

Mt. Tabor Neighborhood Association

Zoom Meeting Minutes, August 16, 2023

Facilitator: Dave Petrozzi

Secretary: Nadine Fiedler

Board members present: Nadine Fiedler, Rob Galanakis, Paul Leistner, Brian Mitchell, Dave Petrozzi, Midge Pierce, Bing Wong

Other attendees: Alex Arrell, Anina Bennett, Julia Brim-Edwards, Skyler Bocker-Knapp, Kristin Brown, Nancy Chapin, George Cole, Michael Corrigan, Susan Dininni, Rich Dreasher, Mary Anne Ericson, Brian Ellin, Sharon Wade Ellis, Allen Field, Duane Fickelsen, Jane Friesen, Vicente Harrison, Lucas Hillier, Debby Hochhalter, Kim Kosmas, Nancy Laney, Nikki Mandell, Mary McWilliams, Lynn Merrick, Craig Mosbaek, Neal Naigus, Laura Orr, Laurent Picard, Joy Poole, David Raphael, Rick S., Ethan Scarl, Michael Smitasin, Jerry Sutherland, Jenny Tilson, John Wheeler

After introductions, the July minutes were approved unanimously. Bing Wong presented the treasurer's report. MTNA's bank balance is now \$7268.71. Ongoing expenses include Zoom \$12 monthly fees.

Neighbor Announcements, Concerns, and Questions

Allen Field, from the Richmond NA, announced a showing of the film "Hidden Figures" on August 19 at 7:30 p.m. at Sewallcrest Park, SE 31st & Market.

Nikki Mandell announced a Rumble on the River event, on the critical energy infrastructure hub, on August 24 at 6 p.m. at Taborspace.

Bing Wong announced the Portland Adult Soapbox Derby on August 19.

Nancy Chapin talked about the Hawthorne Street Fair on August 27 and the International Day of Peace celebration on September 21 at 50th & Hawthorne, 3-6 p.m. Debby Hochhalter from Richmond NA said their table would be at 34th & Hawthorne.

Neighborhood Safety Forum

Presenters:

Alex Arrell: park ranger supervisor for Portland Parks & Recreation

Skyler Bocker-Knapp: senior policy advisor to Portland mayor

Kristin Brown: from the new 311 program, which helps connect community members to local government, including reports on campsites, graffiti, and trash in the public right of way

Vicente Harrison: health, safety, and emergency manager for Portland Parks & Recreation

Lucas Hillier and Sharon Wade Ellis: from the city Impact Reduction Program, which addresses complaints including campsites and garbage, formerly the city of Portland Homelessness & Urban Camping Program

Kim Kosmas: manager of Portland Fire & Rescue wildfire preparedness and other programs. Does education programs for citizens and gives free safety and preparedness assessments

Laurent Picard: liaison for the public education division of Portland Fire & Rescue. Takes referrals about homelessness and campfire situations from fire stations, triages them, and prepares response

John Wheeler: supervisor of parking enforcement for PDOT, handles lived-in and abandoned vehicles

Also attending: **Julia Brim-Edwards**, Multnomah County commissioner

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Dave Petrozzi asked what to do if a camping vehicle blocks traffic. **Kristin Brown** said to call 311, or 911 if there's a threat to life or property. **John Wheeler** added that you can call Parking Enforcement about a vehicle blocking an intersection, 503-823-5195, option 3.

Midge Pierce asked if the parks department monitors the Wednesday evening rave in Mt. Tabor Park, which is usually a well-behaved group, but massive. **Vicente Harrison** replied that it's an unpermitted event and is very concerning, and that although Portland Parks & Recreation is monitoring it, they tried to mitigate it but it's not vehicular traffic. He is strategizing with the Portland Police Dep't. to redirect the behavior, and working with Portland Fire and Rescue (PF&R) on the year-round fire concerns. **Laurent Picard** added that he will reach out to the organizers—not to stop them but to keep it safe. Midge said that it's a massive event, with smoking and fireworks, and asked if there can be a fire truck on alert. Laurent replied that Truck #19 is always on alert, but since they are very busy given staff shortages, they can't park a truck there. Since he specializes in outreach, he will reach out to the organizers. He noted that he had spoken with PF&R fire inspectors, but they claimed it was not in their purview. The Parks Dep't. and Portland Police could be involved if there are tents or structures, but the police are very overtaxed right now. If neighbors see fireworks or fires, they should call 911. **Kim Kosmas** said that PF&R did research on the Wednesday events, and that the organizers had canceled tonight's event because of extreme weather. She stressed that people should call 911 if they see fire or fireworks.

