

SMILE General Meeting minutes

December 4, 2019

SMILE Station

Main Website

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Procedural

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OFFICERS PRESENT: Tyler Janzen, President; Pat Hainley, Treasurer;
Eric Norberg, Secretary

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT: Bob Burkholder; Elizabeth Milner; Julie Currin

President Tyler Janzen called the meeting to order at 7:34 p.m., and began by asking those present to introduce themselves, around the room. After that he asked that the minutes of the November 6 General Meeting be reviewed. However, without a quorum yet having been attained, no motion or vote to approve was possible at this time.

Janzen announced that there are two vacancies on the SMILE Board, following the resignation of former President Joel Leib, who is leaving the neighborhood with over a year left on his term, and Justin Dick, who himself was elected last May to fill an uncompleted term on the Board, and whose term extends until May of 2020. Nominations are accepted until the next General Meeting, on February 5 (the January 1 General Meeting was cancelled because it fell on a holiday), and nominations for these two seats will also be accepted at that meeting before the election takes place. The highest vote-getter will complete Joel's term until May of 2021; the second highest will complete Justin's term until May of 2020. The composition of the neighborhood is changing, with the rapid growth of the population from all the new apartment house construction, and SMILE wants to include a cross section of all the residents on its Board and encourages anyone who lives in the neighborhood, or works in the neighborhood, or owns property in the neighborhood, to consider running.

First on the evening's agenda was John Deitz, a volunteer with Friends of the Library. The Multnomah County Library is the oldest library system west of the Mississippi River, he said; and the nonprofit Friends of the Library was established in 1972 to support the library in various ways. Its major annual fundraiser to benefit the library is the annual book sale, which will next take place on April 14-17, 2020. The Multnomah County Library has 19 branches [of which the Sellwood Branch is the oldest, but he did not mention that]. It is the fourth busiest library system in the country, but it has the 102nd biggest library system. He went on to list a variety of other statistics and services performed each month by the library system, and advocated for an expansion of the Multnomah County Library system, commensurate with the substantial recent growth in the metropolitan population. Although he feels many of the branches need considerable expansion, he voiced the opinion that the Sellwood Branch Library is not one of them. He concluded with some Q and A with attendees on the subjects he'd covered, and offered – and then collected – a survey for those present, concerning their use and perceptions of the library system.

Next to appear was John Marshall, a local resident who is a former U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service biologist. He said that in putting together a class on Oaks Bottom for the new Sellwood Community House, he was reminded that a section of Oaks Bottom had been once used as a garbage dump (at the far south end), and he said that site had never been remediated in a modern sense. He believes that the recent reconstruction and upgrade of the drainage system of the Oaks Bottom Lagoon may not have acknowledged or addressed any remediation of the former dump, at some distance south of the lagoon, although he added that apparently the city believes it did. He frets that contaminants from the dump could possibly leach into the lagoon and affect juvenile coho salmon stopping into the lagoon on their migration to the ocean. He ended by emphasizing that he does NOT consider the former dump to pose any danger to residents of the neighborhood, but he does feel that questions remain to be answered.

At this point in the meeting, it was determined by President Janzen that a quorum had been attained, so a motion was entertained for approving the previously-reviewed minutes of the November 6 General Meeting; Ed Nunez moved they be approved as submitted, Bob Burkholder seconded the motion, and the motion carried unanimously.

The next agenda item was a “Friends of Moreland Woods” report, presented by Nanci Champlin and Elizabeth Milner. They reminded those present that the Foundation Partners of Florida, which some time ago bought Wilhelm’s Portland Memorial funeral home, has already sold its south parking lot for residential development, and is now preparing to sell its north parking lot for the same purpose. Since some parking is still needed for those coming to the funeral home, they now plan to construct a small parking lot just north of the mausoleum, in the south part of the vacant property known as “Moreland Woods” – and the Friends of Moreland Woods were planning to meet with representatives of the owners of the funeral home on December 5 to outline a plan by which five trees, scheduled for removal to enable the construction of the small parking lot, could be saved while still providing the planned number of parking spaces. The Friends of Moreland Woods realizes that Foundation Partners still plans to sell the north portion of the “Moreland Woods” property, and is still exploring the possibility of buying that section of the lot for a public park. This presentation ended with Q and A with those present on this issue.

The Chair of the SMILE Crime Prevention Committee, R. Corless, concluded the meeting by announcing that the appearance planned at this meeting by the operator of the “Willamette Shelter” in Westmoreland, Transition Projects, has been postponed at their request to early next year. She then went on to give a brief local crime report, and offered a handout on how to report any criminal matters over the Holidays.

With nothing else on the agenda, or offered from the floor, Pat Hainley moved that the meeting be adjourned; Elizabeth Milner seconded the motion; and the motion carried with evident unanimity at 8:47 p.m.