

Community Business Meeting Minutes

Germantown Commons 2017-01-23

John Waide

2017-01-23

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Germantown Commons Community Meeting in the Dining Room of the Common House at 6:45 on Monday, 2017-01-23.

1 Facilitation:

Erin R managed the agenda. Mandy H managed the stack. John W took notes.

2 In Attendance:

2.1 Present:

Drew K, Barbara S, Diana S, Bob T, Dot D, Suzanne G, Vicki M, Susan J, Rod K, Essie S, Chris C, Mark B, Mary H, Nancy C, Erin R, John W, Rita B, Mandy H, Jeanmarie K

19 people representing 16 households

3 Summary:

3.1 Decisions Made:

3.1.1 Common Meal Proposal: Part 2:

The following proposal, separated from part 1, was adopted:

Going forward, until community approval of an updated Common Meals Agreement, the CHC is asking that all cook teams limit their receipts to no more than \$6 per diner. The cost per diner will be calculated by dividing the total receipts submitted by the number of diners.

3.2 Actions Taken:

3.2.1 Website Update:

We brainstormed ideas for the update of the website.

4 Course of the Meeting:

4.1 Opening:

None

4.2 Minutes:**4.3 Setting the Agenda:**

The following agenda items were up for consideration because they had been submitted (using Basecamp) for the agenda of this meeting.

4.3.1 Common Meal Proposal:

1. Proposal:

VOTE (Nancy - Common House Committee) Meals proposal discussed at last meeting:

Background: To date, most community meals have “cost” diners around \$5 or \$6, with a maximum of \$6. For some of these \$6 meals, the cook team has spent more than \$6 per diner and has been credited according to the total receipts turned in. Over time, this has created a greater overall credit balance than debit balance, to the tune of \$250 as of the end of December. (1) The Common House Committee would like community approval for this one-time expense of covering the difference between community members’ positive and negative meals balances, to be paid from the Common House Committee’s 2016 budget. (2) Going forward, until community approval of an updated Common Meals Agreement, the CHC is asking that all cook teams limit their receipts to no more than \$6 per diner. The cost per diner will be calculated by dividing the total receipts submitted by the number of diners.

2. Brief Discussion & Test for Consensus:

It was noted that the debit balance was for 2016 which is over. There was some discussion that the unspent budgeted funds were moved into the “Reserves” account. But someone proposed that we not try to figure this out “on the fly.” It was also proposed that we not take action until Finance & Legal Committee has considered it.

Then it was proposed to separate the second part of the proposal and act on it tonight. After brief discussion, we did so.

3. Common Meal Proposal: Part 2:

Going forward, until community approval of an updated Common Meals Agreement, the CHC is asking that all cook teams limit their receipts to no more than \$6 per diner. The cost per diner will be calculated by dividing the total receipts submitted by the number of diners.

Everyone (16 households) held up a “green” card. This constitutes a consensus.

4.3.2 Website Update:

1. Proposal:

BRAINSTORM (Mary Hinton - MMM Committee) What information to include and update as a part of website?

MMM Committee is planning to to update current website. We would like to brainstorm with community about what information to include so we can incorporate this into a proposed plan.

2. Brainstorming:

We brainstormed. The following items were offered:

- What is cohousing?
- Point of Contact
- Units for Sale or Rent
- Values & Visions
- Recent Community Events with Pictures
- Self-Assessment for Someone interested in Cohousing
- Welcome Packet
- All info we want new members to have
- Policies, agreements
- Brief History of Germantown Cohousing
- Consensus Decision-making model
- Link to Cohousig USA
- Information about local community, neighborhood
- Info about the Common House and how it is used
- Photos & Videos
- Info on local restaurants & points of interest
- Local schools
- Child-friendly community info
- Info to accomplish what website is to accomplish

- Contact Us link and responder (with email shared by more than one person)
- Invite diversity of all kinds
- Phone number for Contact
- Our Logo, Name, & Branding
- Easy to travel the site
- Current members names?
- Appropriate level of web marketing SEO (search engine optimization)

It was suggested that people who have more to add can convey their ideas to the MMM Committee and that the MMM Committee meetings are open to participation by GC Community Members.

4.3.3 Common Space Use for “Outside Groups”:

1. Proposal:

BRAINSTORM/DISCUSS/DECIDE (Essie Sappenfield - HOA Board) Common Space uses for "outside groups"

A question has come up regarding an inquiry about hosting a wedding. There are many related questions: what kinds events are allowed in common spaces? Are "outside" groups allowed? If yes, do we charge? What does it mean to be an "outside" group,? Etc. Is this important to the community now? If yes, is there committee or group of people willing to take on this work?

2. What transpired:

There was some discussion of whether the topic should be referred to the Common House Committee.

Someone proposed that any use of our common spaces would require a sponsor in the community.

It was pointed out that the Common House Committee has many policies to develop.

Someone noted that the HOA board currently is making the decisions about this.

There was some discussion over the limits of our option to reserve the Common House for events, especially recurring events (outside organization meetings?).

It was proposed that we try to follow the policy from May 2016 until further notice. Meanwhile, the Common House Committee can take this up for more serious consideration (if needed) when they get to it. No formal test for consensus occurred.

Someone found on Basecamp the Guiding Principles developed by the HOA last May. The policy from May 2016 [Guiding Principles from May 2016](#) is as follows:

(a) 2016-05-26 Note on Common House Use:

The HOA Board and a few others interested (Chris, Rod, Liz) met tonight and discussed some general guidelines, or guiding principles, for how to deal with Common House use over the next few months until the newly formed Common House Committee is able to develop a formal policy and the community is able to consense around it.

For simplicity sake, we propose that the HOA Board acts as a clearing house for requests for specific use of the space until August 15. Until August 15, HOA Board is empowered to make decisions on behalf of the community about allowing specific use of the common house by residents or outside groups. The guiding principles:

- i. community meals is highest priority
- ii. community members should not be restricted from access to the common house during an event (except in rare circumstances)
- iii. use of the common house should directly support the interest of the community or individuals living in our community
- iv. if the outside group charges a fee (other than meal reimbursement) to participants, then the group should pay a fee to GCT

Basically, we want to say yes to GTC members/residents, and we also want to say yes to community groups when appropriate. We would prefer not to get into charging deposits, etc. in the interim. Thus, the “policy” is leave the space as you found it.

We recognize that this is not a perfect interim policy, because there is likely no such thing. We are also posting

this on basecamp rather than waiting until the next community meeting because we have pending requests, and the next few community meetings are devoted primarily to committee development and community structuring (so that we don't have to operate in interim terms indefinitely). So if you have a serious concern with this interim policy or would like to discuss it more as a community, please speak up and we can make some time on the agenda at the next community meeting, but keep in mind it is just in the interim and is only intended to facilitate ease of use and to have some structure over these next few months.

4.4 Announcements:

4.4.1 Finance and Legal Committee

Finance and Legal Committee will announce a series of meetings to inform the Community regarding the Asset Replacement and Repair Schedule and its implications for our Reserve Budget ongoing. There will be a handout to provide more details. See Basecamp for details.

5 Next Meeting:

The next scheduled Community Meeting is Monday, 13 February, at 6:45pm.

Check the Basecamp calendar for Community Meeting proposed agenda and date.