



Meeting Minutes & Action Items

Board Members Present

- **Sue Aspinwall** – President
- **Skip Gallagher** – Vice President
- **Laura Boland** – Board Member / Treasurer
- **Vlad Ghelase** – Board Member / Secretary
- **Ethelyn Hamilton Frezel** – Board Member
- **Amy Hubbell** – Board Member
- **Kelly Juneau Rookard** – Board Member
- **Steve Mercer** – Board Member
- **Thomas Muse** – Board Member
- **Stephan Namisak** – Board Member
- **Jerald Pate** – Board Member
- **Marty Stroble** – Board Member
- **Ron Suarez** – Board Member
- **Lacey Wotring** – Board Member
- **Cindy O'Donnell** – Board Member

Guests Present

- Jim Goodwin – Former board member
- Mike Miller – Former board member
- Benjamin Barth – High school teacher, Inspire NOLA; storm drain cleanup advocate (guest speaker)
- Lisa Damore – Wednesdays on the Point organizer (guest speaker)
- Erin Holmes – Executive Director, VCPORA; STR reform advocate (guest speaker)

1. Guest Presentation: Wednesdays on the Point – Lisa Damore

Lisa Damore presented the fall 2026 Wednesdays on the Point concert series: four Wednesday evenings in October at various neighborhood venues including Triangle Park, 330 Morgan (balcony), and Little House. Performers include the Crescent City Big Band (17-piece orchestra), the Covington Tones, and Lewis Mishaw of the Lost Bayou Ramblers — all performing for free. Lisa requested APA sponsorship at the same level as prior seasons (\$100 per event).

- All musicians donate their time. A tip jar is passed at each event. Vendors (t-shirts, food, Russell Blanchard's Dome Your Home Saints brand) are present but do not contribute to the musicians.
- APA offered to promote the series through its social media channels and videos.
- Jerald Pate suggested coordinating with the Algiers Point Men's Club (Ron Suarez's contact) for a joint event. Benjamin Barth expressed interest.
- Discussion of a possible APA raffle drawing at the final night of the fall series.

MOTION PASSED: \$500 sponsorship for the fall Wednesdays on the Point concert series (\$200 for the first event, \$100 for each of the remaining three).

2. Guest Presentation: Storm Drain Cleanup Initiative – Benjamin Barth

Benjamin Barth (teacher, Inspire NOLA robotics team coach) presented a volunteer storm drain cleanup initiative for Algiers Point. He has organized similar events with other neighborhood associations and proposed partnering with the APA to maximize community engagement.

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- Format: weekend event, either 9:30 AM or 4:30–5:00 PM on September 19. Volunteers clear debris from outside and around storm drains without lifting covers or reaching inside.
- Capacity: approximately 10 volunteers could clear ~50 drains in one hour. Benjamin can recruit at least 10 participants from outside the neighborhood.
- Student volunteers: public high school students need 80 community service hours to graduate. Sue Aspinwall offered to sign off on service hours for student participants.
- Priority area: Opelousas Street, per 311 data showing the most unaddressed reported blockages.
- Coordination with the Keep Algiers Beautiful cleanup (September 19, Saturday, 9:00 AM at the courthouse) was discussed — the two events would cover different areas (levee vs. streets) and could cross-promote.
- Coordination was proposed to be also done with the Algiers Point Mens Club

OUTCOME: Sue Aspinwall to appoint a working group led by Ron Suarez (men's club connection) to coordinate with Benjamin Barth, select a date, and promote the event.

3. Guest Presentation: Short-Term Rental Reform – Erin Holmes (VCPORA)

Erin Holmes, Executive Director of VCPORA (Vieux Carré Property Owners, Residents & Associates), presented on the ongoing commercial short-term rental (CSTR) regulatory process in New Orleans.

Background

- Algiers Point currently has approximately 34 STR licenses. An interim zoning district (moratorium) has been in place for nearly four years while the city develops permanent regulations.
- The city hired Desire Line Consulting to study the issue citywide for one year; their report was submitted to City Council in January 2026. The City Planning Commission has until end of December 2026 to present recommendations, possibly as early as October 27th.
- Under proposed regulations, commercial STRs (up to 5 bedrooms / 10 guests) would be allowed by right once the moratorium lifts — no conditional use required.

