

Minutes from RNA Meeting on October 11, 2017

Noel C. Taylor Municipal Building

Room 159 (EOC) at 5:30 PM

Committee Members in Attendance

Nicole L. Harris, Vice-Chair

Ellie Rigby, Secretary

Christina B. Hatch

Katelynn Lewis

David Parr, Jr.

Cindy Pasternak

Committee Members Absent

Johnny Williams, Chair

Antwyne Calloway

Barbara Evans

Byron L. Hamlar

Dwight O. Steele, Jr.

Guests

Andrew Gentiluomo, Coach with Valley AFC Soccer Club

Brendan Vigorito, Immanuel Mission

John Garland, Roanoke City Councilman

Welcome to Members and Guests

Vice-Chair Harris called the meeting to order at 5:33 and welcomed guests.

Reading and Approval of Minutes

The Meeting Minutes from the RNA's September 2017 meeting were approved unanimously once Mr. Parr arrived at 5:55 pm creating a quorum. Ms. Rigby made a motion to approve the September 2017 RNA Meeting Minutes as presented which was seconded by Mr. Parr. Hearing no further discussion, the motion was unanimously approved.

Guest Presentations

Mr. Andrew Gentiluomo, Coach with Valley AFC

Mr. Gentiluomo noted the Valley AFC Xpress has been around for approximately 30 years and their mantra is "Soccer for All". He advised the nonprofit offers youth, adult and Hispanic soccer programs. The organization has approximately 3500 participants in a broad geographic footprint (owing mostly to the traveling teams and their partnership with Roanoke County which will likely get tighter with the new complex). Their mission focuses are: partnering, childhood health and obesity, and building character. Mr. Gentiluomo advised the organization owns a little over 35 acres of land in Southeast Roanoke along the Roanoke River near the 13th Street Bridge with the intent to develop 14 rectangular fields to be used primarily for soccer with a secondary use for lacrosse and football. He stated plans calls for two (2) synthetic turf fields and twelve (12) natural grass fields noting each field will be lit, well-maintained, and well-managed fields owned by Valley AFC Xpress. He estimated the cost for their development to be \$7.5 million dollars. Mr. Gentiluomo stated although they would like to receive a check for the full amount to build them, right now, they are currently building the fields piecemeal. He stated youth sports is the fastest growing segment in travel according to a NYU report in 2014 noting there are three (3) million youth participants in youth sports and when they travel they bring their families. In addition, over 50% of soccer participants are from households with incomes over \$75,000 per year (35% above \$100,000). Mr. Gentiluomo

stated the complex as proposed would be the site for 2-3 soccer tournaments per year with an estimated economic impact to the Roanoke area of +\$20 million per year. He followed by saying hosting lacrosse tournaments as well would only add to that amount as there are currently only two (2) other facilities of this size in the Commonwealth of Virginia and both are located in Richmond. Mr. Gentiluomo advised the next closest venue is located in Raleigh, NC. He advised the organization is looking for financial help to make this venue happen.

Scott Myers and Brendan Vigorito, Immanuel Mission

Mr. Myers advised he and Mr. Vigorito teamed together to create a grocery pickup service for low-income areas of the city. He noted they recently met RNA Chair Williams at Melrose Towers who invited them to speak before the RNA. Mr. Myers advised they currently provide their services to the residents of Melrose Towers, Morningside Manor, and Elle Manor, and today began offering their services in Farrington. He stated they charge \$5 for grocery deliveries of amounts smaller than \$15 and \$10 for groceries totaling amounts above \$15. Mr. Myers noted they have observed many of their program's participants don't have access to fresh and healthy foods and they hope to provide better access to those food resources. He followed by saying they are looking to help identify the need in the larger community for a service like what they offer other than providing their services only to independent living facilities. Mr. Myers stated they are currently working on building a Facebook page and creating business cards. He noted they currently shop at Kroger and only charge their clients with a delivery fee with no markup made on the groceries purchased. He stated they would like to plan their deliveries ahead so that they can make them only once or twice a week for they currently visit these facilities for 40 minutes to an hour an hour gathering shopping lists. They then travel to the store, pay for the groceries, and then are reimbursed by the clients when they return with the groceries. Mr. Myer advised his phone number is 540-676-1408 and Mr. Vigorito's phone number is 540-266-0203. He noted they will give some business cards to Chair Williams to share with the RNA once they have been created and will send additional information to Mr. Clement to share with the RNA.

