

Penn Branch Community Association

Executive Board Meeting

December 16, 2020 at 7pm

Meeting commenced at 7:10pm via Zoom.

Attendees:

Stan Benton, Kyle Murphy, Cicily Hampton, Mohamed Williams, Paul Grant, Natiya Curtis, and Marie Fritz.

Brainstorm on Working Norms of the Board

- S. Benton asked about how many days before distributing agenda. M. Williams and C. Hampton mentioned 24-48 hours in advance.
- S. Benton trying to get access to GoDaddy account.
- S. Benton asked for a business day to respond via email.
- P. Grant has been looking at templates for website redesign. Once he has login he could look at the back end. About 30 days to turn around edits on website after access. May be able to work within same template. Discussion about web host. P. Grant impartial to who hosts it.
- K. Murphy asked for clarification on email server and costs. S. Benton said no limitation on amount of emails added. K. Murphy thought should have emails by position not name-specific. S. Benton agreed. C. Hampton used same system and convention for email on another Board and said worked well. S. Benton said Pennbranch.org was previously taken but now available so he bought it. M. Williams thought keep PennBranchDC.org. S. Benton could have PennBranch.org transfer to our active website. C. Hampton agreed okay to keep PennBranchDC.org.
- K. Murphy asked about how to use organization-appropriate Zoom account. Asked about other services. K. Murphy asked about asking ANC to donate service. M. Fritz offered to continue to use work account.
- M. Fritz asked about how to address members in the minutes? Also, does Board post and disseminate minutes on website? K. Murphy said when he took notes previously as Secretary at in-person meetings he often did not know who was speaking so he would anonymize. But need improved practice for record keeping.
- K. Murphy raised related points. What can be discussed in Executive Committee meeting without getting disseminated to entire association? Not sure what is permissible for Roberts Rules. C. Hampton thought okay unless something in By-Laws. K. Murphy thought should be explored. N. Curtis said she will research it. K. Murphy and M. Fritz emphasized that transparency should override privacy. Board members agreed

that those in elected positions of trust be should be willing to share information publicly. C. Hampton said that if a meeting is recorded there should be no expectation of confidentiality in General Body Meetings. K. Murphy said one function is to know who is saying what in every meeting. N. Curtis mentioned that the chair is supposed to call on people rather than members speaking openly. Since meetings moved to Zoom, members are speaking openly. Asked about the previous convention at in-person meetings. Told members were called on except for general open discussion. K. Murphy said that a system would help manage the meetings better. N. Curtis agreed.

- Board members explored how to manage meetings in Zoom. Figured out how the Parliamentarian could mute people in Zoom when using someone else's account. Discussed use of Zoom. P. Grant asked if we could sign up for own Zoom account and have ANC pay for it. K. Murphy agreed to reach out to DL about this.
- M. Fritz asked for clarity on decisions for minutes. N. Curtis asked for members to change name to identify themselves when they join a meeting via Zoom. M. Williams said may not be able to change name for those who join by phone. Board members agreed that members arriving on Zoom meeting without name identification should be asked to identify themselves when they join.
- Post minutes; public meetings; identify in meetings; identify how members self-identify.
- C. Hampton said we need to add that to agenda for the first General Body Meeting to make members aware of new meeting conventions and begin to help them learn revised structure and conventions.
- M. Fritz: In Executive Board meetings, how transparent in terms of note taking? K. Murphy: Same as in General Body meeting until entering Executive Session; only post open session minutes. Board members agreed.
- K. Murphy: What other responsibilities for meetings? Who creates the agenda, reaches out to speakers? S. Benton: Would like to create agenda with Board. S. Benton can draft and ask for feedback before sharing with members. K. Murphy: More than 48 hours for initial draft and then 24-48 for email to members.
- K. Murphy: Previously, E. Nash communicated with speakers. Who is responsible now? Perhaps divide based on interests. S. Benton agreed. C. Hampton said may be easier since some Board members might have a personal connection and best for that person to reach out. Board members agreed.
- M. Fritz: Who posts minutes to the website? P. Grant said every Board member could get access. P. Grant asked who gets to post to blog? He fielded an inquiry from a community member who wanted to blog on issues related to their business. K. Murphy indicated that new By-Laws state that association should not endorse commercial interests. Board agreed.
- C. Hampton said communications director should have access to website and maybe only one other person to ensure that all communication has one voice and so that other Board members cannot accidentally edit site. Board members agreed.
- M. Williams: Said proofreading should happen before posting. K. Murphy: Board should agree with all proposed changes to website. Final QC rests with Pres, VP, and second VP. Board members agreed.

