

Algiers Point Association Board of Directors

Minutes of Meeting of January 18, 2018

Board Members in attendance were: Susan Aspinwall, Joe Bonney, Rob Booms, Connie Burks, Brian Dufour, Kelsey Foster, Skip Gallagher, Vlad Ghelase, Virginia Hebert, Paul Langenwaller, Leann Logsdon, Gary Mouton, Marty Stroble, Austin Wilty, and Reagan Reynolds Wilty. Judge Anderson-Trahan, Leighton Barrett-Strong and Sheila Joy were absent.

Call to Order: Rob Booms was recognized by the board for his years of dedicated service as President of the Algiers Point Association. Rob graciously acknowledged the board's sign of appreciation and expressed confidence in the incoming President, handing the gavel to Kelsey Foster. Skip added words of thanks and encouragement to both Rob and Kelsey.

Minutes: The minutes of the November 18th meeting were approved.

Treasurer's Report: Income activity since the last report included memberships (\$624.00) and a donation (\$500.00), while expenses (\$860.97) were associated with the annual membership party, bringing the bank balance to \$31,186.64. The report was approved.

Guest Presentation: Mike Bertel of Bertel Construction updated the board on his firm's residential development, Patterson Point. Two houses facing Atlantic Avenue are in progress and the company is about to break ground on two more houses. The property contains 40 building sites. Mr. Bertel wanted to continue to keep the APA informed about the project and his team will be planning a neighborhood event at Warren's Corner to answer any questions.

Committee Reports

Civic Engagement: The Riverview neighborhood just upriver from Algiers Point is concerned that a proposed apartment complex along Brooklyn Avenue will in ten years resemble a housing project in the area that has since been demolished. Rob and Skip testified before the City Planning Commission on behalf of the Riverview neighborhood. Last April, the Algiers Point Association wrote a letter to the Executive Director of the New Orleans City Planning Commission advocating for assurances by developers of visual and pedestrian access to the Mississippi River, public amenities, adequate parking, and green infrastructure. The letter concluded with a request for full neighborhood

association participation in the decision-making process concerning any development bonuses and design review.

To date, the developer's proposed improvements, offered in exchange for increased density, appear in the plans as landscaping and a tiny park. Of great concern to Riverview, Algiers Point, and other New Orleans riverfront neighborhoods is the increase in apartments from 150 to the 381 requested by the developer. There are other serious issues particular to this proposed site: an active railroad runs along Brooklyn Avenue, Lamarque Street, which runs through the development, is city property, and another portion of the site is not owned by the developer. The APA will continue to support the Riverview neighborhood, asking APA Civic Engagement Committee members to meet with Riverview representatives as the Riverview community formulates its plan of specific design requests.

Events Committee: The Events Committee meets at 7:00 PM on the third Tuesday of the month in Mt. Olivet's church hall. Gary distributed an outline of proposed 2018 APA events for board members to review. Plans for the coming year include **service projects** six times spread throughout the year and a First Anniversary celebration for the **Free Lil Pantry** on February 4th. The board approved making a \$250 donation, an amount recommended by the Grants Committee, to the Free Lil Pantry to support its work in addressing community needs. Volunteers are requested for the annual **ALLA Brunch** on February 4th to help serve breakfast to officers at the NOPD Fourth District before they dispatch to parade routes. The **NOLA Tree Project** is asking for publicity and secure overnight storage for trees before its distribution day of free trees in March. Vlad added that the Newcomb Art Museum at Tulane is sponsoring adoption of publicly-accessible fruit trees this month.

Public Safety Committee: The Commander of the NOPD Fourth District met with Skip today (January 18th). The Algiers Police Advisory Committee (APAC) meetings are held monthly on the second Wednesday. Residents are encouraged to attend.

Neighborhood Improvement Committee: Sue reported that the doggie waste bag distribution ("**Scoop Dat**") boxes that were constructed and distributed last year are being utilized throughout the neighborhood. The committee began a neighborhood-wide initiative encouraging residents to remind each other to clean out the **storm drains** on their blocks. The Knights of Columbus will clean the storm drains for Holy Name of Mary Church. The New Orleans Department of Public Works has been systematically cleaning drains. The trash containers in **Larkin Park** have disappeared and the water fountain there has not yet been repaired.

