

# Old Town Neighborhood Association Meeting

## *January 8, 2025 Minutes*

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7:00-9:000 pm

MIIS McKone Building

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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), Max Troyer (webmaster), Susan Ricketson (NCIP) and Phyllis Bussey (Social Chair). Others attending in person were Bret Grove, Tim Gadus, Sasha Kingsley (MIIS), and Ashley Arrocha (MIIS).

**SPEAKER – Sasha Kingsley and Ashley Arrocha from M.I.I.S. –** Sasha Kingsley and Ashley Arrocha discussed the housing difficulties for students attending the Middlebury Institute of International Studies. 40% of students are international. Although in the past, students were housed within the local community, currently there are between 20-25 students that have no homes. They discussed that even a room in a home currently rents for \$1000-1400 per month, and a studio from \$1900-2000. Most have no cars. Application fees of \$40 each are common. It was suggested that they contact the mayor about a regulation limiting application fees. There was a suggestion for having a list of students that would like to meet a host family on a social/holiday basis, where friendships can be formed. OTNA will also address the issue in the bulletins that usually go out every few weeks.

**MINUTES**-The minutes were reviewed. As there were no corrections, Mary Grove made a motion to approve, seconded by Phyllis Bussey, and was passed by all.

**TREASURER REPORT** -Mary Grove reported that we have a current balance of \$4,636.99, after expenses of \$675 for the Perry House staff in November, and miscellaneous postage of \$20. 33 memberships renewed at or since the membership appreciation event at the Perry House. We had 78 paid memberships in 2024.

**NEIGHBORHOOD AND COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM (NCIP) –** Susan Ricketson reported that the new NCIP group has met. Many of the new representatives had to decline to vote as they had no knowledge of the projects to which they were asked to approve.

**UNDERGROUNDING COMMITTEE REPORT –** Tim Gadus reported that there is a new transformer expected for Fremont St.

**SOCIAL COMMITTEE** -Phyllis Bussey reported that there was a lot of good energy and a great turnout for our November membership appreciation evening at the Perry House. The only suggestion is to announce the guitarist by name, along with the rest of the board. Cathy Callum has been tasked with selecting a spring activity, and bocce was discussed. Our annual picnic in Veteran's Park is planned for July, but cannot be yet confirmed.

**WEBMASTER** -Nancy announced that she had received the historical report for the historical Hellam property and will add that property to our historic homes walk.

**CERT** – Thor sent his report that there had been a deployment of 42 members for the December 14 storm. The current CERT class is full, but another class will be offered in a few months.

### **NEW BUSINESS**

**NEXT SPEAKER-** It was suggested that we ask Mayor Tyller Williamson to speak about issues or get the city arborist, Justin Pruity, to talk about the permit process for removing trees that threaten homes. It was also discussed that when there is action from the City Manager on undergrounding, it would be good to have Ray Meyers come and give an update.

**ELECTIONS-** Gari announced that elections will be held at our March meeting. The directors attending said they were willing to be on the ballot for another term. We always welcome new people to participate. Anyone else wanting to run for a board position or be on a committee should contact him.

**NEXT MEETING AND ADJOURNMENT-** Gari announced that the next meeting is scheduled for March 12, and adjourned the meeting at 8:55.