

Mt. Washington Community Council
Board Meeting Minutes of February 1, 2023, 7pm

Call to Order

A meeting of the MWCC board was held via Zoom link on this day. All board members were in attendance: Jaime Castle, Kristina Kew, Michael Gray, Sophie Roberto, Wade Johnston, Karen Luken, Priscilla Elgersma and Julie Rimer. Sophie Roberto Castle called the meeting to order at 7:028pm.

Sophie led the meeting until elections were held. Julie volunteered to take meeting notes and continued taking notes after elections were held.

The meeting agenda was unanimously approved.

Michael read the minutes of the January 18, 2023 general membership meeting and the minutes were approved by a unanimous vote.

Officer Elections Held

Members were unanimously elected to the following officer roles:

President: Jaime Castle

Vice President: Sophie Roberto

Secretary: Julie Rimer

Treasurer: Kristina Kew

Non-Officer Appointments

Jaime gave an overview of what each non-officer appointment entails. Those interested in these appointments self-nominated and were unanimously approved:

NSP Manager: Karen

This position requires keeping meticulous records and filling out many forms on the approved NSP projects (tracking hours spent on projects, collecting receipts, ensuring progress of project, etc.). Jaime noted that clarifying responsibilities to the person approved for an NSP project upfront (abiding by deadlines, retaining receipts, tracking volunteer hours, etc.) should help the NSP manager with oversight. Karen stated she would recuse herself from votes on any NSP projects suggested by the MWCURC since she is a board member of that organization.

NSP Review Committee Designee and back up person: Jaime is the NSP Review Committee Designee. Kristina and Karen offered to serve as backups if there are meetings of the review committee that Jaime cannot attend. A member of the MWCC board must attend every NSP Review Committee meeting.

The NSP Review Committee Designee serves on a peer review group for all NSP proposals and attends all of the committee's meetings. Jaime attended the NSP Review Committee meeting that was held on January 27, 2023.

Pumpkin Chuck Chair(s): Priscilla

The Pumpkin Chuck Chair serves as the point person to organize the myriad facets of the Pumpkin Chuck. Sophie offered to help Priscilla. Kristina stressed that we will all need to help with this event as there is so much to do. Priscilla stated she will start the process of obtaining permits from Stanbery Park and the City of Cincinnati. She will also investigate obtaining insurance. Jaime is willing to work on organizing food trucks for the event. Last year, food trucks paid \$100 to participate. Wade said he will volunteer for the day of the Pumpkin Chuck and will try to recruit other volunteers to help.

Other initiatives/events: No other specific initiatives or events were discussed at the meeting. We will discuss these as they arise in future meetings.

Unfinished Business

Collaborative meeting: We unanimously voted to approve participating in a collaborative meeting of the various groups that represent Mt. Washington (MWCC, MWCURC, SPAC, MWCDC). Jaime will reach out to Joe Sandman (MWCDC) who proposed the groups meet about potential meeting dates and times.

Urban Parking Overlay Update: A discussion ensued about the status of a potential UPOD in Mt. Washington. Julie said that 26 of the neighbors who would be most affected by the adoption of a UPOD participated in a virtual meeting with City Planning in September 2022. There was no support among meeting attendees and many concerns were expressed. Wade said he thought it would be good to reduce minimum parking requirements so there is not a burden on new businesses to build new parking spaces in/around our dense business district. He also said he believes we have plenty of on-street and off-street parking in the business district, and thinks it is an ineffective use of real estate in an area we want to be walkable and less car-oriented. Julie said a business can apply for a variance if the business feels it can't operate successfully within current parking ordinances. We concluded that we don't know enough about what a UPOD would mean for Mt. Washington and concluded we need to reach out to the City to better understand this.

CORA initiative to put mountain bike trails in Stanbery Park: Priscilla explained that SPAC (Stanbery Park Advisory Committee) was the last to find out about the CORA/MWCDC proposal to put mountain bike trails in Stanbery Park. Julie stated the group that has provided park oversight for decades (SPAC) should have been consulted immediately. Wade Johnston gave an update on the consulting group that is evaluating Stanbery Park and public areas along the Ohio River for the installation of mountain bike trails through a grant CORA obtained. Wade said the complexity of issues in Stanbery Park is well beyond the scope of this project, that the maintenance of our trails would need to be put in order before anything like mountain bike trails could be considered. Priscilla stated there is a park board trail crew that is well aware of the trail issues in the park. There are many issues with erosion in the park, as well as a great need for extensive trail work on the existing hiking trails. We agreed to indefinitely table the issue of mountain bike trails in Stanbery Park.

New Business

Schedule a Date for a Director's Retreat

Karen suggested a half-day retreat would be a great opportunity to brainstorm what we want to accomplish in 2023. She suggested we think about where we could go for the retreat. All agreed this was a good idea. Karen stated it was important that communication be excellent between the acronyms in Mt. Washington (MWCC, MWCURC, MWDC, SPAC). We must be unified before we approach Cincinnati

City Council for support of any kind. Please email Jaime any suggestions for a venue for the retreat. Someone suggested we consider holding the retreat at the Cincinnati Nature Center.

