

Montavilla Neighborhood Association

Special Board Meeting Minutes

@ Namaste Indian Cuisine: 8303 NE Sandy Blvd, Portland, OR 97220. **DATE:** Wednesday, 3/19/2017.

Board Members Present: Benjamin Kerensa (Chair), Elaine Hakala, Jennifer Tamayo, Jonnie Shaver, Jane Lawson, Michael Sonleitner (taking minutes).

Absent With Regrets: Justine Scannell (NOTE: 7/11 Board positions are now filled, with 6/7 members present constituting a quorum; 4 present satisfied quorum.)

Others Attending: None, although nine additional spaces were arranged at a large dining table.

Open Discussion: Michael & Benjamin before 6:30, with others arriving thereafter to enjoy their buffet-style meals while engaging in very informal sharing and open discussion. Michael asked for and received feedback relating to a rough draft of a flyer to be used to advertise the MNA Spring Cleaning fundraiser on May 6th. Benjamin observed that same-day agenda items are not permitted at Special Board Meetings. Having clearly achieved a Board member quorum by 6:30, we proceeded directly to address the advertised Agenda without modification.

Board Meeting Guidelines: Some confusion ensued from there being too few hard-copies of documents subject to this discussion. Benjamin suggested that the "General Meeting Code of Conduct" (originally prepared by Jane to be relevant to both Business & General Meetings) ought not to be considered at this time as any such Code would need approval by those attending a General Membership Meeting. So it was that our attention turned to a document Jane had produced more specifically with the MNA Board Business Meetings in mind AND another document created by Benjamin which emphasized Board member expectations, conduct expectations, and addressing violations of these expectations. From her comments, it soon became clear that Jane's "Code" was primarily intended to include communication guidelines (framed in positive language) – while Benjamin's "Code" would include more specific expectations, the violation of which would result in negative consequences: recognizing the authority of the presiding officer (usually the Chair) to "warn participants who violate expectations of conduct", then "request a participant who continues to violate expectations of conduct to leave the meeting", and to "adjourn meeting if behavior disrupts ability of body to carry out business of the body", or "may use other reasonable steps they deem necessary to restore order to the meeting".

Rather than get into the details of who said what to whom, it may suffice to observe that Michael (who was an active early participant in the discussion and may not be entirely objective in making these Meeting Minutes) and Benjamin (who was an active early participant, even though as Chair he was presiding over the discussion) – were in serious disagreement. Put most simply, Michael was very supportive of Jane's "Code" and Benjamin favored his own alternative. Michael encouraged other Board members to express themselves (a suggestion with which Benjamin agreed) and everyone eventually contributed to the discussion. Among their comments was Jane suggesting that volunteers meet to wordsmith a policy combining elements of the two documents; Elaine saying that an Expectations Guidelines document could be very helpful to future Board members; Jennifer noting that coming to an agreed policy would be worthwhile but may take several months. Benjamin suggested a committee of three people (Elaine, Jennifer, and Jonnie) meet to work on a proposal – to which Jane asked why she would not be included in such a committee. Jonnie implied little enthusiasm for the committee idea by wondering whether there really is any need for a "Code of Conduct" policy and noting how a large amount of Board time had already been taken on this issue without agreement being reached.

RESULT: No resolution was moved or seconded, and so nothing was tabled.

In effect, the issue was left unresolved with no clear timeline for addressing it in the future. **Benjamin announced that he remains obligated to respond to "disruptive or disrespectful conduct" (as he believes is his personal prerogative as Chair – in accordance with ONI and SEUL official documents).**

MNA VISION STATEMENT: Because the "Code of Conduct" issue took almost a full hour (twice as long as the Agenda had allocated), Chair Benjamin suggested that we focus upon approving a "Vision Statement" rather than carefully review the entire 12-page draft of the "*Planning for the Future of Montavilla*" document of 5/19/2014 that has largely languished for almost three years without formal MNA Board approval. Feeling the

pressure of time, the six MNA Board members present collaborated to significantly modify the proposed 2014 Vision Statement which was:

“Montavilla Neighborhood Association envisions Montavilla as an active, inclusive community with a rich tradition of involvement and interaction among highly diverse residents. Life-long learning and higher education attainment are valued highly among its residents, and the percentage growth in higher education completion rates among area residents is greater than in any other Portland neighborhood. It develops a reputation as a walkable, connected, contiguous neighborhood that is a safe and healthy place to live, work, and raise a family and it has a distinct identity as an affordable, accessible, family friendly neighborhood with a full range of businesses and services that meet diverse resident needs.”

Especially encouraged by wordsmithing suggestions by Jane, everyone contributed to producing a document that was unanimously adopted as follows:

RES. 17-3-29: “Montavilla Neighborhood Association envisions Montavilla as an active, inclusive community with a rich tradition of involvement and interaction among highly diverse residents. We seek to develop a reputation as a walkable, connected, and contiguous neighborhood that is a safe and healthy place to live, work, and grow. Montavilla has a distinct identity as an affordable, accessible, family friendly neighborhood with a full range of schools, businesses and services that meet diverse resident needs. Life-long learning and educational attainment are valued highly among its residents.”

Event Calendar: With the evening fast approaching our 8:30 adjournment time, Board members sought to add already planned activities to the Events Calendar. With moderate discussion, these activities included: **April 17th** @ Montavilla United Methodist Church, 232 SE 80th Ave (7-8:30pm): an “Imagine Montavilla” event featuring Tim Smith (using a civic ecology framework); **April 29th** afternoon: MNA participating in the annual 82nd Avenue of Roses Parade; **May 6th** @ Montavilla Baptist Church parking lot, 9204 SE Hawthorne Blvd (9:00am to 3:00pm): Spring Clean-Up fundraising event; **? May 20th** (tentative date for an MNA Ice Cream & Pie Social); **? late May/early June:** a fundraiser for the MNA Neighbors Emergency Assistance Fund (NEAF) Project – not to conflict with the Montavilla Food Coop breakfast/fundraiser on June 3rd; with August being its normally very busy month, including MNA tabling at METBA’s Montavilla Street Fair and APANO’s International Night Market (consecutive Saturdays). Benjamin announced his desire to organize a “Neighbor’s Night Out” event again this year in Montavilla Park (in early August) bigger & better than ever before – and has affirmation of volunteer support from several MNA Board members including, Jane, Elaine, Jennifer, and Michael.

Meeting Adjourned: about 8:45pm

Next MNA Meeting: Monday, April 10th, 2017.

6:30-8:30 @ Montavilla United Methodist Church, 232 SE 80th Ave.