



**MINUTES OF ELLIS BOARD MEETING January 24, 2017  
1 Chandler Street**

Directors present: John Alekna, Robert Berstein, Patty Brennan, Ross Bundy, Gretchen Chauncey, Dave Crowley, Jack Fitzgerald, Bill Gregor, Betsy Hall, Gordon Holmes, Yvonne Lee, Jason Nardella, Regina Pyle, Toby Rodman, Marie Schappert, Ellen Sheets, Jane Siegel, Roberta Sydney, Carol Trust, Ken Tutunjian and Mike Worhach

Also Present: Stacy Koepfel, Executive Director, Matt Rhoades, Ellis Member and Member of the DLZ Committee, Officer Jorge Dias; Sam Chambers, Mayor's Office  
Directors excused: Michael Hall, Emily Aaronson, Paul Duffy, Anthony Gordon

John Alekna called the meeting to order at 6:29 pm. January minutes were unanimously approved.

Guest Speaker: Jorge Dias from District 4: Community Services Officer

Officer Dias spoke about neighborhood incidents, which included:

- The D'Tails armed robbery – there are currently no updates.
- Prostitution in the early morning at the end of Chandler St.
- Heroin use at the end of Chandler St. in the playground. The heroin addiction is a spillover from Mass Ave and Albany.
- UPS burglaries, usually around the holidays.

Officer Dias also reported on violence/shootings in the Villa Victoria area. The police were able to arrest and put away 8 or 9 individuals associated with the shooting.

Officer Dias also described what to do in the case of a robbery: 1) take one step back; 2) put one hand up; 3) observe characteristics about the robber; 4) pull out wallet.

Officer Dias also described and recommended a camera system, Bling, which includes 3-5 cameras, which works on motion sensors.

Officer Dias also spoke about issues with officer retention and hiring.

The Board also had follow-on discussion about package thefts and gangs in the neighborhood.

Treasurer's report: Gretchen Chauncey presented the budget for this month. Ellis currently has \$22,000 in the bank account. It was requested that column headings be added.

Executive Director's report:

- Stacy is working on the fundraiser with the fundraising committee. She will come up with new sponsor levels.
- Stacy is also working with Gretchen to rework the QuickBooks account.
- Stacy also answered questions about wreaths, which included explaining the methodology for picking crossroads to cover.

President's Report:

- Betsy discussed the Arthur Howe award and asked for suggestions.
- Betsy also discussed having a speaker for the annual meeting and asked for suggestions.
- Betsy also informed the Board that BPDA (the new BRA) has requested applications for a grant for beautification of the neighborhood. The money comes from the EATALY project and another project at Copley Place. Applications are due February 8.
- Betsy also provided an update on the helipad. There will be two hearings: 1/30 and 2/6 to discuss infrastructure and operational issues. The current proposal is to put the helipad in Seaport.
- A former board member, Mr. Cavanaugh, passed away recently.

Committee Reports

DLZ: John Alekna provided a report.

- There is a Creole/Seafood restaurant planned for the space next to CVS. They are looking for a liquor license until 2am. There is no material opposition, and DLZ will probably provide a letter of non-opposition.
- 115 Winthrop Square: Millennium Towers is proposing a 60+ story building. The Back Bay neighborhood association opposed the request because of the shadows on the Common. Ellis provided a letter of supporting the Neighborhood Association of the Back Bay's (NABB) opposition. to the Back Bay neighborhood association.
- Jack Fitzgerald indicated that there has been no progress for 4 months and may reflect a rethinking of the project by the developer.
- 40 Berkeley: The owner of the building is going to close in the summertime and make a decision about what to do with the building. One consideration is a restaurant; another possibility is to convert the space into a dormitory.

Community Outreach: Regina provided a report.

- McKinley:
  - There is still not a decision regarding whether the McKinley will be torn down and a new school put up. A master plan was supposed to be distributed this week, but has not yet been handed out.
  - Stacy, John Chambers, and Regina had a meeting at McKinley with the principal and community and family coordinator about what the school needs. The two current items in the works are: 1) traffic on Warren Ave in the morning. The proposal is to improve school signage and possibly a travel lane. 2) John Chambers is working with someone to improve the school's website.
  - Bingo night is being held at the Bolling Building in Dudley Square; the profits will go to the McKinley school. Ellis has donated \$250 for a table for parents who could not otherwise afford to be there. Regina has also put out an appeal to the members to attend the Bingo night and/or to donate to the event.
- St. Stephen's: Ellis donated \$500 to the school for the MLK day event.
- Casa Myrna: Nothing on the table yet.

Scholarship Committee: Marie handed out a calendar and a proposed post for the website.

- Marie discussed having a pilot program for this year to have a student selected for June 2017. Various steps have been put in place to announce the launch. The committee has a prospectus drawn up and plans to write to Eastern Bank for funding a scholarship. The date for submission is April 2017.
- The Committee proposed that the scholarship fund be used as the beneficiary for the fundraiser. Stacy indicated that the recipient had already been selected: the McKinley Sunshine Fund.
- The calendar includes a proposed schedule for selecting a student and providing money for the scholarship.
- Jane suggested partnering with the Benjamin Franklin Institute.

There was also a discussion about how much to fund the scholarship. \$5000 is seed money and the hope is to raise another \$5000.

Membership: Roberta submitted a report:

- Membership is looking into purchasing a CRM. The lowest level CRM does not interface with other systems (e.g., Quickbooks, website, Constant Contact, evites). Roberta asked for an increase in budget from \$500 to \$5000 (per year) for a better CRM system. Stacy indicated that she may be fine with Excel, and is trying to find a lower cost system. The current membership is about 280 individuals/households/businesses.
- Roberta had a conversation with Susan Sherwin of Zipcar to further the relationship between Ellis and Zipcar. Zipcar proposed a system of offering a special tier of membership for Ellis, where Ellis would get a small percentage for Ellis members subscribing to Zipcar.

Neighborhood Services: Dave had no updates.

Chairman's report:

- Annual fundraiser is June 11, 2017 at Mistral.
- The annual meeting will be in May and we will have a specific date soon.
- Upcoming events include the Progressive Dinner on February 6.
- Committee chairs are now reporting to the EC and are encouraged to fill out summaries prior to each board meeting.

Wine group:

- February 22 from 6:30-8:30pm has been set for the next wine event: Italian wine tasting. Bill asked for a volunteer to host the event.

Other Issues:

- Boston Ballet: Toby reported on an issue with Boston Ballet. There is double parking and children running unescorted to double parked cars. When we attempted to reach out to Boston Ballet, the organization was unresponsive and had terminated communications with Ellis. A suggestion to deal with the problem include: 1) reaching out to trustees; 2) write an editorial; or 3) contact a reporter to report on the situation. Stacy will contact the transportation department and report back to the Board next month.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:55.

Respectfully Submitted,

Yvonne Lee  
Clerk