

# College Heights Neighborhood Association

## Minutes of the Annual Meeting – October 13, 2011

The meeting convened at 7:00 PM at the Church of Christ, 405 Hillcrest Avenue with informal conversation over cider and coffee, provided by Marilyn Quethera and Beth Maass. Treasurer Donald Hopkins was available to collect dues. About 60 College Heights residents attended.

Association President Donna Queeney called the Business Meeting to order at 7:30. Secretary Jay Bartlett read a summary of the minutes for the 2010 Annual Meeting, which were accepted by unanimous voice vote.

Donald Hopkins provided a summary Treasurer's Report for the past year:

<b>BALANCE</b>	<b>October 14, 2010</b>	<b>\$4390.46</b>
<b>INCOME</b>	<b>(from dues)</b>	<b>\$1920.00</b>
<b>EXPENSES</b>		
	Copying	\$190.51
	Postage	\$17.60
	Annual Meeting Expenses	\$54.58
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>(\$262.69)</b>
<b>BALANCE</b>	<b>October 13, 2011</b>	<b>6047.77</b>

Dues-paying members reached a record high of **182** households for 2010-11. There has been an upward trend since 2006-07, with sharper increases in the years when two newsletters have been sent.

The Treasurer's Report was accepted by unanimous voice vote.

Donna Queeney delivered a brief update on the status of the appeal by the owners of 303 West Park Ave. of the Zoning Hearing Board's decision to rescind their student house permit. Briefs have been filed with the Court of Common Pleas by the Borough's Solicitor, Jeff Stover, and Sandy Gleason's attorney, David Engle (half of whose charges will be paid by the Association). However, no hearing date has yet been set. (It was later learned that the judges decision would be based on materials provided, with no hearing.)

Donna and Carl Hess, the Borough's Planning Director, also reviewed highlights of the informational meeting on student homes with College Heights residents (also attended by Borough Manager Tom Fountaine and acting Zoning Officer Anne Messner) . About 30 residents attended and heard detailed explanations of the definitions, ordinances, and processes that the Borough works with, followed by updates on all open cases.

Carl Hess then spoke about proposed zoning changes in the Borough and in College Township to address the goal of reducing automobile traffic by locating some essential services within walking distance of neighborhoods (including College Heights) currently without such businesses. He mentioned the informational meeting, open to all interested residents, to be held in Room 220 at the Borough Building on October 26 at 7:30 PM.

Webmaster Kathy Driehaus gave a short explanation of the Borough's new online violations reporting form.

Cathy Dauler, chair of the nominating committee, presented its recommendation, which was to re-elect Donna Queeney as President and Donald Hopkins as Treasurer. No further nominations were received from the floor and the slate was approved by unanimous voice vote.

Donna Queeney then asked members if there were any other business matters. Three were offered:

- ^ Following up on Kathy Driehaus's review of the Borough's complaint filing form, one member urged more direct neighbor-to-neighbor contact before filing official complaints for property maintenance ordinances such as snow removal, grass and foliage trimming, etc.
- ^ Peter Jurs, election judge for Precinct 16 (West College Heights), again solicited volunteers to become poll workers in Precincts 16 and 17, as several of the current longtime workers expected to retire soon.
- ^ Jay Bartlett requested feedback on the idea of starting some type of online forum to enable more neighbor-to-neighbor discussion of the kinds of issues currently handled by the executive committee, or in annual meetings. About a quarter of the attendees indicated interest via a show of hands. It was then agreed that further input should be solicited via the listserv, with the executive committee addressing the matter as it deems appropriate following the feedback-gathering process.

The Business Meeting was adjourned by unanimous voice vote at about 8:00 PM and Donna Queeney introduced our featured speakers, Borough planning director Carl Hess and PSU Vice President for Student Affairs Damon Sims. The third scheduled speaker, PSU student and State College High graduate Dan Florencio, was unable to attend.

Damon Sims began by pointing out that there are many benefits to having "a great university in a great town," but that we have some "culture clash" problems shared by almost all college towns. Part of his mission at PSU is to make students aware of the responsibilities they have to permanent residents of the town they share. He wants residents to voice their concerns, but also to reach out to students. He mentioned that enrollment growth at University Park may be reaching its limits--most future growth should be at the Commonwealth Campuses—which may alleviate some issues of student housing expansion into the neighborhoods.

Carl Hess pointed out that having so many students side by side with an already dense permanent population in such a limited land area creates many pressures on the quality of life for all. He reviewed some of the steps the Borough is taking to alleviate those pressures, including the F8 program and possibly developing nonjudicial remedies for some student behavior issues. He introduced Kelsey Fleming, the new Americorps volunteer who would be working on neighborhood concerns for the Borough. He then reviewed some results of the recent quality of life survey.

Carl and Damon then opened up the discussion to audience questions and comments, including:

- ^ What the Borough and PSU are doing about State Patty's Day. Damon reported that more student organizations have become active in efforts to control and/or eliminate the event.
- ^ What are the penalties for alcohol-related offenses? Carl stated that they are primarily fines and educational programs, and that there is an effort at strengthening both underway.
- ^ Responding to a question about PSU enforcement of off-campus and alcohol code codes, Damon said that these are being stepped up.
- ^ Fraternities seem to be taking more responsibility in neighborhood relations and code enforcement, particularly those with strong local alumni involvement.
- ^ On how residents might better engage students, Damon suggested greater reaching out on a social and personal level, such as invitations to dinner, block parties, etc.
- ^ Regarding the proposed changes to the student home ordinance, Carl predicted that these will pass. He also requested that residents inform the Borough of maintenance issues at student homes.