**West Maka Ska Neighborhood Council Annual Meeting (in person at the Bakken and by Zoom) Minutes**

**October 10, 2023**

**Presided by:** Tim Knight

**Board members in attendance:** Melanie Fehlberg, Bob Gordon, Leyden Victoria Iraheta Santos, Richard Logan, Tim Knight, David Stougaard, Dylan Ohm, Allan Campbell

**Absent:** Lynette Davis

**Coordinator:** Michelle Sass

**Guest speakers:** City Council Vice President Linea Palmisano, Jennifer Waisanen, Crime Prevention Specialist for Minneapolis Police Department, 5TH Precinct

Tim called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM

September minutes: motion to approve by Richard, second by Melanie, **approved**.

Treasurer’s report: Very little activity. $9.43 refund to unrestricted. $49,000 in EEF. Some goes to We Push for Peace. Green Space (doing any deposits to Tangle Town)? Hoping to see an invoice this year. We approved $3500 for design, but we have not seen a contract or designs. Melanie to follow up with Lynette.

Motion to approve treasurer’s report by Dave, second by Allan, **approved**.

Guest Speakers: Jennifer Waisanen, Crime Prevention Specialist for Minneapolis Police Department, 5th Precinct; and Inspector Christie Nelson, Fifth Precinct

Christie Nelson replacing Katie Blackwell.

Waisanen said that overall West Maka Ska is a low crime neighborhood with most crimes being property crimes and crimes of opportunity. She noted that while carjackings and thefts of catalytic converters are down, car thefts are up in the city. Kia’s and Hyundai’s are the principal targets due to the ability to start them without a key or fob and said the police would be meeting tomorrow with Kia and Hyundai officials.

Richard asked for examples of successes with neighborhood watches. Jennifer said that it is important to have a neighborhood presence on the streets.

Melanie asked what the alternatives are to prosecuting juveniles. Inspector Nelson said we need to know the motivation of the juvenile who commits a crime. The police work with county social service agencies to try to find alternatives to prosecution. She said that it is important to find activities for juveniles, but no one activity fits all. Some like sports, some like arts, etc. It was noted the closure of area YM and YWCAs were a loss for youth activities. Looking at LPR-license plate reader technology on district squad car.

Inspector Nelson said that good lighting is helpful in reducing crime, such as lights that are on streets and alleys dusk to dawn It was noted that neighborhood associations can pay for improved lighting.

**Coordinator’s Report**

Michelle asked about availability of volunteers for Habitat for Humanity on November 18th,

and December 2nd, 9th and 16th. She will check with Bakken volunteers before picking a date.

Michelle will send out a spreadsheet with ideas for swag. Besides canvas bags and tee shirts, it was suggested that we also consider sweatshirts and other winter items. It was decided that the only wording would be West Maka Ska Neighborhood.

A Ward 7 Candidate forum will be held at 7 PM on October 12th at the Lake of the Isles Lutheran Church.

Presentation of a plaque to Chris Lundeen as a Neighborhood Treasure was **approved**. It was decided that the plaque should say “Neighborhood Treasure Award” in large letters below the West Maka Ska logo. It was decided that a unique reason for the award is needed (should be different than on the award to Tabio).

It was agreed to have a planning session for 2024 after a one-hour council meeting at the Bakken on December 12th. Michelle was delegated to choose the food.

**Committee Updates:**

Communications: Bob suggested signs with a standard format to which information about events and public service announcements could be added for posting in stores and apartment buildings.

Bob also suggested an app to produce coupons for use in welcome baskets. Melanie said someone needs to take charge of these suggestions. Bob agreed to head a communications Committee. Richard and Dylan will be part of the committee.

Several events were proposed in conjunction with CIDNA:

Trivia night at Taberna in November

Earth Day 2024 to be held on April 20th: Melanie to lead

Neighborhood Clean Up days

Other events suggested include:

Indigenous Peoples Day Recognition

Theater Party, suggested by Bob because we should have events in the winter.

Melanie suggested a seasonal calendar of events for 2024 to be developed at our December planning meeting.

Safety: Richard proposed a number of safety issues to be addressed:

* Freight carrying hazardous materials near apartment buildings
* Need to make West 32nd Street a Snow Emergency Street
* Need for emergency vehicles to get from Abbott Ave. to Chowen Ave. without having to use West 32nd Street. Access is currently blocked by light rail construction despite pledge to keep emergency access open.
* Increased traffic on Excelsior Blvd due to higher densities in the neighborhood.

Greenspace:

Tangletown Gardens has said that the trees planted by the Park Board will not prevent them from developing a plan for bird and bee garden. To date no plan has been seen.

**Board Election**

Melanie Fehlberg, Bob Gordon, Leyden Victoria Iraheta Santos, Richard Logan, Allan Campbell, Tim Knight, Dylan Ohm and Lynette Davis were re-elected to a one-year term on the board. Dave Stougaard and John Bordwell did not seek re-election.

Tim Knight was re-elected chair, motion by Melanie, second by Allan, **approved**

Melanie Fehlberg was re-elected vice-chair, motion by Tim second by Allan, **approved**

Allan Campbell was elected treasurer, motion by Bob, second by Melanie, **approved**

Bob Gordon was elected secretary, motion by Richard, second by Melanie, **approved**

**Guest Appearance by Councilmember Linea Palmisano**

Delayed by previous engagements, Linea arrived at 7:25. Because of the late arrival she was unable to make a presentation, but she stated her appreciation of the board during the time she has served as our representative on city council. Because of redistricting, West Maka Ska will no longer be in Linea’s district in 2024. Linea reflected on the many events that impacted our neighborhood during her 10 years as our representative: Construction of the Green Line light rail, the tragic death of Caitlyn Barton at the Market Plaza and Lake Street intersection and the rise in crime following the pandemic and the police murder of George Floyd. We thanked Linea for her service and named her our honorary councilmember going forward.

Meeting adjourned at 7:41pm.