

Minutes from RNA Meeting on November 9, 2016
Noel C. Taylor Municipal Building
Room 159 (EOC) at 5:30 p.m.

Committee Members in Attendance

Amy Morgan, Chair
Antwyne Calloway, Vice Chair
Barbara Evans, Secretary
Nicole Harris
Scott Horchler
C.J. Meidlinger
Cindy Pasternak
Dwight Steele, Jr.
Johnny Williams

Committee Members Absent

Brenda Allen
David Parr

Guests

John Garland, City Council Member
Daniel Callaghan, City Attorney
Tim Dayton, Director, REACH (joined late after meeting in progress)

Welcome to Members and Guests

Chair Morgan called the meeting to order at 5:31p.m. and welcomed those present and recognized guests.

Reading and Approval of Minutes

Motion was made by Ms. Harris to approve the October 12, 2016 meeting minutes. The motion was seconded by Mr. Williams. Hearing no further discussion, the minutes were unanimously approved

Guest Presentations

City Council member John Garland made a presentation reminding the RNA that he ran for City Council on a neighborhood platform. He noted that although the city had provided large capital outlays into the city's neighborhoods such rehabilitation of parks, libraries and schools that there were still aesthetic issues that needed to be addressed. He noted the city can do only what the General Assembly allows due to Virginia being a Dillon Rule state. But he noted he thinks there may be some things the city can do that is presently not being done. Mr. Garland noted he had been attending many neighborhood meetings before and after the election and knew the RNA had a great liaison with city neighborhoods but felt their relationship with City Council could be improved. He suggested the RNA have work session with Council to see what could be done together

to get things accomplished noting the city alone ca not solve all of the neighborhood problems. Mr. Garland discussed several neighborhood concerns and complaints regarding aesthetics such as blight, litter control, etc. and proposed the RNA create a core committee to look into forming a committee consisting of 2 City Council members, the Office of Neighborhood Services, possibly one (1) additional city employee, the City Attorney, 2 RNA representatives and Presidents from the neighborhood associations to identify what needed to be accomplished and how to do so. He gave examples such as loose trash, high grass, and overgrown alleys. He suggested an 'Adopt a Block' program could be created that the city could administer with the assistance of the RNA. He noted if people began taking responsibility for their neighborhoods using Old Southwest as an example that neighborhoods would begin to improve. Chair Morgan suggested reaching out to the Sheriff to have work crews more readily available to pick up trash. Mr. Garland responded that maybe neighborhood groups or individuals would be willing to adopt a primary route through their neighborhood such as Dale Avenue SE, 9th Street SE or Riverland Road SE that would then hopefully spread to interior blocks. He asked the RNA to get back with him and advise how they would like to proceed. Following a brief discussion, Ms. Harris, Ms. Pasternak and Mr. Steele volunteered to form a committee with Ms. Harris as Chair.

Mr. Tim Dayton noted he was not only the Director of REACH (Real Experiences Affecting Change) but had recently been appointed as pastor of First Christian Church located on Church Ave SW in downtown Roanoke. Mr. Dayton indicated his desire to work with the RNA to promote positive change in the community. He noted he would like to see a set of workshops offered to focus and enhance the talents of the community. Examples provided by Mr. Dayton included workshops on grants, leadership, and grassroots organizing noting the event could be a miniature 'Cityworks(X)po' but on a grassroots level. Mr. Dayton advised his organizations had a desire to offer this event in March 2017 as a free event and was looking for ideas of how his organizations could work together with the RNA. Following a brief discussion, the RNA advised they would take his idea under consideration.

Reports of Special Interest

A. Neighborhood Reports

Neighborhood reports were presented by all members present.

C.J. Meidlinger had no reports to present.

Mr. Horchler reported he was unable to attend the Southeast Action Forum meeting. Ms. Harris followed that the SEAF Board had recently spent the entire day on Saturday handing out flyers and raising funds for the owner of house that was recently destroyed by fire. She noted those present received good feedback regarding neighborhood needs.