Timeline and Process for NSP Projects' Approval and Submission

At the general membership meeting on February 15, we need to urge the community to submit NSP project ideas to info@mwcc.org. Let the community know that March 8, one week before the general membership meeting, is the deadline for submitting ideas. Ideas will be voted on in the March 15 general membership meeting. Those suggesting ideas can present their project ideas at the March 15 meeting. This timing will allow us to do our NSP submissions by the April 14 deadline. NSP has rolling submissions.

Karen stated we need to understand the criteria for evaluating the NSP suggestions, that we must be sure the projects we advance meet NSP guidelines. Karen suggested we could use the following criteria to evaluate project submissions if we receive requests exceeding our NSP budget:

- The number and diversity of Mt. Washington residents that will benefit from the project.
- The willingness of the organization to help make the project a success (i.e., promote events, provide in-kind services).
- If applicable, a demonstration of how the organization will maintain the project

Priscilla said she has submitted NSP suggestions for Madcap Puppets and Shakespeare in the Park.

Meeting Minutes to Website Duty Designation

Sophie said her father may be willing to explain how to upload meeting minutes to Julie. Sophie's father designed the MWCC website. Julie will contact Sophie when the board minutes are ready to post. Jamie and Priscilla said to put a notation or watermark on the minutes that they are "pending approval."

Priscilla suggested we should have one permanent email address for the MWCC president. Kristina Kew said that email address already exists at president@mwcc.org.

Roving Packer Truck

Julie contacted Emily from Keep Cincinnati Beautiful to confirm roving packer trucks are still available. The request for a packer truck must be affiliated with a clean-up event that is registered with KCB at least 2 weeks in advance of when the packer truck is needed. The Department of Public Services provides the trucks at no cost. If the collection is for yard waste, debris must be in segments of less than 4 feet long and weigh less than 40 pounds.

Karen and Kristina have noticed that trash piles tend to form in Cincinnati near the end of each month near apartment buildings as monthly leases end and people move out, leaving too much debris for the apartment dumpsters to handle. As a result, unsightly trash piles have formed in various areas of our community, such as an open dump that is currently on Salvador Street. Perhaps the packer trucks could help with the disposal of these piles. Karen stated that the piles frequently include large appliances and furniture. Julie will contact KCB to see if areas such as the Salvador Street dump can be addressed by the packer trucks.

Karen explained that KCB is offering financial awards to communities with the most successful clean-up efforts. She said the awards will go to three communities in the amounts of \$5000, \$3000 and \$2000. Karen said these awards are a big incentive to conduct a very successful cleanup in Mt. Washington.

Coffee with the Chief

Jaime will represent Mt. Washington at this event.

Interview with Kim Conger

Kim is a faculty member in the School of Public and International Affairs at the University of Cincinnati. She is conducting research about the community council system in Cincinnati and would like to interview members of the Mt. Washington Community Council to better understand the community council and how it contributes to democracy and good neighborhoods in the city.

Karen's opinion is that it is premature for us to participate as we have just begun to work together. If we do participate, it should be at least a few months from now. Karen will reach out to Kim to find out her timeline and how the information will be used and will follow up with us on this.

Any topic of concern

Priscilla wants to make sure the community is moving forward in renaming the Recreation Center in Mark Celsor's memory. This endeavor is being spearheaded by John Hudson and Eric Franz. Priscilla will follow up on this issue to determine what we can do to support this effort.

Wade Johnston is willing to work with Councilman Mark Jeffreys on pedestrian safety issues. Priscilla mentioned we need a crosswalk at Oxford since so many children from Sands Montessori walk to Stanbery Park.

A discussion ensued about the beleaguered tree medians on Beechmont Avenue near Skytop Pavilion. Cars have repeatedly hit the trees in this median. Two newly planted replacement trees were recently hit and destroyed by a car. Karen said there has been a suggestion that the builder of the large apartment complex at Skytop Pavilion might be willing to pay for the care of the median. Karen said there may be City funds we can access for the regular care of the medians. She will talk with Michael Cervay about this.

Announcements/Upcoming Events

Jaime asked everyone to think about interesting speakers that could present to the community council and to bring those suggestions forward.

Jaime would like to acknowledge Elissa Pogue's contributions to MWCC in some way, perhaps by planting a tree in her honor or by making a donation to a charity that was specified in Elissa's brother's obituary. Jaime asked us all to think about possibilities and we will discuss them at the next board meeting.

The MWCC general membership meeting is at 7pm, February 15, at the Mt. Washington Recreation Center.

Good of the Order

Jaime explained what this means, that this portion of the meeting is an opportunity to acknowledge people who are making exceptional contributions to the community. Jaime Castle said she wanted to acknowledge all that Bob Wetterer does for Mt. Washington, particularly the huge undertaking of the annual Mt. Washington Holiday Walk. Priscilla said she wanted to acknowledge all that Judy Zehren has done and continues to do for the community for decades.

Adjournment The meeting was adjourned at 8:34pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Julie Rimer

Pending Approval