Membership and Communications: Membership totaled 320 in 2017 and already in the new calendar year, 174 members have joined the Algiers Point Association, making it a standout among neighborhood associations throughout the city.

Old Business

The railroad overpass at the **Canal Street Ferry Terminal** has been funded but plans do not show it to be covered. The APA continues to advocate for a covered bridge over the railroad tracks. The public input meeting addressing the terminal design has been rescheduled.

The **APA Advisory Board**, stipulated in the By-Laws, was approved. Members are:

Jackie Clarkson
Fay Faron
Amy Hubbell
Dylan Knoll
Derrick Martin
Vinnie Povel
Heather Shields
Lorraine Summers
Joe Toomey
Michael Verderosa

New Business

The newly-formed **Grants Committee** met on January 11th to review APA funding of neighborhood projects over the last three years and to begin to formulate systematic guidelines for considering future funding requests. In addition to APA board members, Tyler Hayes attended the meeting as a representative of Confetti Kids, Inc., a grassroots nonprofit organization dedicated to improving the quality of life of children in Algiers Point. The Grants Committee made the following recommendations to the board:

Confetti Kids

- 1) Candy Land Ball – \$750 donation
- 2) Mardi Gras Parade – The APA has made a donation to the 2018 parade. Plans for future years will be discussed with Confetti Kids via the APA Events Committee.

Algiers Economic Development Foundation

- 1) Wednesdays on the Point -- APA sponsorship only, with the series scaled back to 3-4 weeks in the Fall
- 2) The Bonfire in December – \$1000 donation/sponsorship

SOUL (Sustaining Our Urban Landscape) – The APA will encourage residents to volunteer to plant trees in the Riverview neighborhood.

Compost N.O.W. (New Orleans Waste) – \$360 donation to fund a paid worker for the first quarter of 2018 to oversee the weekly collection of frozen food scraps on Saturday afternoons from 2:00-3:30 PM at Hubbell Library.

ALLA Brunch for NOPD Fourth District – \$300 donation

Robert E. Nimms Jazz Walk of Fame (National Park Service) – restoration to be funded from grants received (grant proposals to be written by Algiers Point volunteers)

A discussion followed to work out exactly how the APA Board will go about reviewing the committee's funding recommendations with diligence while still giving appropriate weight to the Grants Committee evaluation protocol. The general consensus was that the Grants Committee would offer recommendations to the board at regular intervals, perhaps quarterly. At those general board meetings, funding recommendations would be considered in the context of the APA's current financial position, budgetary outlook, and matters at hand. Motions by board members could then be put forth to approve, modify, qualify, or deny funding requests.

The board voted to approve the \$300 donation to the **ALLA Brunch**, with the understanding that receipts for purchases would be submitted to the APA treasurer. The board also voted to approve the \$360 donation to **Compost N.O.W.**, with the understanding that there would be an educational component on the benefits of this particular composting initiative. Vlad opposed the motion in favor of a broader approach to composting by individual households. (Note: The \$250 donation to **Free Lil Pantry** was approved within the context of the Events Committee report.)

Reports on Public Meetings: Skip reported that the **RTA** (Regional Transit Authority) has not complied with some of his requests for public records. Skip asked the APA board to support him in submitting a follow-up letter from an attorney to the RTA. The board agreed to have the attorney send Kelsey a draft of the letter, which she would review and forward to board members for an electronic vote on whether or not to approve the APA's lending support to Skip's response to the RTA's noncompliance with the Louisiana Public Records Act.

Connie added that RTA fares may be prohibitive to families riding the ferry.

Vlad has been examining Sewerage and Water Board (SWB) bills to determine the cause of billing errors. New software was recently introduced at the SWB. Vlad would like to see successive bills from neighborhood households in order to pinpoint the source of the billing errors and to provide evidence to the SWB that the problem is systemic.

Rob has been monitoring United States Postal Service (USPS) delivery issues in Algiers Point.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:58 PM.