

Admiral Heights Improvement Association
General Membership Meeting hosted at Navy-Marine Corps Stadium
October 4, 2022
Meeting Minutes

Board Attendees: Shivaughn Ahern, Jayme Brooks, Joe Flasher, Grant Garcia, Liz Uehlinger, Cat Marucci, Cindy Radulovich, and Amy Skinner.

Board Absences: Michelle Greenhalgh, Lauren Heier, and John Leupold.

In addition to board members, approximately 30 members of the community were in attendance.

Call to order: 7:01pm

Introduction of the AHIA board, Alderwoman Karma O'Neill, and Jesse Iliff of the SRA.

Mr. Jesse Iliff introduced himself as the director of the Severn River Association. AHIA is an active member of the SRA as our community is within the watershed and encompasses Weems Creek. The Severn River Association was established in 1911 and serves as a resource to communities in the watershed, conducts outreach opportunities, restoration projects, and addresses concerns that may impact the quality of our water. The Severn River Association's mission is to connect the people who live, work, and play on the Severn River to restore and protect it for all our communities. To learn more about the Severn River Association and how you can be a part of protecting our water, you can visit their website here: <https://severnriver.org/>

Alderwoman Karma O'Neill, representative for Ward 2, gave updates on the following:

- **Cedar Park Sidewalk:** The bid for the Cedar Park sidewalk project has gone out and the project has been awarded to a firm. However, work on the sidewalk is not permitted by national law to begin while school is in session. Currently, the project is set to begin in June 2023. There is no plan to change the design. The feedback that the city received was largely in support for the sidewalk as is. The temporary sidewalk is currently 3 feet wide. However, the final plan will be ADA certified at 5 feet wide, building 2 additional feet into yard space. Construction is slated to last 6-8 weeks and should be complete before the start of school in September 2023.
- **Intersection of Windell and Cedar Park Rd:** Alderwoman O'Neill advocated for a three-way stop sign at this intersection for the safety of pedestrians, specifically children walking to and from school. However, the 2 traffic studies that were conducted did not support this outcome. Alderwoman O'Neill wants to ensure that the intersection has at the very least, a flashing yellow school zone sign for the crosswalk.

A question arose from a resident about a potential crosswalk from Ludlow Rd. across Farragut to the Navy Stadium. Mr. Garcia, of the grounds committee, confirmed this was something that Mr. Chet Gladchuck, director of Navy athletics, would likely support as it had been discussed previously. A suggestion from another resident asked Alderwoman O'Neill to consider reevaluating Airbnb rentals in

Annapolis to include stricter rules and regulations for the protection and safety of residents. Alderwoman O'Neill also wanted to ensure that residents knew that Ward 2 not only encompasses Admiral Heights, but also includes Germantown – Homewood, the Clay Street area, West Annapolis, and Wardour. Alderwoman O'Neill is advocating for community through committees where residents can brainstorm and do projects within Ward 2 together. For more information on Alderwoman O'Neill's weekly newsletter that includes how she plans to vote on city agenda items, or to contact her directly please send an email to: aldoneill@annapolis.gov

President Shivaughn Ahern presented the 2022 highlights on the slide deck and highlighted the following:

- Oyster Restoration organized by community volunteer Sarah Holden, resulted in the successful release of 2,000 baby oysters on a reef in the bay as part of the Chesapeake Bay Foundation's oyster restoration efforts. There will be another batch of baby oysters arriving this fall. If interested in being part of this volunteer initiative, please contact Sarah Holden.
- Ms. Ahern awarded a thank you to Ms. Uehlinger, of the board's social committee, who organized AHIA's Inaugural Happy Hour at The Graduate on September 22. This event resulted in 9 new dues paying members and cost AHIA \$0.
- AHIA has recently switched to an all-digital newsletter. AHIA was spending over budget with not enough return on investment in the past, so the decision was made to make the newsletter digital with the addition of postcard mailers which are more cost efficient and environmentally friendly. In the future, AHIA will also be using postcard mailers to target neighbors who have not paid their dues and/or welcoming new neighbors into our community. A resident raised a fair concern about senior citizens in our neighborhood potentially being able to opt-in to a paper newsletter due to lack of electronic means. Ms. Ahern noted that this is a concern the board is sensitive to and will be taken into consideration as communication efforts continue to be solidified for 2023.
- Ms. Ahern presented the new website to membership at this time, noting a thank you to Mr. Flasher and Ms. Brooks, of the board's communication committee, for their hard work in the re-structuring and modernization of the website: <https://www.admiralheights.org/>
- Ms. Ahern spoke about the past few years being out of the ordinary due to the COVID-19 pandemic. She noted that this year the AHIA board, largely made up of new board members, has made a consistent effort to rebuild relationships with organizations and organize committees to better serve our community.

President Ahern then spoke about upcoming events:

- October 15, Fall Fest at Halsey Park: returning to Halsey Park on 10/15 from 2:00-5:00pm.

