October 4th at 6:30 pm. There will be a separate meeting held there for any kids who attend.

Selvin Walker noted that the city staff will be making a presentation about two of the 3 flood plain studies (the one for the Big Bethel area is not complete yet) to the City Council on October 24th. He indicated that he would post those studies on his web site for any members who wanted to review them (Go to <http://hamptonrcn.org/2.html> and look under Publication Committee).

The Vice President noted that we (the NHCL) need to work on getting more visibility before City Council. Recently we have not sought much “face time” to keep them reminded of who we are and of our interest in maintaining and improving our area. He suggested we should look for opportunities to do so.

Wendell also mentioned that after last month's discussion of the unsightly appearance of the new housing development on Todds Lane near Winchester, he spoke to the Hampton Codes Department. The City looked at it, and apparently spoke to the developer, since there seems to have been some improvement.

Neighborhood Tours

Karen Duncan, our District 1 representative on the Neighborhood Commission, asked that we reconsider our decision to “pass” on participating in the Neighborhood Tours being conducted during the Neighborhood USA conference being hosted by Hampton in May of 2008. She suggested we might try a joint project with some of the other groups in the Northampton area. One possibility was for a District 1 tour that might include Sandy Bottom Park, Farmington, and Ridgecrest (among others). Karen and Selvin offered to coordinate development of a proposal. Matt offered to provide information about the NHCL's involvement in Kraft Park. Wendell may be able to provide some history of how the NHCL helped with the creation of Sandy Bottom Park. Selvin will contact Farmington to see if they would be interested in participating. The proposals are due back to the Neighborhood Office by October 15th.

Elections

November is the month that our by-laws call for elections of new officers. After some discussion as to whether we should postpone them until December, the members decided to go ahead with elections next month. Secretary Matt Asay will send out (as soon as possible, but by Friday October 5th at the latest) a solicitation for members interested in running for President, Vice President, Secretary or Treasurer (or members interested in nominating someone else for one of those offices). A copy of the NHCL bylaws (which list the duties) should be included.

Since the by-laws call for publicizing the nominees at least a week before the election, he will send out a list to all members by email (or mail for those without email) by October 26-29.

While discussing the duties of the various officers as detailed in the by-laws, specifically the division of duties between the Secretary and the Treasurer, it was noted that, contrary to recent practice, all of the dues are supposed to be collected by the Secretary, recorded, and then turned over to the Treasurer. The membership form lists the Treasurer as who to send the dues to. By the by-laws it should be the Secretary. This will need to be corrected. Matt promised to take care of it.

Organizational Development

Jonathan McBride, our Facilitator from the Neighborhood Office then continued to help us work through our ongoing Organizational Development effort. He asked for updates on the interest areas we had identified at previous meetings from the nominal leads for each area.

Sandy Bottom (Wendell Midkiff & Flo Randall) They are tracking what is happening at the Park and keeping in contact with park officials and other groups. One step will be to establish more communications with the various groups

Common Area Assessment (Flo Randall & Carlton Campbell) They have taken pictures of some of the most problematic light poles in heavily trafficked areas. They asked that we each take a look at our neighborhoods and bring information on problems in the common areas (i.e. roads, medians, utility poles, etc.) back to the group

Emergency Preparedness Jonathan noted that this was not currently part of the set of goals we had established, but in light of the interest shown by the group and the members, perhaps it should be. The group agreed. Selvin Walker and Chris Hosmon will act as the leads for this effort. Flo Randall noted that a group of 12 churches (including Bethel Temple which she belongs to) are working together on emergency preparedness.

Youth Involvement (Matt Asay) Matt summarized his discussions with Wakili McNeal at Alternatives about the status of the Neighborhood Youth Advisory Board. Recruiting is still underway for additional youth members of the NYAB. Selvin noted that his daughter might be interested. Karen reported that she had spoken to Wakili earlier and asked her for a list of District 1 youths who were members of the

NYAB. Someone mentioned that they thought there was a Bethel student who was a member of the Youth Commission. Matt noted that the civic league needed to decide the type of youth involvement we were interested in. Do we want to recruit youth to become members of the civic league? Or do we want to sponsor a youth group in the Northampton Area?

Existing Improvement Opportunities (Karen Duncan) Karen mentioned her ongoing partnership with the PTA at Forrest Elementary. She indicated that the President of the Forrest Elementary PTA may come to our next meeting.

Drainage (Carlton Campbell) Carlton has a meeting with the City of Hampton later this week. He would like additional input from the members on their experience with drainage problems. He expected to have an update by the end of the week. Chris Hosman noted that the CERT folks are considering using Jeff Davis as an alternate shelter and Headquarters in the event of a disaster of some kind. Roger Mowery noted that the Fire Department is working with Liberty Baptist church on Big Bethel about using their facility as a staging area.

Due to time constraints or absence of the lead, the following areas were not discussed further at this meeting:

Network Of Help (Karen Duncan & Alonzo Duncan)

Neighborhood Organizations and Groups (Jonathan McBride & Karen Duncan)

Crime & Grime (Jon McBride)

Jonathan asked that, as “homework” for the next meeting each person bring a list of tasks for the next 6 months to a year for the civic league to accomplish to make progress on the focus areas we have identified above. The question to ask for each proposed task is “What value does goal add towards accomplishing the things we as a civic league have decided are the most important?” “How does it help make the NHCL or the community better?”

Jonathan noted that after the November meeting he would be “stepping back” for a time while we push forward in December and January towards implementing the tasks we choose. Perhaps in February he will return for an update on our progress and help us with a “self assessment” to see how we feel about our progress as an organization. Then, if we feel we are ready, he’ll work with us on reapplying for renewal of our status as a registered neighborhood organization.

Other Business

While we were reviewing meeting dates for the Organizational Development schedule, someone noted that our January meeting will fall on New Years Day. The group decided to reschedule it for January 8th.

Secretary Matt Asay was asked to send out to each member a list of all of the members of the Northampton Civic League.

The meeting adjourned at about 8:56 PM, The next meeting will be on November 6th.

Memberships: There were no renewals and 1 new member (Kimberley Richardson). A total of \$9.00 was passed on to the Treasurer.

Matt Asay,

NHCL Secretary

Minutes as approved at the 11/04/07 meeting.