

Harbord Village Residents' Association Board Meeting

Tuesday March 19, 2024, 7:00– 9:00 pm

by Zoom call

APPROVED MINUTES

Attendees: Kerry Clare, Sue Dexter, Anne Fleming, Susan McDonald, Frances-Mary Morrison, Lena Mortensen, Jane Perdue, Nick Provart, Gus Sinclair, Jody Salomon, Robert Stambula, Moritz Steinbauer

Regrets: Karen Laurence, Cathy Merkley

Special guests: William Hopkins from the Councilor's Office

1. **Chair's welcome: 7:05**
2. **Approval of Agenda:** Gus moves, Jody seconds. Agenda approved.
3. **Approval of the February 20, 2024 Board Meeting Minutes:** Amendment to minutes that Rory Gus was Acting Chair. Gus is moving. Seconded by Sue D. **Motion approved.**
4. **Financial Report for Discussion:** Lena provides financial report. Main thing to report that net revenue for last year was negative 210.00. Concerns moving forward that will make it harder to get this close to breaking even in future years. Membership dues were down considerably in 2023. Closer to 2019 levels, not sure. Last year we also had a lot of incoming membership because it was the first Fall Fair since the pandemic, and usually there is a lot of membership income from the Fall Fair, but this year there was not. Think about ways to encourage membership because that is our main source of income (in addition to the Fall Fair) and some of our expenditures are higher these days so we need to bump up the membership if we can, or we need to think about other income generating activities. Notice that anticipated revenue for 2024 is more in keeping with recent years, and we're hoping for another banner year for Fall Fair income. Totals for revenue are pretty far off totals for expenditures. As in all years, some of the sums for expenditures are contingency funds, which we don't usually dip into. Something we haven't spent money on the last four years is volunteer appreciation, and Lena would like a return to that—there is a budget line. The other thing that's changed is that we pay a lot more for insurance and the costs for the Fall Fair have risen. Not a lot of other places that we can cut, unless we want to change what we are doing as an organization. One of the new budget lines that we've voted in is keeping Speaker Honorarium for the two general meetings we have, and Lena would like us to keep that. Bob asks if the absence of in-person general meetings might be keeping people from renewing their memberships. Mention about the possibility of a membership drive. Gus notes that the

deep years of the pandemic had great membership response, and maybe 2023 was an outlier? Hopefully membership will rebound. Lena thinks this is possible but would like to keep an eye on it. Maybe tail end of the year would be good time to consider a membership drive. Jane reminds us that there used to be a committee for membership, and perhaps we should think ahead of putting a similar group together—brainstorming ideas of how to reach people and spread the word. Lena remembers welcome letters for new neighbours. Susan McDonald suggests the base membership rate could be increased. And maybe include notice of where donations can be sent in the upcoming newsletter. Gus proposes that the base rate go to \$15 and next level to \$25. Lena thinks this is reasonable and would make a difference, but would like to see a change accompanied by a big thank you to everyone who is always paying up and pitching in. Might be worth looking up if we've ever raised the dues, some kind of context to accompany that. Gus notes that rate has been \$10 since 2000. Bob suggests framing how the fee goes toward an organization that puts thousands of volunteer hours into the community. Sue notes that PARA has a much higher rate—base rate of \$25. Lena suggests raising base/supporting dues from \$10, \$20, \$50 to \$15, \$30, and \$50. Bob suggests perhaps the Net Zero Committee could also provide support

Move to approve financials. Gus moves, Bob seconds, **motion approved.**

Motion to raise dues to \$15 and \$30 for first two levels from previous rate of \$10 and \$20.

