



MINUTES OF OPEN BOARD MEETING
October 27, 2015 at 6:30 PM
BENJAMIN FRANKLIN INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY,
ROOM U 202A

Regina Pyle, Chair, called the meeting to order at 6:35PM.

Board Members Present: Betsy Hall, Regina Pyle, John Chambers, Michael Hall, Jane Siegel, Gretchen Chauncey, Leo Delaney, Tony Gordon, Bill Gregor, John Herbert, Gordon Holmes, Yvonne Lee, Toby Rodman, Marie Schappert, Kim Schultz, Ellen Sheets, Carol Trust, Ken Tutunjian, Mike Worhach.

Staff: Stacy Koepfel, executive assistant.

Board Members Excused: John Alekna, Patty Brennan, Paul Duffy, Barbara Hoffman, and Ed MacLean.

Guest Present: Sam Chambers, Mayor's Liaison to the South End. He reported there was no citywide fall cleanup, though the DPW would be happy to provide equipment. There will be a spring Boston Shines. He agreed to report to the administration that the Directors protested that it was a shame that the city was not interested in a clean city. John Chambers will contact Steve Fox to discuss the position of the South End Forum and will get back to Sam.

Minutes: The September minutes were approved with the change that Stacy is staff, not a guest.

Treasurer's Report: Ellis is in a strong position and despite a small temporary loss, is right on budget.

President's Report: Eight Board members suggested options for beneficiaries of the fundraiser, of which three were chosen by the Executive Committee: Haley House, Casa Myrna Vasquez, and Boston Explorers. By vote, the Board selected Haley House as next year's beneficiary. Members discussed increasing our giving, either as a greater proportion of the fundraiser or from our reserve; the idea of a match was presented.

Executive Assistant's Report: Stacy continues to work on membership renewals and has developed two membership forms; one for individuals and one for businesses. She gave each Director two membership forms with the suggestion that each could engage two new members. Ken volunteered to place membership forms in the 505 Tremont mailboxes. Stacy has been meeting with Duffy to contact Councilor Linehan to participate in our Political Forum along with State Representative Aaron Michlewitz and State Senator Sonia Chang-Diaz.

Committee Updates:

Wine: 42 people attended the first event. There will be a tasting of "serious" South African wines on Wednesday, January 13, 2016.

Cooking: The October cooking event is basically sold out (one place left). The next event on pasta making will be Thursday, January 14, 2016.

Young Professionals: 49 people have responded. Gretchen has gotten sponsorship for wine. The budget of \$1,000 might be less than previously requested.

Neighborhood Services: Sam Chambers reported that Boston Ballet said they would recruit volunteers to help with double-parked cars. John Chambers would like to take it to the next level and meet with Ballet representatives. Ken said he knows the chairman of the board. Leo indicated Ellis has a similar problem, but has a space reserved on Berkeley Street. John discussed the fall cleanup. We discussed having a Big Belly at the 711 store. The cost is \$7500, but the city will not contribute. Sam said the city will take a look, and it might be worth talking to 711. Gretchen has spoken to 711, but it needs another conversation. A motion to repeat the wreaths as done last year was passed with one opposed. We will purchase 120 wreaths with bows at a cost of approximately \$9.50 each. Stacy is meeting with the BCA to discuss our participation in the Tree Lighting event. We discussed signs identifying the Ellis neighborhood, which must be approved by the city. We buy the signs and the city hangs them. Projected cost is \$200 for nine signs.

Nominating Committee: The committee will consist of Ellen Sheets (chair), John C, Dave, Carol, Ha Orbon, and Rebecca Roth Gullo. The first meeting is scheduled for 11/9. The committee will evaluate the optimal number of board members and will try to bring younger people on board.

Community Outreach: The goal of this committee is to increase the Ellis's visibility. The committee will create a page on the website featuring volunteer opportunities. We will review a list of service agencies in the South End, including the McKinley School, City Year, USES, Casa Myrna Vasquez, Animal Rescue League, St. Stephen's, Ellis, Haley House, and Teen Empowerment. We agreed that Jane would follow up with Haley House to discuss an opportunity for Ellis members to serve a meal in the future. The South End resource guide will be posted on the website. Saldare Spa has volunteered to give a free yoga class to benefit the Ellis Neighborhood Association and Mike will explore that it can be offered to the Young Professional Group once it's been formed.

Development, Licensing, and Zoning: DLZ recommended a letter of non-opposition to changes at 595 and 605 Tremont. The city is committed to a fast pace on 380 Stuart. There has been little attention to comments. Comments are due in writing 11/5. There has been push back from the neighborhood concerning the height of the building, traffic and parking, and a pedestrian walkway emptying onto a commercial alley. The DLZ has written a letter of opposition to the BRA's request for a 10 year extension of urban renewal powers. The City Council will hold a hearing and make recommendations to a state subcommittee. The BRA has absolute power and is only partially accountable to the Mayor. It appears we may be able to get attention to a more moderate position. The Board endorsed a motion to have the Ellis Neighborhood Association, through the DLZ, enlist support from city councilors for a moderate position between a ten-year extension of BRA powers and abolishing the BRA. This position is not inconsistent with the letter we wrote.

New Business: There was no new business.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:45PM

Respectfully submitted,

Jane Siegel, Clerk