

Bigelow Highland Neighborhood Association General Meeting

Tuesday, October 9 the Bigelow Highland Neighborhood Association met at 6:30 at the home of our President Simone Boe. Ten people were in attendance including our guest speaker Cheryl Selby. After introductions Melissa gave the treasurers report. Our current balance is \$505. We recently received \$70 in membership dues and are expecting a grant reimbursement check for \$97 bring the balance to \$672. Melissa is projecting an additional \$300 in revenue from membership dues and \$120 annually from Ralph's Community rebate program. (Not participating in Ralph's rebate program? Sign up a Storman's Office located behind Ralph's on 4th Ave.) Expenses for this fiscal year include paper for printing the newsletter, some graffiti supplies and the annual picnic. City grant money does not run through the BHNA treasury, more on grant activity later.

The BHNA board is looking for suggestions for other ways that we could or should spend our money on. No specific suggestions were given other than any items that help make the neighbors more connected or comfortable like drug free zone signs.

Cheryl Selby is running for City Council position #4. Cheryl is a downtown business owner (currently there are no downtown business owners on the council) and her primary interests are preventive injury and safety. A question and answer session had Cheryl talking about the relationship between the City of Olympia and the Port. While Cheryl may not personally agree with everything that is shipped in and out of the Port, the Commissioners are tasked with developing the economic sustainability and growth of the Port.

Discussion then moved to People's House – low barrier housing. The BHNA board is not taking a position on the subject, but plans on staying informed. With our current drug houses issues we want to stay informed and aware of any happenings that may have an influence. Cheryl explained that the City of Olympia is currently working on developing zoning laws for housing shelters because they do not have any. Ms. Selby would like to see services associated with homeless all closely located for convenience and better service for the homeless. A possible location that is being considered is on Martin Way across from Bailey's Motor Inn. When asked if Lacey might consider hosting a low barrier shelter; the response was probably not. Lacey feels that the 1% of sale tax which goes to help the homeless is their contribution. Someone suggested we might want to include an update to this situation in the BHNA newsletter with contact information for more information regarding the subject.

A former neighbor and a representative of the SideWalk Project announced that they have placed over 100 homeless people this year. The SideWalk Project is a fast growing national program that aids homeless in finding rapid housing options. To learn more about the SideWalk Project they are hosting an open house on Thursday, October 17th 3-6 pm at the United Methodist Church downtown or go to www.walkthurston.org.

Update on the drug houses on Prospect – One of the homes has been boarded up and the squatters have moved into a second home. The bank is giving them until November 15th to vacate the premises. Unfortunately we have heard of another suspected drug house on Lybarger between State and 4th Avenue.

Our 50+ block watch unit is currently the largest one in Olympia. The goal is to stay aware of suspicious activities in the neighborhood and report them to the police as needed. The block Watch

group becomes an extension of OPD's eyes and ears and because of our involvement we were able to shut down one drug house and are working on a second.

BHNA received \$1770 in city grant money for three projects in 2013:

Capital Vision Community Garden has spent all of their grant money on developing a community garden area. Roosevelt Elementary was planning on painting a mural, but the container where the mural was to be painting on was removed from the site. Instead we spent \$189 of that money on emergency preparedness bags and an additional \$149 for graffiti supplies. The last grant project was for sidewalk replacement with tiles that have been painted by the neighbors. Rus is waiting on the City to get approval to move forward with actually replacing a portion of a sidewalk with the tiles.

Rus asked if some of the unspent money could be used to move the Kakos because it has been tagged again. The current location for the Kakos is in a dark corner in Bigelow Park and is not very visible to many people. Angie has talked to Pastor Bruce at the Capital Vision Church and he is willing to have the Kakos relocated by the garden on Yew Street and Firs. If agreeable by the membership Rus will check with the City Parks and Recreation if it is okay to move it. Angie suggested that Rus write up a proposal and then she would check with the Jennifer at the City if that would be permissible.

Marj suggested with any leftover grant money to purchase 3 sandwich board signs to announce meetings and other events. Marj will write this proposal up and submit it to Angie to pass on to the City. City grants are open to all neighborhood associations and need to be submitted in February with completion by October, although we have been able to get extensions in the past for projects not completed on time.

The City has created subareas combining several neighborhoods together in an attempt to improve communications between residences and the City and try and include people who maybe have a local neighborhood association. There are 10 subareas with BHNA being in the A Team division along with the North East and Bigelow neighborhoods. Smaller neighborhood associations will still exist while at the same time provide an avenue for a larger voice back to the City.

The last order of business was the annual BHNA elections of officers. Simone first thanks Angie and Melissa for the services on the board. Angie is leaving as the VP position and over the past two years helped organize the Block Watch, assisted with the graffiti clean up and acted as our liaison to the City for our grant coordinator. Melissa is leaving as treasurer, but was elected to return as our Vice President for the next term. Thank you and welcome back Melissa. Gwendolyn Nehs agreed and was elected as treasurer. Simone Boe and Marj Shomshor will continue as President and Secretary respectively.

Our next General Meeting will be January 14th with the meeting location to be announced.

Thank you all for coming.

Respectfully
Marj Shomshor, Secretary