

# SMILE General Meeting minutes

March 6, 2019

SMILE Station

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**OFFICERS PRESENT:** Joel Leib, President; Gail Hoffnagle, Vice President; Eric Norberg, Secretary

**BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:** Elaine O’Keefe; Julie Currin; Bob Burkholder; Tyler Janzen; Elizabeth Milner

President Joel Leib called the meeting to order at 7:36 p.m., and began by asking those present to introduce themselves, around the room. Leib concluded that a quorum of SMILE members had been reached, although many had not signed in, so he asked for a review of the minutes of the February 6, 2019, General Meeting. Tyler Janzen and R. Corless requested a slight re-wording on page two to clarify what had been said. No other amendments were requested. Bob Burkholder made a motion to approve the minutes as amended; Gail Hoffnagle seconded the motion. The minutes were approved unanimously.

President Leib asked Gail Hoffnagle for a quick update on the SMILE Sundae in the Park Committee, of which she is a member; she said the committee membership had doubled from 3 to 6. She also announced that although the Parks Department had presented SMILE with some choices for a Movie in the Park this year, which in recent years had followed Sundae in the Park, they have now concluded that they would be better-served showing movies elsewhere, and we will not have a movie after Sundae in the Park this year after all.

Joel next reminded those present that the annual SMILE Board Election will be at the May General Meeting (May 1st), with all four officer positions up for election to a one-year term, and with at least four of the eight at-large Board positions up for election to a two-year term. He asked that anyone interested in running for a seat, or interested in serving on the SMILE Nominating Committee, get in touch with him soon.

Next on the agenda, at her own request, was local resident Sue Schubert, who wanted to tell the community about the organization she had founded, the “Sellwood-Moreland Street Tree Initiative”, which she operates with the partnership of a neighbor, Karla Rowe. The organization is not a legal nonprofit, concentrates on placing street trees in front of businesses and commercial properties, and – although the cost of each tree is about \$1,000 (in site preparation, planting, and the tree itself) – those who will receive the tree get it free, and have a selection of trees to choose from; she funds the tree planting herself with the help of a small bequest she has received. She approached 77 businesses, and 16 property owners agreed – and 16 trees have been planted. Another 13 plantings are pending. She said that she had moved to our neighborhood in 2004, lives over the Library on S.E. 13th, and she believes the trees add value, slow traffic, improve mood, clean the air, regulate temperature, and are a major asset to the community. She invited anyone present knowing of a commercial property owner who might be willing to accept a street tree to let her know.

SMILE Land Use Committee Chair David Schoellhamer arose, next, to acquaint anyone who did not know about the committee's structure and functions – one of which is keeping the neighborhood informed of current land use developments. It provides a venue for developers to hold their “neighborhood contact meetings”, and tracks changes in city rules concerning land use. It formulates comments and testimony for city land use committees for the potential adoption and submission by the SMILE Board. He ended by observing, “there is a lot of growth happening.” There followed some Q&A with those present.

R. Corless was next to present, in her role as Chair of the SMILE Crime Prevention Committee. She told of the committee's past two years' activities. The committee meets, at present, at Starbucks on Tacoma Street – most recently just last week; the speaker there was Mark Wells, the city's trainer for the Neighborhood Watch program, and a former police officer. We have eight Neighborhood Watches active in Sellwood and Westmoreland at this time. She went on to give details on a number of related initiatives. The committee may hold a “Public Safety 101” meeting later this year for the community. Bob Burkholder added a few available community resources. Both urged always reporting any criminal incidents that should be known to the police – because patrols and based on the areas in which crime is reported. Ms. Corless requested that those present consider attending a meeting with County Commissioner Sharon Meieran on “How the city and county work to impact change” on Wednesday, March 13, 5 p.m., at 70 N.W. Couch Street.

Finally, Gail Hoffnagle again arose to report on a city budget meeting she had attended earlier this day with Nancy Walsh and Julie Currin; all three are part of the SMILE Friends of the Sellwood Community Center Committee. Last year, the city promised two years of operation at all the small community centers to provide time for a study on “usage and fee recovery”. The study never happened, and the Parks Department has now repudiated this agreement with the community. The Parks Director was dismissed, the City Commissioner overseeing the Parks Department changed, and this year the budget was examined behind closed doors – where the city told its budget committee just what it wanted to do to address the \$6 million deficit this year. They are firing 10% of the Parks staff, and plan to close most small community centers. Evidently that does not include the Woodstock Center, which is satellite to the Mt. Scott Community Center, and is mostly run and maintained by Woodstock community volunteers. The west-side Hillside Center will close and will be put up for lease; the Sellwood Community Center is to be closed, but won't be put up for lease.

“They say they talked to the stakeholders,” Gail reported, “but they did NOT talk to us.” The city's committee has very little time now to study that budget and the advocated cuts. The SMILE Friends of Sellwood Community Center met last night to discuss. We have a bequest, given to SMILE for the ultimate benefit of the Center, and there is now some \$750,000 in it. We have requested figures on the Sellwood Community Center operating costs from the city, but what we received has not been broken out by category. If SMILE were to take it over, we would try to maintain some of the current programs. “So, this is the first salvo,” said Gail. The committee will meet at 7 p.m. each Tuesday evening at the Center for the time being; the meetings will be open to anyone interested.

There being no other business, Bob Burkholder moved that the meeting be adjourned; Nancy Walsh seconded; and the meeting was adjourned, unanimously, at 9:05 p.m.