

Old Town Neighborhood Association Meeting

October 9, 2024 Minutes

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7:00-9:000 pm

MIIS McKone Building

The meeting was called to order by President Gari Soulé at 7:00 pm. The meeting was held in the conference room of the MIIS McKone Building, 499 Pierce Street, as well as live via Zoom.

PRESENT - Officers and Directors attending in person were Gari Soulé (President), Nancy Soulé (Secretary), Mary Grove (Treasurer), Corey Brunson (Vice President) and Susan Ricketson (NCIP). Others attending in person were Dr. P. K. Diffenbaugh, Rosemary Robert, Bret Grove, Suzie Grimes (Undergrounding chairperson), Roberta Myers, Bob Evins, Kevin Dayton, Joyce Haferman, and Cathy Collum (social co-chair). Attending on Zoom were director Phyllis Bussey and Tim Gadus.

SPEAKER – Dr. P. K. Diffenbaugh – Dr. Diffenbaugh, Superintendent of the Monterey Peninsula Unified School District, spoke on the progress of projects within the school district, and the need for further funds to complete the many projects still to be completed. He also spoke on the issue of teacher retention and need for affordable teacher housing. He distributed informational packets for Measure A on the November ballot, for a \$350 million bond. Our district ranks 258 out of 268 in terms of total compensation for mid career professionals, and our turnover rate is 20% annually.

MINUTES-The minutes were reviewed. As there were no corrections, president Gari Soulé accepted them approved as read.

TREASURER REPORT -Mary Grove reported that we have a current balance of \$4,687.18, after expenses of \$87 for the forum, and our post office box rental of \$182. Our total paid membership is 67 households

NEIGHBORHOOD AND COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM (NCIP) – Susan Ricketson reported that the city postponed the September meeting to approve the projects that will move forward, subject to the budget. The date of November 19 is tentatively targeted for this important meeting, and it is suspected the city wants to wait until after the election of three members of the city council (mayor and council seats for district 3 and 4). There was discussion on the history of NCIP and the mayoral appointment process. New neighborhoods have been recently created; Ryan Ranch, with no residents, the Presidio, Naval Post Graduate School and La Mesa military housing.

UNDERGROUNDING COMMITTEE REPORT – Suzie Grimes reported that the undergrounding committee has contacted city manager Hans Uslar about meeting to discuss how a master plan for undergrounding utilities might be organized.

SOCIAL COMMITTEE -Phyllis Bussey reported that reservations for our annual Membership Appreciation Party at the Perry House are going well. We have over 50 reservations, over half of our maximum, and this with just nine days of accepting these. She will be going over the menu with the Events by Classic caterers. She has been getting volunteers to help at check in. There was discussion

that we pay for the staff \$50 per person, and that in the past that has been 6 staff. It was suggested that we raise that. Mary Grove made a motion to increase the stipend to \$75 per staff person, seconded by Corey Brunson and the motion passed unanimously.

Phil reminded attendees that the social committee has organized a bocce game for October 19 at 10:30 to noon at the Custom House courts. Nancy will continue to have that in the bulletins that go out to over 200 homes.

ELECTION FORUMS – Gari reported that Old Town split the cost of three election forums with the New Monterey Neighborhood Association, covering half the rent for Hilltop Community Center. We also announced in bulletins forums city wide, to provide residents with information on the mayoral candidates, the district 3 and 4 city council candidates, the propositions, the airport board, the MPUSD Bond Measure A and the water district candidates.

CITY MEETINGS – Nancy Soulé reported on the recent city council meeting which discussed the future of the Lower Presidio Park. The city received a request from the military to build an expensive retaining wall around the Presidio curve, estimated a year and a half ago to cost 1.5 million in addition to the \$80k they pay for maintenance annually. The city is looking at alternatives, but all spoke about the desire to retain the park and museum for public access. Among options would be to turn it back to the military, or see if the federal government could make it a federal park or national monument. The city will do more research. There was no action at this time.

NEW BUSINESS

NEWSLETTER – Nancy said she wants to get a newsletter promoting our membership drive and party at the Perry House, among our usual updates. She requested any articles be received by Sunday, October 13, to allow Liliana Potigian sufficient time to add the graphic work and get it published in a timely manner.

NEXT SPEAKER- It was suggested that Clyde Roberson speak on the history and background of neighborhood associations at our January 8 meeting.

ANNOUNCEMENTS – Cathy Collum announced that there will be an historic reenactment of the first Constitutional Convention at Colton Hall on Sunday, October 13, from 12:30 to 2:30.

NEXT MEETING AND ADJOURNMENT- Gari announced that the next meeting is scheduled for January 8, and adjourned the meeting at 8:55.