

Mt. Tabor Neighborhood Association

Zoom Meeting Minutes, June 19, 2024

President: Paul Leistner

Secretary: Nadine Fiedler

Board members present: Nadine Fiedler, Rob Galanakis, John Laursen, Paul Leistner, Dave Petrozzi, Midge Pierce, Bing Wong, Brad Yazzolino

Other attendees: Kathy Beland, Maya & Zak Booth-Balk, Nancy Chapin, George Collins, Josh Crabbe, Ian Dickinson, Lt. Dominic Frederickson from the Portland Fire Department (PFD), Ron & Kay Hall, Mike Houston, Claire Johnson, Patrick Kokopell, Mary McWilliams, Ute Munger, Nikki Mandell, Alec Mendelson, Lynn Merrick, Laura Orr, Sgt. Michael Poole, Johna Rossetto, Rick Sany, Katie Shrall, Sam Sibley, Theodora Tsongas

Mt. Tabor Dance Community Discussion

Fire Safety: Lt. Dominic Frederickson

Lt. Dominic Frederickson said he hadn't gotten very much information about these events.

Midge Pierce raised concerns about fire safety at the dances and wants to work together with the community. She asked about the park's protocol for fire safety for both permitted and unpermitted events, and also for July 4: when is a fire truck on standby, and what can neighbors do to prevent fires?

Lt. Frederickson said that the PFD is prepared to respond 24/7 and are engaged in drilling companies that would respond. A response plan is in place, and the city has specific rules about what's allowed at events. Midge asked him if fire trucks can ever stand by, and he responded that the PFD plans for more activity on event days, and the response to Mt. Tabor is very fast. Midge is concerned about the slow response from 911, which is why we would like a water truck nearby. Lt. Frederickson said there are hydrants and other plans for wild land events. Midge noted the absence of Portland Parks rangers, who had said they were coming to this meeting, and asked if the PFD was in communication with the Park rangers, and he said no.

Nikki Mandell asked if the PFD will establish a connection with and a plan with Parks before July 4, and if they will patrol the park on July 4 and put up "no fireworks" signs. Lt. Frederickson said he will refer to his chief about connecting with Parks. They can't patrol Mt. Tabor because there are too many places in the city to respond to. As for signs, they do an education outreach before July 4 and patrol the city for illegal fireworks. Nikki asked if the PFD will come if she calls them about July 4 fireworks in the park; Lt. Frederickson said you have to go through 911. The entire city is unpredictable on July 4; they can't predict where the emergencies will be. All the fire stations have all-access keys, and neighbors should call 911 only if there is a fire.

Laura Orr asked if 911 is the only way, and Lt. Frederickson replied yes, and that last year's PSAs on the fireworks ban worked very well. The PFD is putting signage all over the city and has lots of resources.

Representative from Mt. Tabor Dance Community: Josh Crabbe

Josh Crabbe said that the Mt. Tabor Dance Community group is aware of concerns. During the pandemic people started dancing for mental health, with many mental and physical benefits. It's a third place and a free experience. He said they work to establish and build relationships. They have formed a nonprofit to be more sustainable, with a board and the following volunteers, of which there are 20-30 at each dance in addition to three producers:

- A dance ranger program to educate the dancers
- A first aid staff
- A fentanyl staff
- A leave no trace team to clean up that night and the next day

- People to make sure people are parked legally

Paul Leistner asked Josh to talk about the permitting process. Josh responded that originally they weren't organized and random people would throw parties. They created the nonprofit to make it more organized. Costs for them include insurance, permits, and porta potties. He said there was a lot of fear early and they have to figure it out. So now they are 100% volunteer led and have raised \$15,000 for these events. Josh said there are a large number of people at these events and they would like to further educate people to treat the community well and with respect.

Sam Sibley said he has taken his kids to these events and wants to know more about them.

Josh Crabbe noted that their permits run from 6 to 10 p.m. (when the park closes) but the dances usually run till 9:15, and they ask people to leave at 9, which is the publicized end time. He said there had been 4-5 dances in the amphitheater. From the end of May till mid-July the dances are not in the park because of the bike races. They plan to have 6-7 dances this year from July to September.

Patrick Kokopell thinks the dances are great and takes his grandson, said he hasn't heard anything from his house.

Nadine Fiedler mentioned the high volume of sound that is heard on the north side of the park when events are held in the crater. Josh replied that the rest of the events will be by Reservoir 5, which is more remote.

Rick Sany asked if people are given instructions about prohibited activities such as fire dancing when they are greeted. Josh said yes and that there is a fire extinguisher on site.

Midge Pierce said she would like announcements made about no smoking or fire dancing and asked where the group is in the permit process. Josh said that all events have been permitted and they are working with Parks and the Noise Control Officer, as well as buying insurance and ordering porta potties. His email is josh@tabordance.org.