Board Goals

- S. Benton: Increase membership; get committees up and going; seeking leads on committee chairs. Terry Clyburn expressed interest in safety committee. Should reach out to members based on who we think has time. May not be able to get all up and running. Need to prioritize.
- C. Hampton: Economic development; most concerned about getting the right retail. Working with developer. Working on MN/Penn Ave SE. Healthy foods.
- K. Murphy: PBCA has not had a large voice in the economic development in the area, overlaps with community anxiety about generational changes and racial changes in neighborhood. Serious responsibility to take head on. Incorporate what people are nervous about, respect long term character of neighborhood while reflecting change and improvement that does not have to look like what is happening across the city. Observed that dancing around friction are about not having clear conversations. Even before that need to get basics rights about organizational management. Timely communication, being responsive, implement clear policies. Need to be successful. More community events for people to interact. Service. Cleaning up and decorating, trails, mutual care for elders. Then actively engaged in citywide discussions. Zoning, minimum wage. PBCA developed resolutions on issues in the past, take community positions. Regenerate that. Pope Branch Trail (DC). Fort Circle Trail (NPS). Make them clean and accessible, work with Park Service.
- M. Fritz has communicated with the DOEE city representative Josh Burch about maintaining Pope Branch Trail. Trail is overgrown and hard to find in some areas; stream rerouted. Burch has spoken to DPR. Ongoing work required. Consider having Parks and Rec speak to association about management of the area. Board members mentioned how Texas Ave SE bridge has washed away. Area needs to be maintained.
- S. Benton: Traffic. Asked about tiered system for cut through tickets. Cut through traffic remains a problem and will get worse again after public health emergency alleviates.
- K. Murphy: Enforcement is a big challenge. Little police enforcement. Need to figure out a way. O Street issues related to development also relate to PB community happiness. O Street neighbor advocacy has become formidable and to some extent has cut out the association for dialogue with city on Shopping Center issues. O Street residents want a one-way street that only enter from Branch Ave SE to Pennsylvania Ave SE. Thought should work with city to create community facing parkland near CVS facing entrance to O Street SE. Need to take broad neighborhood into consideration. Need to deal with the issue.
- Conversation about any potential downsides to making O Street one way?
- N. Curtis: Cars on Branch Ave in that area near O Street SE. Wondered about speed camera that used to be there.
- K. Murphy: Need some other type of traffic calming at O St and Branch Ave where street dips? PBCA has supported traffic calming measures there, either a hawk signal or other measures.

- M. Fritz: Said she and others use O Street SE as bike route. Need to ensure cyclists would not be breaking law by biking down O Street to Branch Ave if one-way is implemented. K. Murphy: Could advocate for contra-flow bike lane on O Street SE.
- N. Curtis: Asked if there should be a Sub-committee specific to community connectedness. Family events. Seniors. DPR park in Penn Branch requires TLC. Standing water. M. Fritz: Would like to see more events for children and families with children. N. Curtis: Community is special because people know each other but children don't play outside or have ways to meet older neighbors. Will have clashes because we lose previous history.
- S. Benton: Had some good events in past, including the Block Party and the Eastern Egg hunt that Towana Banks organized. Dinner dance years before also good. C. Hampton: Maybe can do dinner dance more affordably than in past.
- P. Grant goals: For communications: 1) Develop online fundraising capacity for special projects, video capacity. 2) Rebranding of marketing materials. 3) Heard there is a file cabinet with materials. Scan, archive, and put history on website. S. Benton: He now has the file cabinet.
- P. Grant: Launched an Oral History Project. Would be value in a public exhibition. Could be motivational. May be some overlap but their project would get archived in DC History Archives. Need to figure out how to benefit the association.
- M. Fritz asked for clarification on whether it is a PB project or private and that PG might need to clarify for association members who reach out to him to avoid the appearance of impropriety.
- K. Murphy: Association can consider a model in which PG and TG apply for grants; however, association could provide letter of support; PG and TG remain holder of those funds and creativity. Board members agreed.
- P. Grant: There is a second grant for exhibition that Penn Branch Community Association could apply for. K. Murphy willing to draft grant proposal for association.