Reports of Special Interest

- **Neighborhood Reports**

Ms. Lewis

Neighbors in South Roanoke and Lakewood Neighborhood Watch

Ms. Lewis noted Neighbors in South Roanoke meets next week. Mr. Clement advised he had spoken with Ms. Kinsey regarding the Lakewood Neighborhood Watch who advised they do not meet regularly but they are active with social events.

Ms. Pasternak

Mountain View Neighborhood Association, Inc.

Ms. Pasternak noted she had missed the most recent meeting held but had attended the previous meeting at which it was reported that crime was down. She stated they talked about the Hope Clinic and Bradley Free Clinic regarding substance abuse. Ms. Pasternak advised the organization was partnering with Valley Metro to install new bus shelters at 13th and Patterson Avenue SW as well as 6th and Patterson Avenue SW utilizing Neighborhood Development grant funds. She also advised the Mountain View Neighborhood Association will be hosting a potluck in November at their next meeting which will be held at the Fishburn Mansion on 13th Street SW.

Old Southwest, Inc.

Ms. Pasternak advised it was reported that there was a stabbing in the Old Southwest neighborhood but it was believed to be self-inflicted. She also noted police reported crime was down 22% for the month and 10% for the year. Ms. Pasternak stated the neighborhood's Block Pride clean-up program, which was started in 1995, had been very successful as evidenced by before and current pictures.

Melrose-Rugby Neighborhood Forum, Inc.

Ms. Pasternak advised a car had run into and damaged the Melrose Rugby Community Center where the organization holds their monthly meetings. She noted the building sustained extensive damage and the organization is working on getting bids from various contractors. Ms. Pasternak also advised the organization is hosting a Task

Force survey this Saturday starting at 9am at the Melrose-Rugby Community Center. She also advised police reported 22 shootings occurring in one month in the neighborhood. Ms. Pasternak also advised organizational members were planning on attending the annual city neighborhoods' Harvesting of the Fruits Potluck Dinner & Awards Celebration on November 10th, 2017.

Riverdale Farm Neighborhood Organization (RFNO)

Ms. Pasternak advised the RFNO held a potluck at their last meeting. She also noted there will be a forum about the Opioid and Heroin epidemic tomorrow evening, Thursday, October 12th at the Riverdale Baptist Church at 1624 Edgerton Avenue SE.

Vice-Chair Harris

Wildwood Civic Association

Vice-Chair Harris advised the Wildwood Civic Association will not meet until February 2018.

Airlee Court Neighborhood Watch Association

Vice-Chair Harris advised the Airlee Court Neighborhood Watch Association had not met this past month.

SE Action Forum, Inc. (SEAF)

Vice-Chair Harris advised Mr. Chris Head spoke at the recent SE Action Forum meeting. She advised that the southeast neighborhood comprises both the 13th and the 11th districts. Vice-Chair Harris stated she reminded everyone to register for the upcoming city neighborhoods' Harvesting of the Fruits Potluck Dinner & Awards Celebration on November 10th, 2017. She also advised SEAF, in collaboration with the library, will be entering a float in the upcoming Dickens of a Christmas parade in downtown Roanoke. Vice-Chair Harris also advised SEAF had recently amended their By-Laws reducing the number of pages from sixteen (16) pages to six (6) pages and the proposed changes were approved by the SEAF membership.

Belmont Neighborhood Association

Vice-Chair Harris stated she had recently attended the Belmont Neighborhood Association's meeting during which they talked about nominating the Peacemakers for their mural on 11th Street NW for an Art Award at this year's city neighborhoods' Harvesting of the Fruits Potluck Dinner & Awards Celebration. She noted SEAF member Terry Huxhold advised he had recently spoken with Roanoke Planning staff Ian Shaw and Roanoke Economic Development Director Wayne Bowers regarding neighborhood planning in SE. Vice-Chair Harris also noted Donna Britt from Children's Trust discussed their program that helps survivors of childhood sexual abuse. She stated Ms. Britt advised one 1 in 10 children will be sexually abused by the time they are 18 years of age noting 60% of abusers know the child and 35% are family or otherwise in a trusting relationship with the youth. Vice-Chair Harris advised there will be a workshop held on this topic on Thursday, November 9th at South County library at 6:30-8:30pm noting those interested in attending should send their name and email or cell number by Tuesday, November 7 to Donna Hopkins Britt via donna.britt@roact.org or call (540)344-3579, ext. 13 as pre-registration is required for seating is limited to 30 people.

