

# Northampton Civic League Minutes 12/04/2007

The December meeting of the Northampton Civic league was called to order at 7:02 PM by NHCL President Selvin Walker with 14 people present.

The meeting opened with a pledge to the flag.

Secretary Matt Asay distributed draft copies of the minutes from the November meeting. The minutes were approved with one correction.

Outgoing Treasurer Butch Health provided a summary of the League finances. Our bank account shows a balance of \$384.23 after a \$28.00 deposit.

Butch noted that he needs a signed copy of the official minutes to provide to the bank when we submit a new account signature card to cover the changes in our league officers.

The President then moved to postpone the remainder of the meeting until after the pot luck dinner. His motion was approved by acclamation by all present.

## Organizational Objectives

Near the conclusion of the meal, President Walker shared some of his thoughts and philosophy concerning the league and some of our recent brainstorming sessions.

Regarding the upcoming Neighborhood Tours during the May 2008 NUSA conference, he indicated that he felt the NHCL was not yet ready to take on hosting a tour. He is very interested in our "getting our name out" by the time of the conference. We need to complete defining vision of ourselves as an organization and our mission statement. It was suggested that perhaps we could achieve some visibility by working as a volunteer group in some capacity supporting the conference. Additionally it was suggested that we add a link to information about the conference to our web site.

On the broader topic of how the league conducts its business, Selvin noted that his philosophy is "...not all fun, but fun along the way." He suggested that to try to figure out what the NHCL should do we should each ask ourselves "Why did we join the league? What kind of things do we want to do with the NHCL?" For himself, he noted that he joined to improve the health, security, and wellness of the area in which he lived.

To help the league figure out what resources we have, each of us should assess what skills we bring to the organization? What are we good at or like to do? We also need to maintain continuous communications with each other between meetings so we know what's going on and who is working on what.

Flo Randall suggested that we might pick up pointers by visiting other civic organizations and finding out how they conduct their business.

Selvin noted the invitation we had received from Machen Elementary to participate in their community event. He noted that while, for time and availability reasons he needed to decline this invitation he would work to keep the lines of communication open.

## Flooding

The president noted that on December 19, 2007 at 7:30 the Department of Public Works will brief the City Council on the proposed fixes for the Back River watershed and the Northampton Watershed. These proposals are a result of the studies commissioned by the council.

The Back River study listed 13 options with price tags ranging from \$1.3 million to \$10 million. The options in the Northampton study ranged in cost from \$700,000 to \$1 million. Any future improvements will need future funds from some yet undetermined source.

Selvin suggested that Northampton residents need to be at the City Council meeting if at all possible to get visibility for the improvements needed here. If we are unable to attend it is important to watch the

proceedings on Channel 47 to be conversant with the issues. Delegate Mamyé BaCote noted from her experience with the issue on the Newport News City Council that it is very important that Hampton and Newport News work together to coordinate their cleanup efforts. Otherwise efforts by either city will be less effective and may even negatively impact the work of the other.

The league needs to work together with other Northampton area organizations (i.e. Farmington, Aberdeen, etc.) to coordinate our requests that the city address flooding issues in this area. Selvin will try and attend at least one City Council meeting a month and would like to find a point person to attend various meetings and report back to the NHCL.

On the general issue of presentations by businesses, the group discussed possible guidelines for considering future offers: The presentations should include general information and not just a plug for the presenter's specific product or service. The time to speak offered should be limited and this should be communicated to the speakers in advance.

On a related matter, Bernice noted that there would be a presentation on Court TV on November 17 at 11:00 am on prepaid legal services.

Neighborhood Office representative Jonathan McBride announced that a new session of the Neighborhood College would be starting in January. Classes will be on Monday and Wednesday and run for about 4 1/2 weeks with a total of 9 sessions. He said he would be mailing out more information later. All of the members who had attended the Neighborhood College in the past recommended it for anyone who could attend.

### Other Issues

Construction has begun on the new Pre-K through 8 school behind Bethel High. The cost is estimated to be about \$44 million.

Samara Walker noted that she had recently completed her CERT training. She is a nurse and wants to increase the league's focus on that issue (Emergency Response). Tanis Mowery noted that in addition to flooding, the ice storms in the recent past were a real problem for seniors in the area.

A new session of the Neighborhood College will be starting in January. Information should be available in the Neighborhood section of the City's web site.

The next session of the CERT (Community Emergency Response Training) classes will be offered twice a week for 4 weeks in February. The city's 311 information number should be able to provide details.

### Organizational Development

**Youth Involvement** (Matt Asay) Matt will be asking Wakili McNeill of Alternatives and the Neighborhood Youth Advisory board to present a workshop on Youth Involvement at the February meeting. Each person was asked to bring at least one young person to the meeting. If we are unable to work things out with Alternatives we will plan our own activities. Delegate BaCote noted that she is on the state Youth Advisory Board. President Walker noted that the latest issue of Mix magazine features a nice article on "Hampton Roads Youth." Tanis noted that CERT is putting together a youth program for next year.

**Self Assessment** Selvin again asked that each of us do our own self assessment for January. Why did we join the Northampton Civic League? What would you like to see the league do? (Help the league do?)

### Recognition

Flora Randall and Selvin Walker presented recognition plaques to several NHCL members (President Bernice Jackson, Vice President Wendell Midkiff, Secretary Matt Asay, Treasurer Butch Heath, and Webmaster Darryl Krauch) thanking them for their service and dedication. The membership voted unanimously to reimburse Flo for the cost of the plaques.

In addition Flo received a round of applause for her efforts in suggesting, organizing, and coordinating the delicious Pot Luck dinner. She, in turn, noted the delicious offerings provided by each of the members.

The meeting adjourned at about 8:50 PM. The next meeting will be on January 8th (since the first Tuesday falls on New Years Day).

Memberships: There were 4 renewals (Darryl Krauch, Karen Duncan, Eric Duncan, and Harold Pittman) and no new members A total of \$36.00 will be passed on to the new Treasurer.

Matt Asay,

NHCL Secretary

As corrected and approved at the January 8, 2008 meeting.