



Board of Directors Meeting Minutes
June 5, 2025

Call to Order

The regular meeting of the Westnedge Hill Neighborhood Association (WHNA) was called to order at 5:53 pm by Wilson Xu, Board President.

Present

Dana DeLuca, Zachary Ehmann (via zoom), Steve Glista, Valerie Leith, Lynn Lupini, Lanny Potts, Wilson Xu. **Absent** Qianna Decker, Jim Ratliff, Craig Vaughan

Public Comment

Ally Witchell of Remine St joined us as a guest. She proposed a walking or biking tour for neighbors to showcase their gardens to strengthen community connections and share gardening ideas and resources. The Board provided general support for the idea and agreed to promote the event via the newsletter and social media. Ally will serve as the point of contact and is willing to host and help organize the event. Lanny provided suggestions for neighbors who may have an interest in this event (master gardeners, Crane Park Garden Club), so Valerie will link Lanny to Ally to further strategize. Valerie and Wilson will assist with event promotion and creating a social media post to gauge interest. Concerns raised were that Ally does not technically live in the Westnedge Hill neighborhood, so in keeping with our mission focus, all future event proposals must come from neighborhood residents, and presenters should come prepared with a plan and willingness to lead the proposed project as the Board noted limited capacity for managing external initiatives.

Old Business

Email

Wilson asked that all board members migrate to the Westnedge Hill email as part of Google Workspace. After today's meeting, Wilson will resend an informational email to the board explaining how to migrate to this new system.

Bylaws

Wilson requested the board to review and approve the three added amendments to the Bylaws by June 13, including Virtual Voting, Public Comment, and Gift Acceptance. Dana will resend.

Survey

Wilson reported that over 170 survey responses were collected and an AI generated summary was distributed and reviewed. The survey will remain open until July 11, 2025. Wilson will follow up with Nolan at the city to ensure survey access and closure permission. Zach will lead the survey data cleaning and develop the analysis framework process going forward. He will present his survey summary findings at the August Board Meeting.

P.O. Box

Wilson will open an affordable P.O. Box in Kalamazoo or Portage as our current mailing address in Grand Rapids (Steve's office) is confusing to donors and mission partners. Steve will update the new address via Licensing and Regulatory Affairs (LARA) and we will use the new P.O. Box address on all WHNA communications going forward.

New Business

2026 Events

It was decided that the 2026 Clothing Swap and Bike Fix-it events would be held on Sunday May 3, 2026, which is the same weekend as the Westnedge Hill Garage Sale.

Budget and Fundraising

Valerie expressed the need to revisit and finalize the budget now that funds are available and proposed that we consider a plan to develop a donor outreach and partnership strategy. Wilson suggested we consider launching a fundraising campaign in early 2026 once we have more accomplishments under our belt. He suggested we begin by drafting donor pitch materials (a Pitch Deck) and crafting a vision for future fundraising. The WHNA budget will be included on the July Board Meeting agenda and made available for review prior to the July 3 Board meeting.

Board Photos

Dana and Valerie presented two options for photographers (Mark Bugnaski and Connor Macklin) to be considered for the board member's headshots for the website. They will provide the board with samples from each photographer for consideration prior to the next board meeting. The board would consider an outdoor setting for the photos, such as in Crane Park and are envisioning a more candid, informal, natural vibe than a standard, "suited up" headshot. A decision on a photographer will be made on July 3.

National Night Out (NNA)

Valerie is the lead on this initiative taking place on Tuesday, August 5, 2025, in Crane Park. She submitted the event request form to the city, including requests for public safety, city department representation (Mayor, Vice Mayor, commissioners), a fire truck etc. The theme is community connectivity and WHNA visibility. The event plan is to include vendor booths featuring neighborhood resident's businesses (this is a Bookstore/Bookbug, Factory Coffee, Rocket Fizz), activities for kids such as sidewalk chalk and cornhole, and possibly a food truck (Midtown Fresh). The preliminary survey findings will be shared during the event as well. The board was asked to share business contacts we could engage and to volunteer to do outreach to any of their contacts in the neighborhood. Valerie will draft a Pitch Deck for local mission partners and share that with the board before distribution. Valerie emphasized that significant planning will be required by the board to carry out NNA.

Newsletter

The board provided positive feedback on the two issues of the e-newsletter that Wilson has created and distributed thus far. Dana emphasized the importance of adding a call to action at the footer of the e-newsletter, encouraging people to donate to WHNA.

Annual Meeting

Wilson will follow-up with City Church and revisit this topic at the July board meeting.

Traffic Safety Concerns

Dana shared feedback from a neighborhood resident regarding her concern about high vehicle speed on Westnedge from Cork to Crosstown. Dana will contact Dennis Randolph, city traffic engineer, to submit an inquiry on behalf of the WHNA.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 7:19 pm by Wilson Xu. **The next meeting will be held on Thursday, July 3 at 5:45 at the YMCA on Maple Street.**

Minutes submitted by Dana DeLuca, Secretary