STRONG Coalition

- Erin Holmes represents a coalition called STRONG (Short-Term Rental Organizing Neighborhood Groups), which supports a complete ban on commercial STRs. The coalition's four-point platform does not affect residential STRs (currently limited to one per block face).
- Vlad Ghelase raised concerns about: (a) whether the regulatory process respects the master plan amendment process; (b) whether anti-STR coalitions are truly grassroots or hotel-industry funded; and (c) the disproportionate impact on individual owners of commercially-zoned corner properties in Algiers Point, where there are no large corporate property owners.
- Jerald Pate raised the case of a neighbor (Darren Martin) who lives above a commercially-zoned property and wishes to operate a small STR — currently ineligible for a residential STR permit due to commercial zoning. Erin Holmes noted a bed and breakfast (on-site operator) remains an available option.
- Mike Miller (former board member, attending as guest) spoke in support of opposing commercial STRs, describing operators as real estate speculators with no stake in the community's long-term character.
- Amy Hubbell noted that for owners of mixed-use / commercially-zoned buildings, STR potential is part of their property value and the issue is divisive.

OUTCOME: No policy position taken tonight. Sue Aspinwall invited Erin Holmes to return for a follow-up presentation. Ron Suarez's Civic Engagement Committee to form an STR subcommittee, gather community input, and bring a recommendation back to the board. Vlad Ghelase expressed interest in participating in those discussions.

4. Night Out Against Crime

Marty Stroble raised the annual Night Out Against Crime event, noting inconsistent success in recent years and the departure of the two primary organizers (Jim Goodwin and Barbara Lawler). The citywide event date is October 6 (first Tuesday of October).



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- Jim Goodwin (former board member, attending as guest) explained the event structure: police teams visit all registered sites citywide. A Jefferson Parish PR firm handles coordination. A dedicated neighborhood-only date is possible but must be confirmed with the 4th District.
- Format: barricaded outdoor event, 5–7 PM (setup from 2–3 PM). Family-oriented — food, balloons, possible fire engine or mounted police. Social media / video promotion essential.
- The overlap with the Home Tour (also in October) was noted, but the two events serve different audiences.

OUTCOME: Thomas Muse volunteered to lead. He will contact the NOPD 4th District (Commander Kevin Burns) to confirm date options — either October 6 (citywide) or a dedicated neighborhood date later in the month. Marty Stroble will assist with setup.

5. Minutes, Treasurer's Report and Administrative

a. Approval of Minutes

- July 16, 2026 minutes were presented and approved by unanimous vote.
- Vlad Ghelase proposed that future minutes be circulated and voted on via Slack poll to avoid consuming meeting time. Board agreed.

b. Treasurer's Report

- Laura Boland and Diana Masters have now met; banking access and records are in order. June and July treasurer's reports were distributed.
- Checks authorized and to be issued: Mount Olivet Church – \$1,100 (annual contribution at \$100/month, 11 months); Ronnie Ruiz – \$500 recognition grant (Motion made by Vlad Ghelase, passed unanimously)
As a result, the check was issued at this meeting along with letter from Vlad Ghelase.
- Items under review: Post-boosting reimbursement (owed to Sue Aspinwall); sundial replacement (\$50, on backorder, to be removed from budget for now); Clean Sweep \$100 (vehicle rental reimbursement to Mike Miller — receipt exists but never claimed; to be verified).
- Home Tour allocation: \$2,500 authorized but not yet disbursed. Wednesdays on the Point \$500: to appear on September report.

c. IRS 990 Filing / Nonprofit Status

- Sue Aspinwall raised the urgent matter of the APA's IRS Form 990 filing status. The organization risks losing its 501(c)(3) designation if three consecutive years lapse without filing. The APA may be approaching that threshold.
- Laura Boland confirmed she can access the Louisiana Secretary of State filing. The state filing lists Stephan Namisak as Executive Vice President — to be updated.