Gus moves, Jody seconds, **motion approved.**

5. Business Arising from Past Minutes:

- 5.1 Zero waste project update**—Anne reports that Dave Hunsbuger is having success recruiting households to participate, Facebook group is growing. There is exciting momentum.
- 5.2 Governance committee** Gus reports an email exchange among members of the committee. Crafted versions of a constitutional amendment. Gus will be sending invitation this week for the group to get together and sort it out so they have something to present to the next board meeting to approve before the general meeting in May,
- 5.3 CNOY** Kerry reports that Fort York Food Bank raised \$188,686, huge success. Our two HVRA teams raised nearly \$30,000. Event was a success. Big thanks to our community!
- 5.4 Spring General Meeting** —Anne reports that our May meeting would be Tuesday May 21 but we could meet any night that week, depending on availability of councillor/ MPP/ Speaker. Gus has reported that hybrid would be too expensive, but also Kensington Gardens is no longer having gatherings of more than 35 so it looks like we're back on Zoom. Any thoughts on Speakers? Sue is thinking about "coming crisis" of heritage listings about to be expunged on January 1 2025 and properties that will be removed could not be protected from development for 5 years. Adam Wynn is doing lots of hustle and activity about this and may be appointed head of Citizens Committee to assist city to do quick designations—might be a possible speaker and we could recruit people locally to help city-wide. Anne suggests Alana Jones, new ED at 60 Borden St, creating positive space for people who need help with

housing. Would be interesting and inspiring talking about homelessness in general, and she's currently having an impact on the neighbourhood. Sue will look into heritage speaker, and check availability.

5.5 College Street Update Gus reports that biggest change is the streetcar stop is being moved to west of Major Street which means the offloading streetcar blocks Major Street traffic at College. Reason why they've changed it, clearway of sidewalk with intro of a bike lane is not big enough to allow for patios that are on the block just east of Major Street. Concern about this, had some good responses from Becky from the city. She's been on top of it, but we think this is a problem in the making, and it might be dangerous. It's going in, but it's going to be monitored. City wants feedback to know how it's working. Sue flags that Harbord Street is also going to be redone, and bike lanes are going to be redone on Harbord again. William Hopkins reports that HVRA will be invited to an upcoming stakeholder meeting about changes to Harbord Street. Jane notes that because configuration of the gap with bike lane on College Street, businesses are putting their garbage bins in a place that's making it difficult to see traffic.

5.6 Bur Oak Fund Susan McDonald talks about arrangement with Net Zero and Scadding Court so they'd have access to charitable receipts with Canada Helps, eligible because they're an environmental project. They've previously done fundraising amongst their small group of community members. Last year Tim Grant and Susan (and others) became involved in saving bur oak in Hospice Chapel Lane, and they used Scadding Court again and made the tree fundraiser a subset of their existing climate action fund. For the most part it worked out; they raised significant amount of money, \$15,000-\$17,000. Successful in getting contractor to give a discount and were able to pay for work to be done. It was completed in October. Second part of campaign to install downspouts, but there were technical and logistical issues with this and doubt that it would actually help, so abandoned that, and instead have Todd Irvine consult about deep fertilization with remaining funds in the next couple of weeks. City has budget this year to replace paving in alley with permeable stones. Lots of success. Problem: didn't think it through and funds were already existing in the account when tree funds were added, didn't pay attention to how much was actually there previously. Now after everything, money is left, don't know how much. Some should be Net Zero money, but need to have a thorough look at how much was specifically raised for the tree project, how much is left over and decide what to do with it. Don't want to do anything wrong in terms of Federal Government and tax receipts, don't want to be seen to be using project meant for one project one another. Lena went over everything designated for Bur Oak and things that were undesignated or designated for Net Zero. There are remaining funds—can't tell us exact number yet, but in the realm of \$2000 or \$2500. Enough to pay for some of these additional projects that specifically support Bur Oak. Lena's concern in general that if funds are raised for specific project and there is some left over that we have some mechanism for accountability for how to decide how to use those funds that people have donated toward a specific project (ie can money for Bur Oak go to support general Net Zero project?). Would be good to have a policy for what happens when we are stewarding funds for external or subcommittee projects that we have financial responsibility for. Anne suggests going forward, donation requests will include wording that any additional funds will be used for projects in a similar vein. She suggests that when totals are totalled, we will write to everyone who donated and tell them they can have a portion of their funds returned OR they can have their funds used for another project. Lena notes that funds will be used for project that supports the tree so that might not be necessary for this specific project, the important part is that we need a policy going forward for how to deal with these situations. Sue notes that funds have been raised and kept for heritage. Maybe Bur Oak

funds could be part of “a tree fund” and we can continue to maintain and can be used for tree projects in future. For next meeting, Susan will have numbers from fundraising and specific policy to vote on.

