

Menlo Park Neighborhood Association
Meeting: February 8, 2024
Sentinel Building, 320 N. Commerce Park Loop, 6-8 pm

Board members present: Kylie Walzak, President; Laura Dent, First Vice President; Anthony Nelson, Second Vice President; Wendy Sterner, Secretary; Liz Martinez, Treasurer; Mamta Popat, Parliamentarian; Liza Grant, Historian & Newsletter; Keren Torres, Celina Soto and Kara Harter, Members at Large

Welcome and Introductions: The Board and neighbors introduced themselves, both in person and online.

January minutes for approval: Armando moved to approve the minutes, Laura seconded, motion was passed unanimously.

Treasurer report: The current balance in the MPNA checking account is \$2,509.61, \$25.03 in savings.

Yard Sale Fundraising update: Per the Treasurer's report, we made \$1,210 from the yard sale. Kylie and other neighbors reported it was a great opportunity to hang out with neighbors and earn some money for the neighborhood. Thank-you to the many volunteers who helped organize the event, donated items, showed up at 6 am to set up, helped with sales, and staffed the cash box table. An especially big thank-you to Kylie for doing so much of the organizing, including getting permission to use the property where the sale was held, securing enough tables for everyone, coordinating furniture pickup, designing and distributing the flyer, setting up the QR code and online sign-up sheets, and for bringing breakfast and coffee to volunteers. This event would not have been nearly as enjoyable and successful as it was without Kylie's involvement..

Preview of MPNA Bylaws Amendments and Changes, to be voted on at March MPNA mtg:

Kylie handed out a copy of the current Menlo Park Neighborhood Association bylaws, and the City of Tucson/ Planning and Developmental Services Department guidelines for boundary changes for neighborhood associations. Kylie clarified that tonight the Board will be previewing proposed changes to the bylaws, but the opportunity to discuss the changes will be at the March meeting. MPNA bylaws require at least a 10-day notice be sent to MPNA members before any discussion of changes can take place. Neighbors are going to be notified by email, verbal announcement at this meeting, and postcards through the US mail that changes to the bylaws will be discussed at the March meeting.

The Board reviewed the following proposed changes to the bylaws:

1st paragraph Mission Statement

– Remove “urban” – this does not need to be specified, as Menlo Park has elements of both urban and rural lifestyles.

Article II Purposes, number 8

– Add back in “To encourage the revitalization and preservation of inner-city neighborhoods of Tucson, AZ”. This sentence was inadvertently left out of the 1/20/2021 version of the bylaws and was replaced with the same wording as number 9.

Article III Membership, number 1, B and D

- Delete items B and D because they haven't been used in the past 15 years at least and don't seem necessary.
- Retain item C in case a future Board wishes to charge dues.
- Delete “Associate Members” from number 1 wording if item B is deleted.

Article IV Officers, number 1, C, D, and E, and number 3

- Standardize lettering to capital letters to conform with lettering in Article III Membership

- Add a definition of Records to clarify what the Secretary, Treasurer and Historian must retain, and what is the property of the Association.

Article V Committees, number 1 and 3

- Number 1: delete the word “elected”, add “...and appointed at-large members...” so the first sentence of number 1 reads “The Executive Committee shall be composed of all officers and appointed at-large members of the Association.”
- Number 3: delete, as committee chairpersons are appointed by the President of the Association

Article VI Meetings, number 1

- Standardize lettering to capital letters to conform with lettering in Article III Membership
- Item C: insert language from the 1/14/21 version of the bylaws, Article IV Meetings section
- Item C: delete “...except, if due to extenuating circumstances, members are unable, or anticipate being unable, to meet in person in September, the Annual Meeting may be rescheduled by a majority vote of those members present at any regular meeting preceding the September meeting.” This language was added during the COVID pandemic, and conflicts with Article IV Officers number 1 A stating the President shall call all meetings.
- Item D: replace the word “elimination” with “removal”. “Removal” is a more accurate description for this process.
- Item E: Define what constitutes “virtual” attendance, keeping in mind the possibility of future circumstances such as a pandemic that may prevent the membership from gathering in person.

Article VII Fiscal Responsibility, number 3

- Change contingency fund amount to \$325 due to yearly costs to maintain the neighborhood website permissions and ZOOM license.

Article IX Amendment of Bylaws, number 3

- Replace current wording with “Neighborhood boundary changes, name changes, mergers, splits, dissolutions, or coalition formation will follow City of Tucson guidelines.” Kylie explained that this language was written into the bylaws prior to the City of Tucson developing a process for neighborhood association boundary changes.
- If the members decide to keep and revise the current language, standardize lettering to capital letters to conform with lettering in Article III Membership.