Bing Wong asked about homeless camps blocking sidewalks, and if the city can throw people out, and who would handle that. **Sharon Wade Ellis** asked that people report to PDX Reporter or call 311 about unsanctioned campsites. They will do a risk assessment score and prioritize sites that reach a threshold level and act on those. **Lucas Hillier** said they have limited resources but can do a risk assessment in 3-4 days. Sites that block the right of way, or with drug activity, or with situations such as bike parts, are the most crucial. **Skyler Brocker-Knapp** said that state law requires that a site be posted, and then there is a 3- to 10-day wait to remove the camp.

Bing Wong asked if the ADA law changed the way assessments are done for camps blocking sidewalks and streets. **Lucas Hillier** responded that you can report any accessibility problem or ADA violation, and that it will be referred differently. They can address it within a week, since they are now dealing with 400 referrals a week, up from 200. **Skyler Brocker-Knapp** said that the city has to adhere to state and federal legal restrictions, but they can help with storage and transportation, and that they opened an alternative shelter site.

George & Shelley Cole remarked that they would like to see future forums on safety, and would like another number to call besides 311 or 911.

David Raphael asked if the city can offer an alternative after people are removed from unauthorized camps, and if the number of camps has changed. **Skyler Brocker-Knapp** replied that there is a public dashboard with statistics, and that 311 is the best number to call. The 311

office hosts problem-solving meetings run by Dakota Thompson, and Midge Pierce will get her contact info. According to state and federal law, the city can only remove camps if there's another place for the people to go, so the city does offer storage and transportation. The 9th Circuit ruling was amended and now states that the city doesn't need to provide a shelter bed but can offer other legal alternatives. **Lucas Hillier** added that no one is arrested, and he displayed the Impact Reduction map from July 2022 to the present (pdx.maps.arcgis.com/apps/dashboards). There had been approx. 129,000 campsite reports of 40,000 unique sites. 30,000 of those were actual campsites that were then assessed, and of those 57,000 were posted for removal or cleaning. 12.2 million pounds of garbage were collected.

Jenny Tilson asked what the city can offer campers after removal. **Skyler Brocker-Knapp** said the city can offer what they can, given a lack of behavioral and mental health services. Only 50% of people who want to get into detox actually get in.

Laura Orr asked when the fire department last held a fire drill in Mt. Tabor Park. She's not confident that PF&R is ready to deal with a fire in the park. **Laurent Picard** replied that PF&R does extensive drills and practices every summer. There are no hydrants in the park, but they are close by. A fire truck will work for a small fire, and bigger fires need multiple trucks. They are prepared to bring water to the park. They have other apparatus for wildfires and feel very prepared for wildfires. They drill at the station and practice in the park.

Laura Orr asked if PF&R tests their communications with neighbors, since that was a big problem with the Lahaina fires. **Laurent Picard** said that PF&R has a robust and redundant communication system, including public alerts. The Bureau of Emergency Management has systems that go to all cell phones and media. People can also access the Pulse Point app, and use the speaker function. Laura asked if the system has been tested and if the public can drill on it, and that some people can't get alerts. **Kim Kosmas** urges people to sign up for public alerts. Some are geographically based, and other alerts are automatic. She urges people to put Pulse Point on their phones. She also educates people on creating a defensive zone to protect from wildfires.

Debby Hochhalter asked if a brochure can be created with a list of safety resources and contact info to be given out at upcoming large street fairs. **Kristin Brown** said she has a resource guide in multiple languages that she will email to Debby.

Midge Pierce asked how NAs can improve relations with the city, and that some NAs feel muzzled. **Skyler Brocker-Knapp** said that NAs can sign up for problem-solver meetings.

Midge Pierce commented that no one is trying to stop the Wednesday raves, in response to a Chat comment. She said that there are concerns about the fire department being at the ready in case of fire, and that safety is the main concern.

