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

**February 14, 2022**

**Presided by:** Tim Knight, chair

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

**Absent:** Lynette Davis, David Stougaard, John Bordwell, Dylan Ohm

**Coordinator:** Michelle Sass

**Presenters:** Scott Graham, candidate for city council for Ward 7; Anissa, YWCA Race & Equity Team member

Tim called the meeting to order at 6:03 PM

**Presentation by Scott Graham**

Scott introduced himself as a candidate for city council and said he was a member of the Bryn Mawr neighborhood council, a realtor, a DFL activist and a “common sense Democrat.”

**Approval of December minutes:** Melanie moved approval. Richard seconded. **Minutes were approved.**

**Treasurer’s Report:** Richard moved approval. Melanie seconded. **Motion approved.**

**Presentation by Anissa from YWCA**

Anissa spoke to the board about workshop partnership opportunities. Her team is focused on “creating brave spaces” where all are empowered to participate. They conduct racial justice and DEI (Diversity, Equity, Inclusion) workshops and offers an “Intercultural Development Inventory” to enable people to identify how they have been socialized to relate to their communities. They also offer racial justice workshops and will review materials with an equity lens and recommend best practices for neighborhood engagement. Anissa will send Michelle the slides from the presentation.

Melanie said that the workshops are good opportunities for young professionals.

**Michelle’s Contract:** An e-vote was taken on February 1 and an increase in Michelle’s contract to $37/hour for 2023 was **unanimously approved**. Motion by Lynette, second by Allan.

**Coordinator’s Update**

Upcoming Meetings - Michelle proposed having two meetings in other spaces to be closer to residents. Will be talking to property managers. Perhaps a meeting at The Be in the June and at At Home in September. Allan said we need to do more to reach out to At Home and other apartments north of the tracks. Suggested a Happy Hour targeting this part of the neighborhood.

Merchandise Review – Canvas bags, whistles, etc. Need something to put into welcome kits for up to 250 new apartments at West Lake Quarter and the Lake & Excelsior apartments. Will be discussed further on Slack.

Habitat for Humanity Review – Plan two more events with Habitat: a weekday in spring and a Saturday in November. Michelle noted that although we provided only four volunteers for the last work day, a few residents indicated they might have participated if they had more advance notice. Where Leyden

works there’s a paid day to volunteer.

We Push for Peace/Spring Cleanup events – Plan is for neighborhood clean-up events on the second Saturday of each month, beginning in April. Event also planned with We Push for Peace and Whole Foods. Nature of event still to be decided. Could involve music and food trucks and an opportunity for Whole Foods customers to meet with We Push For Peace people. Still waiting to hear back from Jason at Whole Foods. Could target Earth Day (April 22nd) for the event and also have a spring clean-up. Need to get businesses involved. Adopt a drain, adopt a bus stop were additional ideas. Melanie will organize a committee.

Melanie said we want to keep meetings to an hour though we could continue discussions if needed. Committees need to be more active.

**Committee Updates**

Greenspace – Allan raised the question of the best use of the $512,990 in Park Dedication fees attributable to new development in our neighborhood. While we can’t decide how these funds should be used we can make a recommendation to the Park Board. The rules are that the money must be used within 0.5 miles of the new development, that it can be used for a new park or upgrades to existing parks, but not for ongoing operations or maintenance.

Allan suggested a new neighborhood park near the Lake and France bus stop as one possible use of the funds. County Commissioner Marion Greene says they want to put up affordable housing, but not imminent. Park Board would need to buy the land from the county.

Question: Can funds be used in our greenspace, which is a regional park? Leyden suggests exercise equipment. Need to contact park board to see how such funds have been used.

Melanie to set up a Slack Channel for an ad hoc committee to decide on how the Park Dedication fees should be spent. Allan, Richard and Melanie volunteered to be on the committee.

Safety – Richard raised the issue about parking and snow. There is a dangerously congested parking situation that narrows the streets and threatens access of emergency vehicles to W. 32d and Chowen Ave., especially in another snow storm with no place to park with one sided-parking on West 32nd Street and Chowen Avenue. The city is unwilling to help. There is a need to organize a meeting with the people and property owners involved. Dylan will talk to Stu Ackerberg.

**Miscellaneous Items**

Bob said that one of the reasons we have so many potholes, especially on West Bde Maka Ska Boulevard is garbage truck traffic with each apartment building or condo having its own trash service. There is need to coordinate garbage collection. Melanie is trying to get a meeting of property managers together.

Need to keep access as an agenda item.

No news on banners on Excelsior. Michelle will get back to us.

Meeting adjourned at 8:31. Next meeting March 14, to be held hybrid style.