Riverland/Walnut Hill Neighbors

Vice-Chair Harris advised Riverland/Walnut Hill Neighbors did not meet in October noting their next meeting is scheduled for November.

Starview Heights Neighborhood Watch

Vice-Chair Harris advised she was unable to attend their September meeting.

Ms. Rigby

Fairland Civic Organization

Ms. Rigby advised the Fairland Civic Organization had not met since the last RNA meeting.

Wasena Neighborhood Forum

Ms. Rigby advised she had a scheduling conflict and was not able to attend the Wasena Neighborhood Forum's recent meeting but noted that several buildings on Main Street had been recently sold and will be rehabilitated in their neighborhood's commercial district.

Melrose-Orange Target Area Meeting (MOTA)

Ms. Rigby advised the Emerging Leaders in Architecture (ELA) presented their proposals for street improvements in the Melrose-Orange Target Area noting their area of specific focus was the 24th Street corridor. She advised suggestions included brightly colored and artistic crosswalks, micro-parks, and bus shelters. She also noted the ELA proposed a logo for the improvements with a star and the title of "Restart Roanoke".

Mr. Parr

Mr. Parr advised he had been unable his assigned neighborhood group meetings but did meet with Isabel Thornton from Restoration Alliance, Inc. He noted the nonprofit had recently purchased a house just outside the H-2 District and had also purchased the Villa Heights Center from the city to be used as a Boys and Girls Club once renovations are completed.

Ms. Hatch

As a new RNA member, Ms. Hatch advised she would begin attending the Greater Deyerle Neighborhood Association meetings and would also be willing to serve as a 'floater' for other RNA members who, for whatever the reason, may not be able to attend their respective neighborhood group meeting to ensure RNA had representation at the meeting.

Reports of Officers – Standing Committees

- **Report from Garland Neighborhood Blight Committee**

Vice-Chair Harris noted that on Saturday, October 14th there will be the big push for getting neighborhood surveys out into the Melrose Rugby neighborhood as their goal is to get 1000 respondents. She advised there will be an hour long training session on administering the survey before venturing out into the neighborhood that will be conducted by Melrose-Rugby Neighborhood Forum, Inc. President, Stephen Niamke. Vice-Chair Harris advised they are anticipating spending 10 to 15 minutes per household.

- **Report from the Welcome Roanoke Mailing Committee**

No report was provided.

- **Report Regarding Proposed Amendment to RM-1 Zoning**

Ms. Lewis noted she had recently sent a survey out to the city's neighborhood association presidents to solicit their opinions about the proposed RM-1 zoning amendment and had only received three (3) responses. She advised she would package the responses with prior survey responses received into a report and then she and Ms. Pasternak would review and submit it to the RNA for review and approval before sending it to City Council in advance of their November meeting. Councilman Garland indicated the amendment might not be on Council's November agenda since there had been so much opposition to it.

Unfinished Business

- **Report on Creation of New Survey regarding Disposal of Properties in Public Parks**

No report was provided.

- **Report on FY17-18 RNA Operating Budget**

Ms. Lewis proposed the following FY17-18 RNA Operating Budget for review and RNA approval:

\$300: Advertising and branding (t-shirts, Facebook ads, etc.)

\$150: Harvesting of the Fruits Potluck Dinner & Awards Celebration

\$250: Neighborhood Month Annual Conference for Roanoke Neighborhoods (venue, food, name badges, etc.)

\$75: Neighborhood Task Force (visual aids, branding, posters, etc.)

\$175: Fees to attend neighborhood sponsored events (Peacemaker Annual Supper, etc.)

