

The last 22 days have been a whirlwind for what I expected to be a fairly quiet time period. The Montavilla Neighborhood Association has risen to the challenge and hit the ground running. In this update you will see how the MNA has come up to speed at a quick pace, deftly handled security breaches, and how we are getting our house in order to have better transparency of our process and records.

The first challenge I ran into as Secretary of the Montavilla Neighborhood Association was the lack of a succession plan in regards to how to transition the tech the MNA uses for websites, email, and record storage into the new board's hands. In fact, there is no existing asset list to even enumerate the

various technologies that the MNA uses. The situation required your secretary to do extensive work to compile this information.

In the course of collecting asset records, a past board member removed the MNA web presence from a DreamHost web server service that no current board members ever had access to (aside from accounts able to post news updates to the page). This threw my asset discovery quest into a frenzy.

As it stands, the Montavilla Neighborhood Association has the following digital assets:

- **The montavillapdx.org domain name** - The domain is registered through namecheap.com. This domain needs to be renewed periodically at a cost of \$12.49 a year (as of this report).
- **Google G Suite** - This technology allows us to use Gmail, Google Calendar, Google Drive, and other google products with the montavillapdx.org domain. Due to the removal of domain records we lost our grandfathered Free Nonprofit Account. We are now using the basic G Suite plan at a cost of \$5 per user per month.
- **MNA Facebook Page & Group** - The Montavilla Neighborhood Association Page and Group on Facebook are free services.
- **MNA Twitter** - The @montavillapdx Twitter account is a free service.
- **MNA Website** - As mentioned above, the website was taken down, but I have constructed a new one to use as a temporary page. We also have zip file backups of the old page we can migrate to the new location if the MNA decides to keep the new page. The new page is hosted on github.com, and is provided at no cost.

It is my recommendation that in the coming months a succession plan for transfer of this technology to future board members is written. This plan must document how to access these technologies, and how to change the access credentials to allow future boards to act swiftly and securely.

“It was fine and good to be defiant to the end, but it was better not to get caught in the first place.” -- Julie Kagawa

On November 6th, 2017 the MNA board suddenly found early draft motions that had not been made public posted to unauthorized places on the Internet. I took it upon myself to try to figure out how this leak was happening.

At 10:35 pm on November 6th, 2017 I discovered that there was a user account in our email system with the name “Board Mailer” and an email address of do-not-reply@montavillapdx.org in the Montavilla Neighborhood Association email suite. This backdoor account was receiving copies of all emails to the MNA board. As of 10:40 pm the backdoor had been shut down. Any emails to the MNA board before that time should be assumed to be compromised.

The existence of such an email account does not at once cause a reason for alarm as many such accounts are used for automated email transactions with websites and other services. I began investigating what the activity looked like on this account.

I found:

- A number of regular logins from what looked like an automated script for a website. I am unaware of what the exact purpose of this automated script was.
- A number of regular logins to the account from an identity hiding service <http://www.nordvpn.com>. This service sells itself with the following info: “NordVPN never logs what you do and where you go on the Internet. So if anyone asks, the best we can do is shrug our shoulders. And we like it that way.”
- A number of logins from an IP address that was also used to login into past board member Benjamin Kerensa’s account.
- This email account had also forwarded 4 email threads on August 9th involving matters related to a grievance being handled at the time to bkerensa@gmail.com. (Ben Kerensa was not on the board at this time).

It is unclear to me if anything illegal happened here. However, this account was a security breach, and I apologize for not catching it sooner.

From an information security standpoint, I recommend that email correspondence not automatically make it into the public domain as it can contain sensitive information that the MNA has an obligation to protect. I also do not recommend taking legal action at this time. However, records should be kept (including login records, mail records, and other records associated with this incident). I recommend that if any individual MNA members decide to pursue legal avenues that these records are made available to their legal representation.

Following Office of Neighborhood Guidelines and best practices I would recommend that the MNA continues the practice of not deliberating toward decisions via email. Instead, for transparency, it is my hope that another open digital system can be used to allow neighbors to better see and understand the process of bringing draft motions into a meeting agenda and make comment on these motions.

“When I die, just keep playing the records.” -- Jimi Hendrix

In 2017 it is very important to both be open and public with our neighbors and also make sure to protect our neighbors personal identifying information such as their home address, email addresses,

and telephone numbers. This is not an easy balance to maintain, but it is a goal to aspire to that I hope we are always improving upon.

Before I had even been granted access to my MNA email account the Montavilla Neighborhood Association had received two separate records requests. Both of these were extremely broad even asking for “all documents belonging to the MNA”. I have been working extensively to figure out what should and should not be public. With a recent mass spam email being sent to a list of MNA members (containing their home addresses) the need for protecting neighbors privacy is fresh in my mind. At the same time I want the MNA to serve its members by being as open as possible.

I contacted The Office of Neighborhood Involvement to get guidance on how I should deal with these requests. It is not at once obvious what our requirements are, and to be honest the state of our records is currently in a bit of disarray.

Paul Leistner from ONI instructed me that:

“Neighborhood associations are not subject to the Oregon State Public Meetings and Records Law. Neighborhood associations are subject to the open meetings and public records requirements in the ONI Standards for the neighborhood system.

The MNA’s response to any public records requests for MNA records should follow the requirements in the ONI Standards.”

I have reviewed the ONI Standard, and I have crafted a draft motion to be discussed at the MNA board meeting on November 13th, 2017. I have attempted to be comprehensive with this plan to try to make the records of dialog, deliberation, and other board business readily available to future requests. I have also added a catch-all clause for any other records that may need to be compiled outside of the purview of ONI Standards. These requests will be able to be made at a fee of \$15 an hour (a fraction of what Multnomah County charges for similar requests) so that we can be as open as possible without going broke making millions of copies.

I also researched public records laws in order to find solutions for neighbors who do not want their addresses exposed publicly for safety reasons. Although the neighborhood association is not a governmental entity we are connected to ONI which is and regularly receives some of our records. Oregon law allows for individuals to send a written request to public bodies asking that their home address, email, and/or telephone number be redacted from records requests for a given safety reason. Here is text of the subsection of the statute:

192.445 Nondisclosure on request of home address, home telephone number and electronic mail address; rules of procedure; duration of effect of request; liability; when not applicable. (1) An individual may submit a written request to a public body not to disclose a specified public record indicating the home address, personal telephone number or electronic mail address of the individual. A public body may not disclose the specified public record if the individual demonstrates to the

satisfaction of the public body that the personal safety of the individual or the personal safety of a family member residing with the individual is in danger if the home address, personal telephone number or electronic mail address remains available for public inspection.

If you would like send the MNA a non-disclosure request you can drop one off with me at any MNA meeting, or via email at briarrose@montavillapdx.org.

Conclusions

Wow, what an exciting first month! I hope we can continue this momentum going forward. I am eager to get a number of committees organized to help handle all of the things outlined in this document, because it has been quite tiring doing it alone. Together we can be proud of our neighborhood, and an important first step to that is making sure that our records procedures are open, secure, and in order. We got this Montavilla.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Briar Rose Schreiber". The signature is written in a dark ink and is positioned above the printed name.

Briar Rose Schreiber

Montavilla Neighborhood Association Secretary

briarrose@montavillapdx.org