ACTION REQUIRED: Identify who has IRS login credentials and verify whether Form 990 has been filed for 2024. Escalate immediately if not — loss of 501(c)(3) status is at risk.

d. Election of Secretary

- Sue Aspinwall nominated Vlad Ghelase as APA Secretary.

MOTION PASSED: Vlad Ghelase elected Secretary. (Note: Vlad voted against himself.)

e. Zoom Trial

- Sue Aspinwall proposed a one-month trial of Zoom for remote board access, at ~\$7/month (nonprofit rate). Benefits noted: remote attendance for traveling board members, transcription comparison with NotebookLM.
- Ethelyn Hamilton Frezel noted prior unresolved board discussions about whether to permit Zoom. Discussion moved to a dedicated Slack channel ('#apa-projects-technology) for deliberation and poll vote.

MOTION PASSED (8–1): Authorize up to \$15 for a one-month Zoom trial, contingent on Slack vote resolving the underlying policy question. Vlad Ghelase to set up account under secretary@algierspoint.org once approved.

6. Committee Reassignments and Ferry Terminal Update



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a. Committee Chair Reassignments

With Jim Goodwin and Mike Miller having resigned from the board after the July meeting, two committee chairmanships were vacated:

- Neighborhood Improvement (previously Mike Miller): Stephan Namisak assumed the chair.
- Transportation and Public Safety (previously Jim Goodwin): Stephan Namisak nominated and approved.
- Stephan Namisak proposed a bylaw amendment (Article 7, Section M) to require each standing committee be chaired by a different board member, preventing one person from holding multiple chairs. The board agreed to adopt this as a standing practice without a formal bylaw change, acknowledging temporary exceptions may be needed.

b. Ferry Terminal Update (Stephan Namisak)

- Terminal construction: expected completion by end of January 2027 (subject to change).
- New barge: expected installation by end of April 2027, requiring a service closure of up to four days with approximately one month's notice to the community.
- Stephan Namisak submitted a neighborhood event calendar to the RTA to avoid scheduling conflicts (e.g., Southern Decadence, Mardi Gras parade weeks).
- Interior food and beverage buildout: to be managed by AEDF (Algiers Economic Development Foundation); decision expected by end of August.
- ADA funding: A separate \$500,000 public right-of-way allocation for ADA improvements was rescinded by the city on July 19th. However, the RTA confirmed all mandated ADA requirements will be met under the existing \$11 million federal grant, which cannot be rescinded by the city.

7. New Business: Welcome Baskets, New VP, and Governance

a. Welcome Baskets – Request for Funds

Ron Suarez requested \$300 to continue the welcome basket program. Basket contents include donated items from neighborhood businesses (coffee coupons, pizza gift certificates, etc.) with APA covering material costs. Program has driven new memberships and business engagement.

MOTION PASSED: \$300 authorized for the welcome basket program.

b. Election of Second Vice President

- Skip Gallagher noted the second VP position remained vacant.
- Sue Aspinwall nominated Jerald Pate as Second Vice President. Jerald accepted, noting this was news to him that day, and emphasized his focus on neighborhood communication and engagement.

MOTION PASSED: Jerald Pate elected Second Vice President.

c. General Membership Meeting / Annual Meeting Governance

- Vlad Ghelase raised the distinction between the Christmas party (social event) and the annual membership meeting required by the bylaws, which he noted should include board elections. These are currently conflated.
- Suggestion: separate the annual meeting (October or November) from the Christmas party (open community social event). Venue options (e.g., school auditorium) to be explored.
- Vlad Ghelase noted the APA has not had contested elections in over a decade. Skip Gallagher observed the organization has not actively recruited members from the broader neighborhood.

OUTCOME: Deferred to a bylaw revision committee. Sue Aspinwall to convene a working group.

8. APA Home Tour – October 2026 Update

- Eight homes confirmed and photographed as of this week.
- Stephanie Bruno coordinating homeowner interviews for tour descriptions.
- Ticket sales: in the teens. Dates: October 3–4, 2026. Pricing: \$35 advance / \$40 day-of.

