

FOR APPROVAL at the 2023 EHCA Annual Meeting

MINUTES of the Annual Meeting of Embry Hills Civic Association (EHCA)

Wednesday, November 16, 2022

Chamblee-Tucker Christian Fellowship Church

(See Attached Agenda)

Call to Order

Bill Blumberg, President of EHCA, called the meeting to order at 7pm and thanked our meeting host Chamblee-Tucker Christian Fellowship. Thirty-three members and guests were in attendance, including:

- EHCA Board members Bill Blumberg; Becky Perkins, Treasurer & Secretary; Vicki Hood, Jenna Teston, and Sherry Adams, Directors at Large; and Kelley McManaman, Immediate Past President.
- Katherine Cadena, the new chair of the Neighborhood Watch (EHNW) committee
- Brook Caballero, President of Embry Hills Club (EHC)
- DeKalb County District 1 Commissioner Robert Patrick, his Chief of Staff Tara Smith, and his Constituent Affairs Manager Sonya Isaac
- DKPD officials Al Fowler, Public Education Specialist, and Major Patrick S. Sheirling, Lieutenant Ransool D. Graham, and Sergeant Brian A. Fitts from North Central Precinct.

Overview of 2022 Activities

Bill provided a summary of EHCA's 2022 activities and some of its targeted 2023 activities:

- Confirmed EHCA Bylaws - 2021 Annual Meeting (posted on website)
- Confirmed EHCA 2022 Board of Director Roles
- Launched EHCA Website (>890 visitors, 153 past 30 days) <https://embryhillsca.com/>
- Successfully completed EH Street Sign Topper Project, fully funded by member donations.
- Initiated Phase I of Entrance Triangle Landscape Project; Phase II planned in 2023.
- Established collaboration with Embry Hills Club on social and fundraising events.
- Welcomed the Neighborhood Watch program into the EHCA organization.
- 2023 plans and ideas: Increase participation, recruit volunteers to head up committees, request EH roads/infrastructure repairs, continue to monitor area development and growth, continue outreach with Commissioner Patrick on local issues and arts projects, update EH Neighborhood Watch program, a "Yards of the Month" contest, and partner with EHC on "Embry Hills Live," to name a few.

Approval of 2021 Annual Meeting Minutes (see EHCA website)

The 2021 Annual Meeting Minutes were approved. A motion to approve minutes was seconded and carried by a show of hands/ballots.

2022 Treasurer's Report (see attached Agenda)

Becky Perkins presented the attached Year-to-Date 2022 financial report. The successful operation of EHCA relies upon voluntary membership dues (\$25 annually per household) and donations to capital projects such as the sign toppers and upcoming entrance triangle landscape. EHCA covers a footprint of 370 residential addresses and as of the meeting date had a current paid membership of 31 households. To cover annual fixed costs of approximately \$1,200, 48 paid members are needed.

Committee Updates

- **Roads and Drainage (see attached Agenda):** Becky Perkins presented a list of roads/drainage issues in EH that were repaired or requested in 2021/2022. This list included several private property repairs reported by individual homeowners. Becky encouraged members to continue to monitor the area and report needed street signs and paving repairs to County Roads and Drainage. <https://www.dekalbcountyga.gov/roads-drainage/roads-drainage>. Becky also recognized Richard Stinnett, an EH neighbor who voluntarily paints over graffiti along the Chamblee Tucker Road corridor.
- **Community Council (CC):** Jenna Teston presented the CC report. She and Kelley McManaman serve as members of the county's Community Council, an organization of appointed community residents who review applications for rezonings, land use plan amendments, special land use permits and text amendments, etc., and give their approval or non-approval to the county planning commission. Jenna explained how the CC's recommendations impact future developments. Jenna discussed a current CC agenda item in the Embry Hills area, where the council is (as of Nov 2022) evaluating a rezoning request: a developer is seeking rezoning from office/OI to high density residential in order to build a 750-unit apartment property on a 7-acre office site along the I-85 North access road, which would result in 100+ units/acre density, unprecedented in DeKalb County. Jenna mentioned upcoming CC meetings where the public can speak to this project and other topics. For more information visit the DeKalb County Planning and Sustainability website at: <https://www.dekalbcountyga.gov/planning-and-sustainability/planning>
- **Neighborhood Watch (EHNW):** Katherine Cadena, the new head of Embry Hills' long-standing neighborhood watch program, introduced the aforementioned DKPD representatives, who provide law enforcement to the EH community and offer guidelines for EHNW. Katherine stressed the importance of neighborhood watch, an organized effort where residents report suspicious activities first to law enforcement and then disseminate the information or an alert as needed throughout neighborhood. Katherine is coordinating a community focus group to research and best understand the wants and needs of Embry Hills residents so that the EHNW program can be updated. Katherine invited interested parties to sign up on her sheet in the church lobby.
- **Community Engagement:** Brook Caballero, President of EHC, announced upcoming neighborhood and Embry Hills Club events, including pickleball lessons, Embry Hills Luminary Lights, and the planned Embry Hills Live festival. For more information visit the Embry Hills Club website <https://embryhillsclub.com/> or the EHCA website.