Chair Morgan reported that Belmont Neighborhood Organization did not have a meeting. She noted that she had attended the Mountain View Neighborhood Association meeting where the conversation focused on recent shootings occurring in the neighborhood and neighborhood development grant project ideas for the upcoming year. She also noted she had recently attended a special West End/Mountain View community meeting the Sunday before where attendees

discussed their next steps for continuing to move the neighborhood forward following the city's completion of their project to target funds for the revitalization of the West End/ Mountain View neighborhoods. Chair Morgan noted three (3) primary initiatives were raised including a Neighbors Helping Neighbors program and completion of a small park on Patterson Ave. She also noted the neighborhood had plans to enter a float in the upcoming city Christmas parade and desired to create a small dog park in the West end park located at the corner of 10th St SW and Campbell Ave SW. Chair Morgan noted Chris Chittum, Director of Roanoke Planning Building and Development had made a presentation at the Riverland Walnut Hill Neighbors meeting regarding the proposed RM-1 zoning amendment change and that there were lots of questions afterwards. She also noted Ms. Isabel Thornton spoke at the Starview Heights Neighborhood Watch Meeting regarding the proposed RM-1 zoning amendment change. She also noted the group voiced concerns regarding quality of life issues more than code issues noting many of their neighbors did not understand what a good neighbor is or just did not care to be one.

Ms. Evans had no reports to present.

Mr. Williams noted Melrose Towers was planning an event to honor our veterans.

Mr. Calloway noted that he also served on the Board of NNEO and that they were planning to apply for a VHDA grant to rehabilitate McCray Court and Thornhill Place.

Ms. Harris noted she had attended the Airlee Court meeting where the discussion focused on a proposed plan to improve Williamson Road that may reduce the number of travel lanes on a segment from four (4) to two (2). She note the neighborhood was circulating petitions to opposed this reduction

Ms. Pasternak reported that Garden City not having meetings at this time as they were looking for new leadership. She also noted that although she had not attended the Old Southwest meeting that she understood a presentation re the proposed RM-1 zoning amendment was on the agenda. Ms. Pasternak stated the Riverdale Farm Neighborhood Organization meeting was scheduled for the next night and topics of discussion included Roanoke's Lead Safe program, the new soccer complex, and Explorer Park. She also noted Rev. Mike Palmer of Riverdale Baptist Church was undertaking a health initiative working with youth.

Mr. Steele had no report to present on the Grandin Village Business Association. However, he noted at the recent Gainsborough SW Community Organization meeting that the police reported crime is down in the neighborhood. He also noted a local contractor is working with the neighborhood to identify run down properties to be possibly acquired and rehabilitated. Mr. Steele also advised he would report on NNIC.

Reports of Special Interest

A. Report from FY2016/2017 RNA Budget Committee

Mr. Meidlinger noted the Budget Committee had not met and requested to be removed from the committee. He noted a new job may not allow him to be as active

on the RNA as in the past for at least the next several weeks. Mr. Clement advised he would provide a copy of last year's RNA budget expense to the RNA at their next meeting. Further discussion on the budget was tabled until the next meeting.

Unfinished Business

A. 2016 Neighborhood Partnership Awards Update

Mr. Clement noted volunteers were needed to help setup, coordinate, and breakdown for the upcoming Neighborhood Partnership Awards Dinner & celebration.

Following a brief discussion, an appropriate number of volunteers were secured.

B. 2017 RNA Officer Elections

Mr. Clement advised he had heard from several RNA members interested in serving as officers for the upcoming calendar year and had created a ballot in preparation for distribution to the RNA to vote. Chair Morgan asked Mr. Clement to read the names of those interested and the position they had an interest in serving in. Upon doing so, Mr. Calloway asked that his name be removed for consideration as the Vice-Chair. Chair Morgan then asked in there were other nominations or volunteers from the floor who would like to serve as an RNA office for the upcoming calendar year. Hearing none, Mr. Clement was asked to distribute the ballots with instructions to the RNA to mark their officer selection on the ballot. Mr. Clement collected the ballots and tallied the results for the 2017 RNA elected officers as follows:

- CJ Meidlinger, Chair
- Johnny Williams, Vice Chair
- Nicole Harris, Secretary

Chair Morgan thanked the new officers for volunteering to serve in 2017.

New Business

A. Proposed RM-1 District Zoning Amendment Discussion

As the evening was getting late, Ms. Evans motioned discussion on the proposed RM-1 District Zoning Amendment proposal be tabled until the next RNA meeting.

Mr. Meidlinger seconded the motion. Hearing no further discussion, the motion was unanimously approved.

B. RNA December 2017 Meeting

Chair Morgan suggested in lieu of a December meeting that the RNA consider getting together in a social setting to celebrate the arrival of the holidays. Following a brief discussion, a motion was made by Ms. Evans to meet at the Patrick Henry for dinner in lieu of holding a December public meeting. The motion was seconded by Mr. Meidlinger. Hearing no further discussion, the motion was passed unanimously.

Adjournment

Chair Morgan adjourned the meeting at 7:29 p.m.