

SMILE Board Meeting Minutes

January 27, 2021

Via ZOOM videoconferencing

Main Website

Procedural

www.SellwoodMoreland.org <<>> www.SMILErecords.org

OFFICERS PRESENT: Simon Fulford, President; Bob Burkholder, Vice President;
Pat Hainley, Treasurer; Eric Norberg, Secretary

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT: Elaine O'Keefe, Rhea Smith, Jim Friscia, Elizabeth
Milner, Juliana James, Neal Spinler

ALSO ATTENDING: R. Corless; James Cruz; Paola De La Cruz, of Southeast Uplift

Due to social distancing measures ordered by the State of Oregon to avoid spreading the COVID-19 coronavirus, this meeting was conducted online using the ZOOM application, with advance notice of the meeting having been made online – advising how any interested persons could join it by requesting the admission code; and, as noted above, a few did.

This meeting was moved to January 27 from its originally scheduled date of January 20 to avoid a conflict with the Presidential Inauguration in Washington DC on that date.

President Simon Fulford called the meeting to order at 7:37 p.m., and – observing the presence of a quorum – began the meeting by presenting the agenda, and then by inviting a review of the minutes of the December 16 SMILE Board Meeting. After that review, Pat Hainley moved that the minutes be approved as presented; Rhea Smith seconded the motion; Simon announced the motion as having carried unanimously.

After that, Fulford invited a report from the new SMILE Communications Committee, and Rhea Smith began it. She said the annual Communications Grant from Southeast Uplift, intended to assist with the Community Newsletter requirement, was to be reduced to \$500 this year – but that there is a separate grant available of up to \$1,000, specifically to encourage diversity in communications. Both have application deadlines of February 28. She said the Communications Committee would like to send postcards to the entire Sellwood-Westmoreland neighborhood to raise awareness of SMILE; would like to increase our Mailchimp account; would like to use a Social Management service; and would like to make a change in the hosting company for our websites.

Simon observed that digital communications are necessarily limited to reaching those we have contact information for; the postcard program would seem to require access to a Post Office address list of the neighborhood. Pat suggested skipping the postcard mailing and doing a personal outreach door-to-door, but Neal Spinler mentioned the current COVID-19 pandemic as an obstacle to doing that right now, and doing door-to-door in apartment buildings is problematic in any event. He said we can send postcards without specific addresses to the entire neighborhood using a Post Office program and a mailing service – but he said he does like the door-to-door personal-contact idea, when the health situation eventually permits it. Jim Friscia suggested that any postcard campaign should be designed

to get recipients to do something; Elaine O’Keefe said that they could be used to build digital contact lists for subsequent campaigns. Simon asked the cost of the Neighborhood Newsletter in THE BEE; Eric Norberg responded, pointing out that SMILE gets a special discount of almost half the end rate for the space, and he believes he has found a way to make sure the cost of the current space never increases as long as it’s used. THE BEE reaches an estimated 45,000 people a month, essentially all in Inner Southeast Portland.

Turning to the matter of SMILE website hosting, Elaine O’Keefe announced that we have had ongoing malware issues with our main website, which is hosted by CanvasHost (our third host in the past decade); and the committee believes CanvasHost is not secure. “WP Engine” is the committee’s recommendation for a new host, and Neal says he believes it is much more secure, but the cost would increase from \$10 to \$70 a month. However, for that rate all three of our websites (including the Oaks Pioneer Church website, and the SMILE Station website) would be included. Elizabeth Milner remarked that Sellwood Community House is using SquareSpace as a website host, for \$25 a month – but Neal responded that switching to SquareSpace at this time would require a complete website redesign, and the charge would apply separately to our other two websites, which would not represent any saving over WP Engine. Elaine O’Keefe then made a motion to authorize Kevin Palmer (our webmaster) to “fire CanvasHost and move our sites to a more secure host for approximately \$70 a month.” Jim Friscia seconded the motion. Pat Hainley said the proposed increase in the hosting charge presented no financial issues for SMILE; and in the subsequent vote, President Fulford announced the motion had “passed unanimously”.