Claire Johnson, who lives by the park entrance on Salmon St., said her street is affected by a slight uptick in traffic on dance nights, but the dances are a gift and offers her house if attendees need help. She's more worried about less organized groups doing events.

Sgt. Michael Poole of the Portland Police Department said that Parks are in charge of this and are sorry they didn't attend. He said the police are aware of these Wednesday events and want to know how the police can help, even if they are short staffed right now. He can instruct officers to drive through and check the crowd, and is taking notes to bring back to the district offices. Josh replied that police and Parks presence are welcome, and that he expects about 900 attendees later this summer. **John Laursen** asked if police have a role if the dancers linger in the park after it closes at 10; Sgt. Poole said that would be criminal trespass but they probably couldn't get to them right away and people should call the police non-emergency line at 503-823-3333.

Laura Orr asked how to move cars that are blocking driveways. Sgt. Poole said it falls to the police, but parking patrol doesn't work after 4 and it would be a low priority unless it involves an ambulance.

Katie Shrall lives at the edge of the park and talked about how dance parties in the amphitheater are much too loud; she's walked around to see how the sound carries and gone up to the dances. She thinks these events, even though they are fun, are too large for the park with the grass trampled, fire dancers, and lots of trash, and people treat the park like a warehouse. She also thinks the dances happen too frequently and would like us to address that. Josh replied that there's now a large crew of volunteers including a trash team that works that night and the day after. He said no fire is allowed and that they plan 6-7 events from July to September. Katie noted the use of vaping, weed, and alcohol at the dances, and Josh said they educate people about park policies but can't enforce them in a public park, and they turn off the

music if they see violations and ask people to leave.

Accessibility in the Park for People with Disabilities

Ron Hall lives next to the park, uses a wheelchair, and goes to the park 3-4 times a week. He's been talking to the park foreman about coordinating with the Parks Department, but it's taking a long time and not much has happened. Paul Leistner replied that MTNA would love to work with Ron on this issue. A person from the South Tabor NA is promoting a process about accessibility, and Paul will connect Ron with this process.

MTNA Consent Agenda

The May minutes were approved unanimously. **Bing Wong** presented the treasurer's report. MTNA's bank balance is now \$6016.82, with a pending \$120 reimbursement from SEUL. The final reimbursement for split proceeds from the joint cleanup with NTNA is pending.

Project to Refurbish the Mt. Tabor Entry Gateway at 50th & Hawthorne

John Laursen gave a short history of this 20-year-old gateway and said the bronze plaques have become hard to read and have been graffitied. He's been in touch with a conservator who said the cost will be \$3,200. MTNA has \$500 in that account, and John wants to know if we can fund this or raise funds for it. Paul Leistner would like us to figure out sources of revenue, and John said he might have a possible source.

Quick Updates

- **Midge Pierce** reminded us that the date for the **neighborhood community safety training** is June 26, 6 to 8 p.m. at the Mt. Tabor Presbyterian Church. The training will be in person only.
- **John Laursen** reported that both cells of Reservoir 6 are now full of water.
- **Nikki Mandell** said that the Mt. Tabor Neighborhood History Project meeting was good, and now there's a lot to follow up on. We have many photos and info coming from other institutions too and will keep gathering info.
- **Laura Orr** said that a temporary location for holds pick-up while the **Belmont Library** is under construction is unofficially on Hawthorne St.
- **Paul Leistner** is spearheading a project to design and place Mt. Tabor neighborhood banners on utility poles. John Laursen will design them, and Paul would like help with tracking down good poles for this use on a neighborhood walk.

Reports

- The **Hawthorne Street Fair** will be held August 25, and MTNA should table with other NAs.
- Nikki Mandell said the next Rumble on the River to educate people about the **Critical Energy Infrastructure Hub** will be the same night as the safety training. She urges people to ask about the CEI hub if they meet local candidates.

Friends of Mt. Tabor Park

Bing Wong reported that an updated tree map guide is complete with an online link only coming soon. The numbered posts for the additions have been installed and old ones cleaned. Future addition is a GIS locator for smartphones.

FMTTP discussed accessibility for park visitors, and new board member Cathy Kudlick has a background in ADA compliance. They also discussed unpermitted dance events.

A part-time Visitor Center coordinator position was approved.
FMTP will be tabling at the Stark Street Portland Nursery on July 6-7, 11-1.
BES is now involved with dog off-leash area erosion issues.

Reminder, it's bird nesting season.

May's work party was at the SW Lincoln Street entrance to the park, weeding and mulching around the trees. Lise Gervais, Weed Warrior volunteer coordinator, reported that Parks moved mulch up against tree trunks, which is bad for tree health. Next Weed Warrior work party will be on Saturday June 29, 9 am-noon.