Hillcrest Residents Association Minutes

January 10, 2022

**Attending:** Laurel Lawrence, Karen Konarski-Hart, Beth Person, Marian Boyd, Tommie Kelley, Barbara Miles, Katherine Barnett Jones, Antoinette Johnson, Caroline Reddman, Janet Flegal, Pittman Ware

**Absent:** Jan Hollenberg, Ross Noland

Chair Luke Kramer called the meeting to order at 6:02 p.m.

**Approval of Minutes:**

**Motion made by Karen Konarski Hart to approve the Minutes. The motion was seconded by Lauren Lawrence and passed unanimously.**

**Treasurer’s Report:**

The report was not available, but Jan Hollenberg will forward before the next meeting.

**Public Officials:**

Tippi McCullough: The House budget meetings will start tomorrow. The Governor will outline and present his budget and DFA will present their projections for a balanced budget, then will hear requests from all state departments. The process should last 30 – 45 days. The filing period for candidates will begin January 22, 2022. There will be quite a few changes in both the senate and the house for the next term.

Kathy Webb: First of all, I want to say that this afternoon I went to capitol with Tippi McCullough and had a positive visit with Governor Hutchinson. Topics included the food deserts in Little Rock and across the state. There are several Arkansas counties without grocery stores. They talked about violence issues. This was a good example of productive conversations among all levels of government. When state and federal governments cut resources, the cities and counties are left to pick up the slack. At the last board meeting, we did pass a resolution to fund preliminary work for a drainage problem on Midland and Lee Street. There has been an increase in gun fire in Little Rock and the city council knows that is unacceptable. Webb is running again for City Director Ward 3. The quarterly LRPD 12th street meeting is Thursday night at 6:00 p.m.

Mayor Frank Scott: Scott stated that it is always a pleasure to be with this group. As you know, Kathy Webb is a constant advocate for Ward 3. To add, we are diligently working on a solution for gun issues in our city, with the state issues of access to guns.

President’s Comments: Kramer stated that there is no official action taking place this evening regarding the DOD. Kramer met on with Bruce McMath and a couple of people from the opposition on Saturday. They looked at the latest proposal and there is still contention on a couple of things. Kramer asked the DOD committee to come back together again to look at this. 1. The DOD committee started at a recommendation of 30% for a one-story and 37% for a two-story and has moved to a 42.5% ratio of space to try to appease the Opposition Group but they are set on the 45%. Also, there was a preamble set in place, but since movement has lessened the regulations, the DOD committee removed the preamble. The Opposition Group wants a preamble in the recommendations. Also, a question about commercial height has been raised but apparently this is not a sticking point. The DOD committee is working diligently to bring recommendations to the board that meet the goals of retaining our neighborhood’s historic standing and scale while encouraging as little opposition as possible—this is a very difficult task and is not being taken lightly.

New business.

**Communications Committee:** We plan to get website up and going by next Sunday. Should have some membership issues to work out, but all will be better than before.

There was discussion regarding the New Year’s Eve Gun Shots.

There was also discussion regarding the increased numbers of homeless in Hillcrest. A young lady has recently set up in front of the Post Office. HRA will work with the city and other non profits. Mayor Scott added that his people will work so that people are transitioned to the appropriate places and/or nonprofits. This is a 911 issue. Kramer added that when you call 911 or 311 to be very specific.

There was discussion on a change in our by-laws. We are doing this so that we can ask for a waiver for the penalty on not filing taxes. We need to change one word on by laws so that we can move on with our request.

Karen Konarski-Hart made a motion to amend the by-laws for the purpose of editing for clarity to change Section 8.06, Tax matters. Sentence 3. “To the extent required, the Board **shall** file, or direct the filing of , tax returns.” Marian Boyd seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

**Education Committee:** Ross Noland was pleased to announce that the School Milage passed.

**Preservation and Planning Committee:** Bob Keltner announced that his dog, George was recognized out in the neighborhood and is impossible to live with. Keltner reminded us that he Certainly appreciates all the support of the HRA and all involved, especially Toni. Committee didn’t meet this month because of holidays. In addition to gearing up to support DOD, there are a few things on our list to circle back to, including the Markham Road Diet and contributions to the HRA website.

**Preserve Arkansas Awards:** HRA will get a table for the awards as we have several Hillcrest recipieints. In addition to Keltner getting an award for outstanding achievement in historic preservation, Doug Martin won for Hill Station and Jim Pfeifer won for his articles for Hillcrest Life, Heights Living and his social media posts. The ceremony, to be held January 28 at the Governor’s Mansion is sold out.

**Membership Committee:** Marian Boyd reported that membership renewals have slowed down considerably. We talked about sending letters out recruiting prospects. We delayed this in the fall, because we were so close to having our final DOD recommendations and wanted to include them in the letter. Then, we were going to send at the first of year. As we got ready to go, we thought it would be good to wait so that we can say, “Visit our new website to sign up and learn what’s going on. So, we are waiting until next Sunday. Boyd reported that there is still time for board members to redeem themselves in submitting names for potential members. At this point, only four board members have turned in their list of potential members. She will send the list out one more time. Karen suggested getting something for the HMA.

Gmail. Boyd reported that the membership email account has been suspended and needs help resolving this matter.

**Arts & Aesthetics:** Boyd reported that we are still on hold waiting to hear from HMA regarding their willingness to co-sponsor the mural at Canon Grill. Daniel Bryant had agreed to make this ask on behalf of HRA.

**Travel Club:** Travel Bugs. Boyd reported that the Hillcrest Travel Bugs have planned a pilot trip to Portugal and Spain. Katherine Lu has put together an itinerary. As a reminder, this is not an official program of HRA, but the board voted in December to help promote the trip through social media and HRA E-blasts.

City Councilman, Antwon Phillips joined the meeting late and reminded the group that he appreciates the work of the HRA.

Kramer reminded us that we need to start planning for the Eclipse, as in the past, hotel rooms in other cities in the path of the eclipse have had hotel rooms sold out two years before the vent.

There was discussion on recruitment for Committees. Karen Ryall agreed to join the communications committee.

We still need chairs and members for the Parks Committee and the Safety Committee

Boyd asked to take some time to think what kind of help she needs with the Membership Committee and the Arts & Aesthetics, though a chair for Arts & Aesthetics is needed.

**As there was no other business, Konarski Hart made a motion to adjourn. Johnson seconded the motion. The meeting adjourned at 7:06.**