

October 2024 Audubon Neighborhood Community Meeting - October 7, 2024

Meeting called to order by Christian Hokans, Board President. 6:37pm

Board Members Present: Christian Hokans, President; Mary Stadler, Secretary; Deborah Brister, Executive Director; Onan Justonan, Vice President; Blake Hampton, Treasurer; Angelica Carvajal, Board member (late).

Community: 19 community members present

Introduction/ Overview: Christian Hokans, President

Councilman Payne: Councilman Payne gave overview of City of Mpls Council business describing the process entailed in getting budget recommendations for the City of Mpls; gathering recommendations from department heads and information about what initiatives they want to invest in. The Mayor puts his perspective and brings a recommended budget and recommended levy. There has been new park projects and he is seeing some of the new park infrastructure in Audubon. Councilman Payne noted a new contract with park laborers through an amendment to recommended levy and to fund Freedom Readers Youth program. It brought the maximum levy up to 8.3%. The current season is reviewing all presentations for the budget and aligning with values and priorities from now until December when the budget for the new year will be finalized.

Recent actions taken by City Council: A number of housing actions the last council cycle. They passed some funding to save a shelter run by Agate from closing downtown due to disrepair; money was passed and matched by an anonymous donor to move forward with renovations. There are many service providers running into issues due to the covid stimulus funding ending and many service providers will be facing struggles; the City is working diligently to figure out how to work with partners in the state to support the homeless population. The City is seeking to avoid large encampments that increase distress and safety issues in neighborhoods; hoping to preserve the places we have for people to stay and fund resources to meet needs and the council is prioritizing these concerns. An opioid settlement for investments to substance use treatment that the City is building up capacity for treatment and support. Renter protection passed increasing the state 14-day notice to a 30-day notice for residents in the City of Minneapolis; rental support through the county takes time and the additional protection will help residents get the aid in time.

They also passed an Encampment eviction reporting ordinance that ensures that there are enough shelter beds available the day of eviction and tracking cost of evicting to avoid simply shifting homeless population vs establishing more housing.

The Council is wanting to explore a fee for police working off-duty; currently able to utilize the patrol car and have full insurance of the city. The taxpayers should not have to pay for officers to work off-duty. Board President asked if the Council is considering amendments to current policy that requires community organizations who want to provide alcohol at events to have pay to

have an off-duty officer with Councilman Payne stating that they have recently reviewed and made some adjustments but is unsure of exact changes.

Audubon Park Recreation Center: Dakotah Lomasi introduced himself as Center Director at Audubon for @ 1.5 years. Audubon Rec Center has a lot of different programs. Most programs are school-age and tween programs with a lot of waitlists for the program due to demand of families with young children. There is a decline in teen programs due to competing with other neighborhood parks and athletics due to Audubon being the only park in NE without a gym. We have done adult athletics, senior program and senior luncheons with most of the programs now going to other parks (Logan and Botteneau), free programs like field trips to Lynx games.

Current Programs:

Teen gymnastics, dance program, increase in sports teams (baseball, pickleball, soccer, basketball- Every park offers all youth sports, except football, and will conglomerate to form a team.

All-ages family event for Halloween, the Audubon Howl - 10/25: food truck, crafts, smores, carnival games, bounce house prizes

Biggest event of the year is in the spring, the Bunny Brunch Easter event: petting zoo, egg hunt....had 125 toddlers in attendance.

Take all donations: craft supplies, little free library outside

Indoor playground: preschool, \$20/session, adults have coffee

Gamer group: tween program, donation for TV, Switch, Soundbar - 2nd session is this Wednesday.

QR code - take survey to suggest recommendations, complaints, and suggestions

State of the Neighborhood: Christian Hokans, President, gave an overview of neighborhood accomplishments over 2024.

We have expanded what the ANA is doing, in some ways have remained stagnant or retracted for want of resources. It is difficult to get volunteers and people on the Board (plug to get involved). Funding is always a challenge.

- Market Garden: ANA is the City's tenant on the formerly vacant lot across from the Hollywood Theater leased at a low price - less than 2 years old. There were 6 farmers on 4 micro-farms this year. We are working with the U of M on some microplastic soil research. We had a number of 14-15 year old summer interns paid by the city to help out in the Garden and Farmer's Market. We built two Tuff Sheds with plans to turn one into a cold-storage shed. Our grant funding was enough to cover a greenhouse that is on the way. We were able to donate over 2 tons of food to the local food shelves (Senior Food Shelf, community meals at Gustavus Adolphus Church, food shelf in South Mpls); the food is not going to waste. In addition, some are going to Black Duck, super locally produced.
- Deb Brister, Executive Director, is working on a Farmer's Collaborative to help emerging farmers.
- Farmers Market is going through October. Farmers Market has water access through Nail Ninja. We continue Power of Produce Program at the Farmer's Market that gives a token to kids to 'buy' vegetables. We are always looking for sponsors to increase

program. We have had the largest number of BIPOC vendors this year, including someone who is 10 years old.

- Spring Festival: We held the annual festival indoors this year due to rain but it was a success. Next year we are hoping to expand the festival and to have a beer tent but would need to hire off-duty police officers that has been cost prohibitive in the past.
- ANA developed a neighborhood elder survey through a neighborhood grant program.
- We are working to create a coalition of NE neighborhoods to work together more and try to submit grant applications together.
- Pothole-palooza event: Local musician concert held at Hollywood Theatre to raise money for resurfacing/ repair the free parking lot on Johnson. Deb Brister, Executive Director, announced that enough funds were raised and it was repaired on this date.
- NE Podcast: Deb Brister is working on NE Podcast with 17 guests lined up for interviews
- Halloween Event in the Market Garden- passing out candy and may need volunteers for that.
- Working on another fundraiser with a dog photo competition
- ANA continues to distribute funds through our home and business grant and loan programs that can be accessed on our website. ANA oversees grant and loan program funded through the state for things like emergency repairs to your home: interest rate is very low, 2%.

Deb Brister reviewed activity to date:

2% loan program - \$270,784.96

Exterior and energy deferred program: \$77,429 -

emergency deferred program that has money available

purchase assistance deferred program - \$15,000

\$535,223.65 - total distributed by ANA

- We are looking forward and seeing ideas for winter events - last year sold Christmas trees, European Style Christmas Market in the Market Garden
- Spring Fest is our biggest event and we always need volunteers for that.
- Resident suggested resuming the Soapbox Derby on St Anthony Parkway: discussion - resident

Board Elections:

Christian Hokans, Board President, reviewed election process of writing names on cards to collect; introduced Board of Director applicants to attendees, with each applicant providing an overview of themselves and their interest and experience to offer if elected to ANA Board.

Applicants included 3 incumbents and 4 new Board applicants for two year terms.

Election results:

Abraham Turcotte - new member

Jo Turcotte - new member

Sonja Peterson - new member

Tegan Vail - new member

Onan Justonan - incumbent

Blake Hampton - incumbent
Mary Stadler - incumbent

Open Forum: Christian Hokans, Board President, invited questions with resident asking about how often meetings are held: Community meetings held typically every other month, bi-laws require 4 per year, Board Meetings typically monthly. There will be a Board retreat before the end of the year to introduce the bilaws and rules.

Sign-ups: Mary Stadler, Secretary, noted sign-ups to volunteer at various events on the table.

Christian Hokans, Board President, adjourned meeting (7:28 pm)