Committee Chair Positions

- C. Hampton: Should open up committee position chair positions for everyone to express interest rather than only those who reach out to Board members. Board agreed.
- S. Benton: Will send email for members to express interest as chair. K. Murphy: Also ask about interest in committee participation. Will help to better understand who will work together. By-Laws are clear on committee chair advising Board; appointed positions; Board needs to be able to work with members.
- Discussion about Ms. Paul's refusal to take things to Board. Need to be clear to all members, in accordance with By-Laws when issues arise. S. Benton: If community/association members contact us individually, must inform everyone on Board via email for transparency. All requests are reviewed by full Board to avoid members seeking the answer they want from different Board members. Always tell members that requests have to be considered by Board. Board agreed. There must be no information segregation moving forward.

- N. Curtis: Asked how to achieve more interest in committee chair positions. Talk to neighbors. C. Hampton: Put in newsletter. K. Murphy: Will need to reach out to neighbors separately as well because there has not been as much interest in past.

Administrative Updates

- S. Benton: Update logo with new name. P. Grant agreed.
- By-Laws state standing committees that we must have. Board may create other committees.
- N. Curtis: Would like to see a committee specific to community and families. For those interested specifically in community not fundraising. C. Hampton: Not enough interest to support additional committees. Difficult enough to find members to chair existing committees. Fill existing ones first.
- K. Murphy: Put in newsletter and ask about interest. Keep initial committees to small number.
- M. Fritz asked about how we can support our local businesses without endorsing them? P. Grant: Write article in newsletter. N. Curtis: Business listing fundraiser for future.

Calendar of Events

- Discussed meetings going forward.
- January: Panel with health professionals; Health and Wellness During COVID; Outreach to Lisa Fitzpatrick, Alan Burton, Charles Curtis. C. Hampton: Back up speaker on vaccines.
- Hampton: Fill in other events in Jan meeting. Need to hear from community.
- K. Murphy: Will bring summary of data to next meeting and draft to get us through the summer to present to Jan. meeting. Members agreed.

Other Business

- K. Murphy: Had question about newsletter. Do we continue it? Before Jan. meeting?
- S. Benton: Newsletter in paper or emailed for COVID times? Some apprehensive about delivering now. N. Curtis: Older neighbors are not checking email. M. Fritz: Many of my neighbors are not on list serves or not members but still like the newsletter. C. Hampton: Respect wishes but newsletter gets to those otherwise missed. Conversation about how newsletter is delivered contactless.
- N. Curtis: Put on large laminated card stock instead. K. Murphy: Built on that idea to mention that perhaps we could build a Station for a community bulletin board with community information, dog poop dispensers, etc. Future project.
- C. Hampton: Would help with community connections.
- P. Grant: What is turn around time to get newsletter finalized. S. Benton: Person who prints it goes to ANC office. Willing to go into office. Do we have enough news for newsletter? To include the following: New board. Calls for committee volunteers. C.

Hampton, added: Committee descriptions. Broad goals. K. Murphy: Need regular stream of information to submit so everyone can contribute so as not to fall on Paul. Reminders of By-Laws. Getting members ready for new meeting conventions.

- S. Benton got password to GoDaddy account during meeting. Check out 9-11 Memorial Park. Ritter donated electricity. K. Murphy donated \$30 to the electricity.
- M. Williams: Did Stan get financial documents from Towana? S. Benton: Yes. Also need to work on consolidating lists.

8:36pm meeting ended.