EHCA Business

- **EHCA Bylaws update and confirmation (see Agenda):** The membership voted on two revisions to the Bylaws. The first would expand the allowed number of Directors at Large, and the second would eliminate a now obsolete statement about the VP being Board liaison to the separate Neighborhood Watch organization. Becky Perkins asked for a motion to adopt these changes, which was heard and seconded, and the motion passed overwhelmingly by a show of hands/ballots.
- **Chamblee Annexation:** Bill reported that a neighboring resident(s) group has initiated the process to have Embry Hills and some surrounding areas annexed into the city of Chamblee. (This same group is currently collecting signatures to extend the Brookhaven reach to Toco Hills.) Volunteers will reportedly be canvassing the area in the coming weeks and months to collect signatures on behalf of this effort. EHCA has requested more information regarding the annexation and how it would impact our community. The group behind the effort is preparing an FAQ – Frequently Asked Questions.

Bill stressed that EHCA is relaying information but not affiliated with the annexation effort. EHCA has no other specific information but will post information on its website as it becomes available. (*Post Meeting note: the FAQ document is now available on EHCA website.*)

- **Board Nominations and Confirmation:**

Nominations for new Board members were requested from the floor and there were none. Several members present indicated interest and the current Board will follow up with them in 2023. The terms of each of the current Board members expire 12/31/2023.

Bill noted that the Board's Vice President position was vacant and that Becky Perkins had filled both the Treasurer and Secretary positions in 2022. The EHCA Board will continue to encourage community involvement and recruitment of volunteers in 2023. Email or contact any Board member directly if interested in working with EHCA in any capacity.

Conversation with Commissioner Patrick & Team

Commissioner Patrick introduced his team and addressed some of the issues, new developments, and plans for the community, including the following:

- **Placemaking/Gateway/Murals:** Embry Hills is considered a DeKalb County "gateway" area and will benefit from influx of well-paying jobs at Doraville Assembly film studios. To support this growth and establish a clearer identity, Commissioner Patrick is working on "Placemaking" efforts that include public arts projects such as murals on area retaining walls, the extension of Peachtree Creek Greenway path, more street toppers, and potential for a Community Improvement District (CID). He is also working with a local brewery and Mercer University to possibly bring a brewery to the area.
- **The Homeless:** He is consulting with nearby municipalities on solutions and working with outreach programs. The problem is complicated and requires concerted efforts of outreach, DKPD, GDoT, etc.
- **Code Enforcement:** Code violations should be reported to county code enforcement. <https://www.dekalbcountyga.gov/beautification/code-enforcement-report-violation>
- **Police and Crime:** The Commissioner recently held a town hall on crime with Assistant Police Chief Padrick, and there is potential for an Embry Hills Mini-Precinct. DKPD continues to have staffing challenges. (*See Major Patrick S. Sheirling's address below*)
- **Undesirable Businesses:** The Commissioner has heard concerns about potential nuisance businesses moving into the area and these are addressed via zoning requirements on a case-by-case basis. *Issues in Embry Hills include a so-called massage spa, too many convenience stores, the location of the new QCM Quality Control Music studio next door to cemetery and across from library & church, and the county's 2021 approval to reduce its required 50-foot transitional buffer to allow construction of the QCM building addition.*
- **Constituent Services Portal:** Residents are invited to submit questions/issues to the Commissioner's Constituent Services Portal here: <https://commissionerrobertpatrick.com/business-services/>

Audience Q&A

- What is a CID? A group of businesses that forms a self-taxing district in order to make infrastructure improvements such as public art, landscape, custom streetlights, expanded sidewalks, etc.
- What is Placemaking: The implementation of efforts to establish an identity for the community.
- Vicki Hood thanked Commissioner Patrick for his support of the Peachtree Creek Greenway

Major Patrick S. Sheirling, DKPD <https://www.dekalbcountyga.gov/police-services/welcome>

Regarding policing, Major Sheirling addressed the benefits of community involvement and encouraged the EH community to continue to involve DKPD in neighborhood activities and gatherings. He reported on DKPD's Community Development Unit, discussed the crackdown on Speed Racers, and described crime control tools such as tag readers (tag #s can be opted out) and in particular, Flock Safety cameras, the pricing and implementation of which the EHCA Board will research. A show of hands indicated overwhelming support for these tools. <https://www.flocksafety.com/>

Adjourn 8:30 pm

Respectfully submitted,

Becky Perkins

2022 Secretary, EHCA

embryhillscivicasociation@gmail.com

<https://embryhillsca.com/>