Kylie explained that in notifying the neighborhood about the bylaws discussion in March, the proposed changes (above) will not fit on a postcard. She and Rebecca Ruopp with City of Tucson Planning Department are working on a way to remedy that. The proposed bylaw changes will be available for review at the Ward 1 office during office hours. The proposed bylaw changes will also be posted on the MPNA website.

MPNA members can contact Kylie or any other Board member with ideas for bylaws changes or concerns about the proposed changes. Kylie reminded everyone that the bylaws changes proposed by the Board are not permanent, and that there will be ample time for discussion of all proposed changes at the March MPNA meeting.

A neighbor Jean Ramirez spoke up to say she was upset about the way the voting happened in Sept 2023. She felt that people “helicoptered in” and showed up on ZOOM just to vote. There was a discussion about verifying who is eligible to vote, and it was noted that the Parliamentarian was and is responsible for verifying that only eligible members of the neighborhood association can vote.

Call to Audience/Neighborhood Announcements

Isaiah from the Audubon society announced that he brought nesting boxes for the Mesquite Warbler (aka Lucy’s Warbler) for people to put in their mesquite trees, instructions included on the nesting boxes. If

neighbors attend the Birds and Beer event at Borderlands Brewery Feb 29th and mention that you live in Menlo Park you can get a nesting box there. You can also get a nesting box by contacting Isaiah.

Flor announced that she is working with Somos Uno! A Cultural Heritage Strategy for Tucson, in conjunction with City of Tucson to compile an inventory of art, cultural heritage and historic preservation, to include all people with cultural knowledge and history of Tucson. She passed out flyers with a QR link to a survey, which she encouraged everyone to fill out and share with others. The survey closes at end of February. So far most of the people who completed the survey were attending the Tucson Meet Yourself event. Flor said groups of certain heritages are gathering to share their stories and heritage.

Keith Bagwell from Pima County Board of Supervisors District 5/Adelita Grijalva announced that the county has received \$5.2 million from FEMA to continue asylum seekers program through April; as well as \$3.5 million to help with housing for people facing eviction.

Laura Dent announced people may be able to get lower-cost solar panels for their houses through Solar United Neighbors. They are piloting a program to give people on fixed income 50% off solar panel installation. Groups of homeowners who want solar are also joining forces to negotiate with solar vendors to get lower rate. Technicians for Sustainability was noted as being the most reasonably priced company right now.

David Walker announced that buffel grass pulls on A Mountain are ongoing, and that the Save our Saguaros event last Saturday event, which was supported by the Arizona Sonora Desert Museum, over 100 people came. Tucson Clean & Beautiful is providing some money to hire and train 10 youths from Tucson's west side to identify and eliminate buffelgrass on A Mountain. David will continue to work with youth on this project. David announced there is a GoFundMe account set up to raise money for this effort, with a fundraising goal of \$600. He asked neighbors to contribute. The money will be used to train and pay young people from Tucson's west side to spend 4 hours each pulling buffelgrass, they will be paid \$15/hr for a total of 8 hrs. Kylie suggested this could be addressed at the next MPNA meeting to consider a donation from the neighborhood.

Isabel Doe wanted to know what's happening with the liquor store? No information yet. One neighbor said they heard that the owners are still waiting for their plans to be approved by the city. It was pointed out that the city permitting office is understaffed and therefore slow in issuing permits. Kylie suggested the neighborhood write a letter to the Planning Department explaining our concerns and the issues we see, and ask them to expedite the process. Isabel volunteered to write the letter.

Someone also asked about the affordable housing project on Westmoreland, nobody had any new information.

Raul Ramirez announced he is working with Ward 1 and Josefina Cardenas' nonprofit organization to finish the lighting and landscaping around the Tohono O'odham Prima Vista sculpture at Grande and 22nd. They have secured \$61,000 to complete the project. There will be a presentation at Ward 1 on 2/13 at 5:30.

Raul announced that Barrio Sin Nombre residents are exploring splitting off from Menlo Park Neighborhood and forming their own neighborhood association. They met in December and are working with the city to announce a meeting for BSN residents only on 2/24. Their proposed boundaries would be the Santa Cruz River to the east, 22nd Street to the south, Grande Ave to the west and Cushing street to the north. If they decide to split, some of their next steps will be determined by the MPNA bylaws changes.

Kylie announced Mission Garden workshops are coming up in March and April. Also that there was a fatal dog attack at Cedar and Melrose. PACC is aware of the issues and have and ticketed the dog owners many times.

Steve moved to adjourn, seconded by David.

Next meeting: Thursday March 14th 2024.