Laura Orr asked how we can help all of the agencies presenting tonight to reduce fire, crises, encampments, and the like. She asked if calling is all we can do. **Laurent Picard** responded that he encourages use of 311, which can relay concerns to the proper area. **Sharon Wade**

Ellis added that concerned citizens should report campsites at least once a week to PDX Reporter, and that crews do come out to pick up debris. **Vicente Harrison** said that we should get out and enjoy our parks; the county and city do get along and are great partners. He encourages use of 311 as well as communication with the Impact Reduction Team. **Skylar Brocker-Knapp** said that the city and county do work closely together on these issues.

Bing Wong commented that he has successfully used PDX Reporter many times. He then asked about reports that ambulances have not been responding to calls for long amounts of time. **Laurent Picard** said that the county is responsible for emergency management services, but that PF&R still goes to every call in 4-6 minutes regardless of ambulance status. **Julia Brim-Edwards** expressed great concern about the ambulance situation and said that AMR had been fined. The county has to manage the contract and bring AMR to compliance. The county has to establish metrics, not just penalize, to improve response time. **Laurent** added that PF&R has all the equipment that an ambulance does. **Lucas Hillier** said that he encourages people to become paramedics.

The session came to a close, and **Laurent Picard** said he would follow up with any questions that didn't get answered tonight.

Rose Lane Proposal

Rob Galanakis talked about recent traffic fatalities, how streets are unsafe, and how PBOT has identified Cesar Chavez north of the MTNA boundaries as a Rose Lane, cutting traffic to 2 lanes from 4. We are not voting on this tonight, but other NAs have explored responses to this action, and he 'll have something to share in September from the Sunnyside and Richmond NAs. **Paul Leistner** said that both he and Rob attended the last Richmond NA meeting, and Rob had presented studies and info on the Rose Lane project. He added that NAs try not to drive projects in other people's neighborhoods, and that NAs best role is to help people get access to information, instead of picking winners when opinions are split; Richmond NA is concerned about traffic problems but wants more info on alternatives. He asked if MTNA can partner with Richmond and Sunnyside, share resources, and be part of the solution. He thanked Rob for taking action. **Dave Petrozzi** said it's good to focus on traffic on Cesar Chavez and thanked Rob for his activity, and that we're making progress. **Bing Wong** added that traffic problems include issues that Rose Lanes can't solve, such as high speeds, people under the influence, and lack of enforcement. MTNA can advocate for a new state bill to have red light and speeding cameras installed.

Friends of Mt. Tabor Park

Bing Wong reported that the summer concert attendance was 1,400, organized with Parks by board member Anka Sepulveda for the second year. The board decided to sponsor only one next year as it would be solely up to FMTP, costing about \$10,000. A piano/push/play concert scheduled for the same night was moved after vice-chair Kathleen Cornett contacted the development person (FMTP made a donation for their cooperation). An attempt to provide new bathroom signage (Visitor Center frequently asked where they are) at the main parking lot was met with opposition from Parks, and will take months for parks to create an equity appropriate sign or signs. Next Weed Warrior work party on Saturday August 26, 9 a.m.-noon.

Montavilla Jazz concert with Tabor theme composition on Friday, September 1, 5:30-8 p.m.
FMTP members picnic on Monday, September 11, 6-8 p.m.

Communication Committee

Dave Petrozzi talked about the current successes of the communication committee, including dedicated email oversight by Nadine Fiedler, an updated website thanks to Paul Leistner, a blog and listserv by Laura Orr (who we should empower more), and a robust speaker list driven by Midge Pierce. He wants to install more process in what we do. The committee includes Dave, Laura, Rob Galanakis, Paul, Midge, and Nadine. Things to focus on now:

- Someone to pick up the baton besides Dave
- Migrating to Slack, which is how many teams communicate with one another
- Finishing job descriptions, which should be more thorough. He provided samples of descriptions for webmaster, speaker coordinator, email monitor, and agenda setter. He'd like the committee to work on these descriptions and report monthly to MTNA.

Midge Pierce said we need a separate board meeting to work on this. Both Midge and Dave have limited time to work on this for the next month or so. Paul Leistner thanked Midge and Dave for their contributions tonight.