- October 29, Navy Tailgate at Navy-Marine Corps Stadium: This was a past AHIA event that has recently gained some renewed interest in the community. AHIA has reserved a tailgate spot for the 10/29 football game against Temple. Ms. Ahern expressed that the board needs an organizer and a volunteer committee to make this event a success. AHIA also has the means to help secure group tickets at a group rate. There has been some recent interest on the Admiral Heights Facebook page for volunteers. AHIA will connect volunteers to help organize this event.
- A November happy hour is being coordinated and will be announced shortly.
- AHIA's landscaping contracts only include mowing and maintenance but do not include beautifying. We need grounds volunteers for fall clean-up assistance.
- December Santa Run: AHIA will set up the table for the yearly Santa Run at Halsey Park. AHIA is awaiting solidification of the date from the fire department and will communicate details to neighbors when they become available.

Ms. Ahern then discussed committee volunteer opportunities (communication, social, grounds) for Admiral Heights neighbors. The board will need additional hands and volunteers to continue to make events successful and to upkeep our neighborhood. AHIA currently has 1 board vacancy and will have an additional 2 vacancies before the close of this election term. Board members have already made a concerted effort to recruit up to 3 new board members with email blasts and social media posts, with very little response. Any dues paying members in good standing that would like to be considered for a board appointment, can send an email to President Ahern (president@admiralheights.org) with a brief write up to be presented to the board at their next meeting. Members who would like to be considered for the next election cycle, will need to be elected by general membership in March 2023.

Upon motion duly made, seconded, and unanimously carried, the minutes of the March 2022 General Membership Meeting were approved.

Treasurer's Report: Currently our membership is 185 of 600 homes. AHIA had a goal this year to have 1/3 of the neighborhood as members by the end of 2023. President Ahern is certain we will reach and surpass that goal. Overall, expenses are up. There has been unplanned tree maintenance with some maintenance remaining, increased property maintenance, and more expensive operations (i.e., PO box more than doubled in price). The treasurer reports that efforts to increase membership are working, though we had a later start than anticipated due to unforeseen circumstances with the previous board. Increased mailings will help drive membership for the rest of this year into the next.

Budget Recommendations: AHIA board recommends that we increase dues from \$40 to \$50 per member in the new fiscal year. Overall, AHIA has found that many community members are willing to accept increases in membership dues to further support the beautification of our neighborhood and community events. AHIA recommends that we maintain Kayak Rack rentals at \$45. Mr. Flasher and Mr.

Garcia noted that there was an analysis done by AHIA a few years ago that indicated that AHIA's kayak rack rentals were priced fairly. It was noted that we do not offer any other services with the \$45 fee and kayak owners are solely responsible for the care and security of their boats. The AHIA board also recommends that there is a 1-year operating reserve in the checking account. The board maintains that this is fiscally smart should there be any emergencies or unplanned expenses outside of the budget. President Ahern noted to membership that there are no funds allocated for events in the budget. The AHIA board has structured future events to be by sponsorship, in which we nurture working relationships with both large and small local businesses, or that events are run by donation.

Discussion:

- It was noted by a neighbor that the Boat Club lease of \$1 per year brings in no revenue for AHIA. A discussion ensued about the \$750 per year that both the Boat Club pays and AHIA pays (\$1500 total) for future restoration of Admiral Heights dockage. These funds are maintained in a separate account. Mr. Garcia made note to speak to AHIA's treasurer, Mr. Leupold, to be sure that we are also tracking inflation.
- A neighbor had a question about a Special Community Benefit District and what the mechanics are to have one in AHIA. There was some previous discussion about Admiral Heights becoming a Special Community Benefit District prior to the pandemic. However, the laws were recently altered. Previously, 51% majority was needed to agree to a SCBD. It is now a super majority of 66.6% of homeowners.
- AHIA had a question from a neighbor about family members or multiple members in a household being members of the association. AHIA has resolved that any person can be a member if dues have been paid. If two adults in a household would like to have a vote or if both would like to be considered for a board position, both must pay the membership fee. The membership fee is per person.
- A neighbor suggested that automatic membership renewal be something that AHIA investigates for renewing and ensuring membership continuity. Mr. Flasher noted that this was previously an option, however, neighbors were becoming easily confused since membership is renewed all year. This allows for a steady stream of revenue for AHIA throughout the fiscal year.
- There was a general recap of the Admiral Heights Safety meeting with Officer Smikle. A neighbor suggested that AHIA offer a day when Officer Smikle can come do safety checks on homes for AHIA members.
- A member of our community also suggested that AHIA consider a Senior Citizen discount for AHIA membership, much like AARP.

Upon motion duly made, seconded, and unanimously carried, the 2023 Budget was approved.

There being no further business before the board and the general membership, the **meeting adjourned at 8:25 pm**.