6. New Business:

6.1 Spring Clean Up Kerry will not be able to put this on this year, but we need to find a champion to take it on this year. Frances-Mary is going to speak to Kerry about possibly taking it on.

6.2 Spring newsletter deadline on March 28, items to Anne Kerekes.

6.3 Parkette at 51 Sussex Gus reports that everyone had a good look at slide show for the new park. Lots of good feedback on the plan.

6.4 St. Stephens Encampment—Jane has nothing to report, we have not heard back from the Councillor on this issue. Jane did attend results of the survey, has sent results to board. Survey run by third party in response to fact that city has handled encampment issues poorly. Survey to try to get feedback from RAs, businesses. Report to council coming soon. 17 reps from RAs, all with stories and concern for unhoused neighbours and other people living in the areas. Mostly what consultants have found out is that it’s not being handled consistently, 311 calls are bounced around, and councillors are handling it really differently. City needs to update Interdepartment Service Protocol. Things are happening (improvement at Allen Gardens) but not resolved. William Hopkins can’t speak to St. Stephens, very political and contentious. Can speak to encampments generally, most fundamentally that shelter system is under strain. 311 calls for specific problems with encampments. Question to William about concrete blocks that could be damaging tree roots—forestry and transportation can coordinate to come up with a more friendly solution. Jane notes conversation about broader human rights and perspectives, how to work things out and be fair.

6.5 Street Art potential project Anne heard from a resident in the North East who is interested in a mural at Harbord and Sussex Mews. Then heard from an artist looking for a wall, interested in mural about heritage figure Norman Cook. There is a street art program with City of Toronto that funded work on Croft—Jane notes that there already is a process in place for artists to work through so perhaps suggest artist work through that program. Discussion of how to get building owners to buy in to mural projects. Nick and Anne will loop up to pursue.

6.6 NW Traffic Situation FM reports on “Anarchy on Borden Street” as it’s devolved into a two-way street. No enforcements. Mirvish Village and opening of Niagara College and contractors have all resulted in more traffic on Borden, traffic ignoring street signs. Ramification of closing Lennox westbound traffic west of Bathurst—lots of consequences for people on the east side. Sue responds about Lennox, closing it eastbound cuts off traffic to Harbord Village. And now people are trying to figure out how to turn onto Bloor. Sue suggests that we reach out to Becky Katz who has been working streets and traffic. FM will follow up.

6.7 Heritage Designation—Sue reports HV heritage group are trying to put together a citizens’ coalition. **Sue would like board to authorize her going to Ellen Kowalchuk of Common Bond Collective www.cbcollective.ca/ who has been recommended, and potentially hire her student to do the designation with heritage with local buildings,** lots on Bloor, and College. 4000 heritage properties are going to use their listings. Gus moves, Susan McD. Seconds. **Motion approved.**

6.8 Recording of correspondence, for the record Anne reports that Sue’s motion (Feb 24) to join the Avenue Road Safety Coalition, passed by e-vote Feb 26

6.9 60 Borden: Anne would like everybody to read correspondence about current situation at 60 Borden. Things have turned around in a way that we never would have expected. New model for caring for vulnerable people. Challenge is money. They are doing a big fundraiser this yea. Anne urges us as a group to support the work that they're doing. She is going to meet with ED Alana Jones for more info on how we can support them.

- 7 **Committee and Area Rep Reports:** Acknowledgement of receipt only unless action or discussion is required.
- 8 **Adjournment:** Meeting adjourned at 9:24. Gus moves, Susan Mc seconds. (Happy Birthday, Gus!)

Minutes prepared by Kerry Clare in absence of Karen Laurence, Secretary, 2023 – 2024