To complete the Communications Committee report, Neal Spinler said the committee would also like to change the SMILE e-mail policy, setting up e-mail addresses generically by position for the Board Members and Committee heads hosted by Google rather than our own listserv, but we could continue to use a listserv for committee members and other purposes. Various options would be available for anyone not wanting to make use of these new e-mail addresses; but we need more than one administrator for the e-mail addresses, to make sure there are no problems transferring them when people leave the Board and others join it. Spinler presented his proposed new e-mail policy in writing [incorporated into these minutes by reference]; Elaine O’Keefe moved that SMILE adopt this proposed new policy as outlined in his statement, and Elizabeth Milner seconded the motion. In the subsequent vote, President Fulford announced the motion had “passed unanimously”.

Speaking for the Events Committee, Jim Friscia said it had held its first meeting – and it had been decided (due to the pandemic) to cancel the Easter Egg Hunt in Westmoreland Park this year; Pat Hainley said he’d notify Fran Shaw of the Oaks Bottom Lions Club, which runs the event for SMILE. Friscia said the committee had approved the Neighborhood Cleanup for the third Saturday in May, since as an outdoor event that seemed manageable in the pandemic, if health protocols are observed. The committee is also tentatively reserving the first Sunday in August for a revival of “Sundae in the Park” in Sellwood Park, but it is unclear yet whether it actually can take place, or in what form. As for the Summer Concert series in July, he said, that will depend on whether Portland Parks has its “Free For All Summer” events again this year. If not, smaller music events around the neighborhood are possible as an alternative, and he said there could be “virtual music events” as well.

President Fulford said he had contacted Hailey and Tara at SMBA (the Sellwood-Moreland

Business Alliance), and they greatly appreciated SMILE's support of their Christmastime "Shop Local" campaign; they hope for future collaborations between the two organizations. They would like a SMILE rep regularly at their meetings – rather than only intermittently, as in the past; an SMBA planning meeting for the year is coming up on February 5th at 5 p.m. Jim Friscia said he would be willing to step up for that initially, but would like to see others eventually take on the responsibility; Juliana James said she is willing to be an alternate for Jim in that role. Jim also suggested a regular liaison from SMBA attend SMILE meetings too.

Bob Burkholder reported for the neighborhood N.E.T. emergency team, of which he is a member. He announced that our NET is working with St. Agatha Church and School; NET has built a 10x12 shed there and will share it with St. Agatha, while it provides a place to store NET emergency equipment. Burkholder reminded SMILE that it recently paid for the "antenna and radio repeater" upgrade to facilitate NET emergency communications, and they may be installed at SMILE Station. He said NET may reinstate the Earthquake Preparedness classes SMILE previously sponsored, expanding them beyond just our own neighborhood. There was some subsequent Q and A on details of these announcements.

The last agenda item was introduced by President Fulford: A letter circulated by State Representative Rob Nosse through Southeast Uplift, which Nosse would like Southeast neighborhood associations to sign onto, directed to Multnomah County Chair Deborah Kafoury and to Portland City Commissioner Dan Ryan, advocating "sanctioned camping sites" for the homeless in Portland and in Multnomah County. The letter [incorporated into these minutes by reference] concludes, "I know this isn't a perfect solution, and I know there will be folks who will disagree with this approach, but the situation we have now is not working either and will worsen. I and others signed on to this letter believe some sanctioned camping with some security and safety and sanitation is a better way to go."

Juliana James began the discussion of whether to adopt the letter by saying without our knowing the details of the proposal – proposed locations for camping, how sanitation and mental health services would be provided – we cannot really endorse the letter. Elaine O'Keefe agreed that "we don't have enough information to endorse this letter." Neal Spinler pointed out that no plan of action was included, making it apparently not well thought out. Elaine said she would support exploring the concept, but no more, at this time. But Elizabeth Milner responded that she would agree to endorsing "doing something new, as a temporary solution". SMILE resident James Cruz, attending this meeting, observed that he has seen the already-sanctioned camping area on Water Avenue (in the vicinity of OMSI), and it is only sporadically used, and nothing positive is happening there as far as he can tell.

President Fulford concluded the discussion by saying he would like to send Nosse a letter saying that SMILE endorses exploring new options, but that we are not yet informed enough to be able to endorse a specific course of action, such as outlined in Nosse's letter. "We're not comfortable with the action stated at the end of the letter, but we do support encouraging exploring new options." The Board seemed amenable to sending the letter as proposed by Simon, so he will do so.

Pat Hainley then moved adjournment; and after a little more Board conversation, Eric Norberg seconded. At 9:15 p.m. the motion carried, with evident unanimity.