

## **Mt. Tabor Neighborhood Association**

Zoom Meeting Minutes, March 20, 2024

Facilitator: Paul Leistner

Secretary: Nadine Fiedler

**Board members present:** Nadine Fiedler, Rob Galanakis, John Laursen, Paul Leistner, Brian Mitchell, Midge Pierce, Bing Wong

**Other attendees:** Duane Fickeisen, Lindsey Johnson from SEUL, Nikki Mandell, Laura Orr, Joan Parosa, Rick Sany, Brad Yazzolino

After introductions, the February minutes were approved unanimously. **Bing Wong** presented the treasurer's report. MTNA's bank balance is now \$6595.61. Ongoing expenses include Zoom \$12 monthly fees. Other expenses were a \$29.98 reimbursement to Kate Mitchell for 2023 iPower. Bing asked for approval of the fiscal year report and communications budget submitted to SEUL in order to obtain \$750 in communication funds. The budget includes \$264 to Wix.com, \$236 to iPower, \$153.48 to Zoom, and \$900 for an OWL. Nadine Fiedler seconded and the motion was approved unanimously.

**Midge Pierce** asked where MTNA's funds come from, and Bing replied that most comes from the cleanup fundraiser, with other funds from SEUL for communication and small community grants from the city.

### **Neighbor Announcements, Questions, and Concerns Not on Agenda**

**Bing Wong** reported that the new pedestrian and bike pathway into Mt. Tabor Park from 64th & Division will open on April 1. **John Laursen** added that the pathway is part of the completion of the maintenance yard construction, thanks in large part to MTNA. The parks department was planning to sell that property, even though they claimed they would not. Cascade Anderson-Geller and others fought back and it ended in mediation, resulting in improvements to the maintenance yard. Bing also said that the off-leash entry at Warner Pacific College is now closed and fenced due to erosion problems.

### **Belmont Library Renovation**

**Laura Orr** expressed concern about the upcoming year-long closure of the Belmont Library for renovation without Multnomah County Library offering temporary library sites. She asked if there is support to join with other NAs to send a letter to the Library asking them to include a temporary site in their budget, and moved that MTNA do so. Nikki Mandell seconded, and the motion was approved unanimously.

### **Street Vacation Request**

**John Laursen** discussed a property owner's street vacation request for a parcel between 71st and 72nd on Madison St. The property is owned by PBOT, is not potentially a street, and has been maintained by the owner, who owns houses on either side, for 30 years. He can't evict campers because he doesn't own the property. He's gotten approval from neighbors and done all due diligence. John mentioned that the city benefits from the property being added to the tax rolls.

**Rick Sany** lives nearby and said that the city is not compensated when this happens, that the owner has already built structures on it, and that he wishes the city had a way to assess the value and get a fair price. He added that although the owner has no intentions now to build on it, new building codes would allow building if the property changes hands.

**Rob Galanakis** asked what the owner planned to do with the property, and John replied that he plans to divide the lot between the two houses.

**Paul Leistner** moved that MTNA support the street vacation. Rick Sany and Duane Fickeisen were opposed, and Midge Pierce and Rob Galanakis abstained. The motion passed.

### **MTNA Cleanup**

**Paul Leistner** said it is scheduled for Saturday, April 20, at the Unity Community on Stark, in collaboration with the North Tabor NA. NTNA received a \$5,000 grant for the cleanup. The event is not a fundraiser but we can ask for donations. There will be a re-use area, and pastor Amanda Golbek has assembled a volunteer team. No hazardous waste will be picked up. Laura Orr had previously asked about shredding; Nikki Mandell followed up and found out it would be very expensive. Paul suggested we could do a separate event. Bing Wong mentioned that last year NTNA had papers with QR codes for online donation, and Paul asked Lindsey Johnson if SEUL could do that for MTNA; she agreed.

### **MTNA Board Elections**

**Paul Leistner** discussed MTNA's yearly board elections in May. He'd like us all to encourage people to get involved to support the neighborhood and will send notice of the election to our email lists. **Brad Yazzolino** expressed interest in joining the board.