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- Social media results (past 3.5 weeks): Facebook – 36,323 views (+10,000%), 2,813 engagements (+25,000%), 66 new followers (+1,200%); Instagram – 5,600 views (kids video), 2,800 views (bar video). Estimated total reach: 60,000+ views across all platforms. Three additional videos pending.
- Seven new memberships gained unsolicited in a 30-hour period — attributed directly to video content (confirmed by Skip Gallagher as unprecedented).
- Placements: Gambit calendar, NOLA.com / Times-Picayune, New Orleans 100 (write-up by Betsy). No paid boosting yet; boosting planned for this week.
- Barge Board (originally engaged as co-organizer) has been unresponsive. Lacey Wotring and Jerald Pate have been carrying the workload.
- Sponsorships: approximately \$2,000 committed (including \$1,000 from one sponsor secured by Skip Gallagher, including Crescent Towing). Budget: \$2,500 authorized; no bills yet.
- Amy Hubbell offered to assist with editorial media outreach. Jerald Pate accepted.

ACTION: All Home Tour bills to be coordinated between Lacey Wotring and Laura Boland.

9. McDonough Triangle Park – Memorial Restoration Recognition

A board member reported that Del McDonald (of a local funeral home) used his own staff to restore, seal, and repair the war memorial at McDonough Triangle Park, at no cost to the APA or the city.

- Board discussed appropriate recognition. Options considered: letter of appreciation, website spotlight, signage (ruled out — city charter prohibits commercial acknowledgment on public property), video feature.
- Vlad Ghelase recommended reaching out to Del McDonald directly before any public recognition to understand the scope of the work and determine the best form of acknowledgment.
- Neighborhood Spotlight sequence: Confetti Kids (next, to support the fundraising drive), then Carmine Rau at Hubbell Library.

OUTCOME: Ron Suarez to contact Del McDonald. Board agreed to a letter of appreciation and to explore a website/video feature once more is known.

Note: Skip Gallagher mentioned a young woman (Laura Ruiz) has also been mowing McDonough Triangle Park; she gave her \$20 personally.

10. Neighborhood Improvement: 311, Sidewalks, and Mini-Grant Program

a. 311 and Sidewalk Repairs

Stephan Namisak (new Neighborhood Improvement chair) reported incremental progress on city-funded sidewalk repairs, including a recent resurfacing near Vallette Street. He recommended periodic reminders to residents to use the 311 system and to file requests directly with the Sewerage and Water Board for water-main-adjacent issues.

b. Mini-Grant Program

- Kelly Juneau Rookard acknowledged she is behind on launching the mini-grant program and committed to moving it forward.
- Program structure: small subcommittee of 2–3 board members reviews requests of \$400–\$500 from neighborhood individuals or groups for community-benefit projects (not limited to businesses). Follow-up on outcomes required.
- Grant committee chair is currently vacant. A board member with grant-writing experience would be a valuable addition. Jerald Pate offered communications / social media support to promote the program once it launches.

ACTION: Kelly to finalize and launch the mini-grant program. Sue Aspinwall to identify a grant committee chair. Ethelyn will take the reigns and report back with her plan (program to launch in spring)

11. Charitable Gambling License / Raffle Fundraising Proposal

Jerald Pate proposed that the APA pursue a charitable gambling license to run periodic 50/50 raffles and item-donation raffles as a fundraising vehicle, potentially timed to Wednesdays on the Point events. He noted he has



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already completed the required certification course. Kelly Juneau Rookard was thanked for prior research on the topic.

- Estimated revenue: \$2,000–\$4,000 per raffle cycle. License application fee: ~\$100. A separate bank account and quarterly reporting would be required by law.
- Potential prize: donated vacation week at Jerald Pate's Panama condo plus donated travel miles.
- Vlad Ghelase raised concerns: current reserves of ~\$30,000 are adequate; the APA's core mission is advocacy, not fundraising; some members may have principled objections to gambling associations. He suggested applying for external grants as a more mission-aligned revenue approach.
- Thomas Muse and Lacey Wotring expressed support. Amy Hubbell noted the nonprofit sector routinely uses donated-item auctions for fundraising.
- Board consensus: the board needs full buy-in before proceeding. Piecemeal approval not appropriate.