\$50: Administrative supplies

\$1,000.00 Total

Ms. Lewis motioned the RNA accept the FY17-18 RNA Operating Budget has presented. Mr. Parr seconded the motion. Hearing no further discussion, the motion was unanimously approved. Mr. Garland suggested that the RNA submit justification for the budget they proposed during their State of the Neighborhoods Report presented to City Council several months ago clarifying what the RNA is asking for. Vice-Chair Harris volunteered to put something together and submit to Councilman Garland.

New Business

- **FY2018-2019 Neighborhood Development Grant Program**

Mr. Clement distributed a packed of information regarding the FY18-19 Neighborhood Development Grant Program noting the annual neighborhood grant workshop would be held on Thursday, November 9 at 6:00 pm in conjunction with the HUD Community Resources Public Meeting. No feedback was given. Mr. Clement advised the Public Meeting will begin with a presentation by Keith Holland about what HUD funds are anticipated to be available and the Neighborhood Development Grant Program workshop would immediately follow Mr. Holland's presentation. He advised his office administers the Neighborhood Development Grant Program on behalf of the RNA and stays on top of them to ensure neighborhood groups are meeting deadlines and making proper final reports.

- **Annual City Neighborhoods Potluck Dinner and Awards Celebration, Friday, November 10th - Clement**

Mr. Clement advised new City Manager Bob Cowell will be the event's guest speaker. He noted about 20 award nominations had been received to date with more expected in the next two weeks. He suggested the RNA needs to focus on getting people to attend the awards dinner and if an RNA member needs promotional material to let him know. Mr. Clement advised he created a 'Save-the-Date' card he will e-mail the RNA electronically. He advised he is going to promote the event on the Office of Neighborhood Services Facebook page and Nextdoor. Vice-Chair Harris suggested the RNA do a Facebook live video of the event. Mr. Clement asked Mr. Garland to please remind City Council members of their role at the potluck in presenting the award trophies. Vice-Chair Harris made a motion for the RNA to fund a Facebook post boost to advertise the City Neighborhoods' Potluck Dinner and Awards Celebration for \$25 and Ms. Lewis seconded the motion. Hearing no further discussion, the motion was unanimously approved. Mr. Clement advised the award nominators are notified when their nomination is received and he also mails a letter to the nominee advising them of their nomination and to ask them to register for the event.

Open Forum/Announcements

Mr. Clement advised his part-time Administrative Assistant, Doris England, had recently retired from the City noting he shares this part-time position with the Office of Public Arts & Culture. He noted they are currently training a new person to perform the Lead Safe Roanoke program grant funding drawdowns and that Ms. England was coming in on an on-call basis until the training is completed. Mr. Clement also requested that RNA members register for the Potluck & Awards Celebration event.

Mr. Parr suggested the RNA should have a committee to welcome and help train newly appointed RNA members. Following a brief discussion, he volunteered would he would put materials together for the RNA to establish a three (3) person welcoming committee for RNA. Mr. Parr moved that the RNA establish a Welcoming Committee. Ms. Lewis seconded the motion. Hearing no further discussion, the motion passed unanimously. Mr. Clement suggested the RNA add this committee to the RNA By-laws and/or Strategic Business Plan so that it became a part of the RNA history. Mr. Parr responded he will look at the RNA By-laws and Strategic Business Plan to determine where best to locate the committee and will include it in his proposal at the next RNA meeting.

Mr. Clement reminded the RNA that elections for 2018 RNA officers was right around the corner as voting for new RNA officers normally takes place during the December RNA meeting. He suggested RNA members advise him if they are interested in being considered for an officer position, and if so, he in turn will add their name to a ballot to be distributed at the December meeting for a vote by the RNA membership.

Closed Session

Per a communication received from Chair Williams requesting that RNA convene in a Closed Meeting to discuss vacancies appointed by RNA, pursuant to Section 2.2-3711(A)(1), Code of Virginia (1950), as amended, Vice-Chair Harris requested that the RNA convene in a Closed Meeting to discuss vacancies appointed by the RNA. The RNA unanimously agreed and hearing no further discussion, the meeting was recessed for the closed session. All guests excused themselves.

Meeting Reconvened

Following the closed session, Vice-Chair Harris reconvened the meeting.

Adjournment

Vice-Chair Harris adjourned the meeting at 7:33pm.