### **Political Candidate Requests to Speak**

**Paul Leistner** said that in past meetings both Rob Galanakis and Laura Orr said that it's not a good use of our meeting time to have political candidates speak at our meetings, and he asked for a discussion of the issue. SEUL has postponed their forum until June, so that's not an informational option right now.

**Bing Wong** said that SEUL's forum is only for city commissioner candidates, and there are many other types. He thinks they can attend MTNA meetings, but we'll give them questions to answer and limit it to 2 minutes. He'd also like them to have a connection to the neighborhood, giving Mary Lou Henrich as an example.

**Laura Orr** thinks we should focus now on the May elections. She also said that candidates are not supposed to campaign at NA meetings. Paul said NAs can't take political positions. Lindsey from SEUL added that we can host but not support candidates.

**John Laursen** agrees that hosting individual candidates is not a good use of time, but that we should publicize and attend candidate forums since there are so many candidates. Duane Fickeisen agreed with this. John would like us to invite a visitor to a future meeting to explain how our new voting system works.

**Paul** said that if someone shows up they can introduce themselves, but we should not set aside time for them. Rob and Nikki agreed with this.

**Midge Pierce** admires candidates who would take an initiative to attend NA meetings, so thinks it's okay to have them come and answer questions for 2-3 minutes. Brad Yazzolino agreed and thinks we could limit it to 5 minutes to make their case.

**Paul** summarized our discussion so far: most people don't want to dedicate a chunk of time to candidates at our meetings. So we can limit people who show up to a couple of minutes and will not invite candidates. Midge said we can rethink this if we get overwhelmed. Rob added that we don't need to ask them to speak, and have them participate in the meeting without having a 1-2 minute pitch.

**Midge** asked for a policy statement. **Paul** responded that this will be our policy: it's fine for candidates to show up and have them listen to our meeting, but they will not give a stump

speech.

### **Quick Updates**

**Reservoir 6:** John Laursen said that the concrete poured in March should be cured by April, then water can be added.

**Meeting Room Search:** Paul reported that the Western Seminary offer fell through. He met with people from Taborspace, and it looks like the dining room would be a good meeting space, although they have upped the price per meeting to \$87.50. Paul will try to negotiate a free or low-cost option with them.

**Hybrid Meetings:** Paul Leistner said we will borrow an OWL hybrid device and give it a test, with help from Zach of the Cully NA. If it works we will buy our own OWL equipment.

**Neighborhood Personal Safety Trainings:** Paul and Midge are still planning one training in person and one on Zoom.

**Blood Drive:** Rob reported on a blood drive at Taborspace.

**Neighborhood History Project:** Nikki, a retired historian, said she will help however she can with oral history and other projects. Paul said that Jan Caplener has offered space to do an oral history of people who grew up here, with people bringing photos; Brad offered to scan photos. Nikki suggested 3-minute interviews.

**Fun & Interesting Sights in the Neighborhood:** Paul is interested in gathering photos for the website of interesting sights such as the wooden fish, the old reservoir gate house, and the art fence at 50th & Madison. He'd like to gather ideas to add to the list. Duane suggested adding an inventory of Little Free Libraries.

**Critical Energy Infrastructure Hub:** Nikki Mandell said that a broader study is scheduled to be done on toxic effects. She invites everyone to attend a press conference on April 16 where a public letter to officials about the CEI will be released; MTNA has signed on to that letter.

### **Friends of Mt. Tabor Park**

Bing Wong reported that FMTP's annual membership meeting was held Monday, March 18, where board elections took place with 4 openings and 8 candidates. Three board members were re-elected and one new member. Board member Anka Sepulveda stepped down but will continue leading the concert in the park committee. Lisa Wilcke presented her work to update the Trees of Mt. Tabor brochure. It's a highly technical and complex project with different forms of mapping and review of current and proposed trees to add to the brochure. PP&R is reviewing the draft and has made some changes. Friend of the Year Award went to Steve Bingold, a longtime volunteer leader/trainer on the foot patrol. Also in attendance was PP&R director Adena Long and Kimberlea Ruffu, East Portland outreach coordinator. Next Weed Warrior work party will be on Saturday, March 30, 9 am-noon. Next FMTP board meeting will be held on April 22, when officers will be elected.