OUTCOME: No motion taken. Item deferred to September meeting for full discussion and vote. Jerald Pate may continue background research. Spring Wednesdays on the Point (10-week series) identified as a possible better launch window.

12. Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 9:18 PM. Noted as the longest meeting in recent memory. Sue Aspinwall recommended against scheduling three guest speakers in a single meeting in the future.

Action Items

Responsible	Action Item
Sue Aspinwall / Ron Suarez	Form a working group (led by Ron Suarez) to coordinate with Benjamin Barth on a storm drain cleanup event. Select a date, promote via APA channels, and arrange food/refreshments for volunteers.
Sue Aspinwall	Invite Erin Holmes back for a follow-up STR presentation once the board has compiled questions and the STR subcommittee is formed.
Ron Suarez	Form an STR subcommittee, gather community and property-owner input on commercial STRs, and bring a board position recommendation to the September meeting.
Thomas Muse	Contact NOPD 4th District Commander Kevin Burns to confirm Night Out Against Crime date (October 6 citywide event or a dedicated neighborhood date). Report back to the board.
Thomas Muse / Marty Stroble	Organize Night Out Against Crime logistics: barricades (setup 2–3 PM), food, family activities, and social media/video promotion.
Laura Boland / Sue Aspinwall	URGENT: Identify IRS login credentials and verify whether APA Form 990 has been filed for 2024. If not, take immediate steps to file and protect 501(c)(3) status.
Laura Boland	Update Louisiana Secretary of State filing to reflect current board officer roles (Sue Aspinwall – President; Skip Gallagher / Jerald Pate – Vice Presidents; Vlad Ghelase – Secretary, Laura Boland - Treasurer).
Laura Boland	Update APA website to correct the secretary listing (currently shows 'Claude AI'). Confirm with Vlad Ghelase.
Laura Boland	Verify Clean Sweep \$100 reimbursement with Mike Miller (vehicle rental for tire removal). Confirm receipt and issue check or remove from budget.



Algiers Point Association

Monthly Membership Meeting | August 20, 2026 | 7:00 PM CT

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Laura Boland	Issue check to Mount Olivet Church: \$1,100 (11 months × \$100). Issue \$500 check to Ronnie Ruiz with APA letter (check dated August 20, 2026 — already prepared).
Vlad Ghelase	Set up Slack channel 'Re: Zoom' for full discussion and poll vote on whether to permit Zoom for board meetings. (already set up, #apa-projects-technology) Once approved, set up APA Zoom account . Continue exploring better AIA transcription tools and working on minutes input in the #apa-meeting-minutes Slack channel
Stephan Namisak	Continue monitoring RTA ferry terminal construction timeline. Maintain communication with RTA on event calendar conflicts and ADA compliance under the \$11M grant.
Lacey Wotring / Jerald Pate	Continue Home Tour preparations: boost selected videos, finalize signage, coordinate all bills with Laura Boland. Amy Hubbell to assist with editorial media outreach.
Lacey Wotring	Finalize and launch the mini-grant program before the September meeting. Coordinate with Jerald Pate for social media promotion.
Sue Aspinwall	Identify a chair for the grant committee (ideally with grant-writing experience) and convene a bylaw revision working group to address the annual meeting / Christmas party distinction.
Ron Suarez	Contact Del McDonald (funeral home) to learn about the McDonough Triangle Park memorial restoration and determine the appropriate form of APA recognition (letter, website feature, and/or video).
Jerald Pate	Coordinate with Lisa Damore to align Algiers Point Men's Club event dates with the Wednesdays on the Point fall concert series. Continue background research on charitable gambling license for September discussion.

Minutes prepared from AI-assisted transcription | Algiers Point Association | August 20, 2026