

SMILE Board Meeting Minutes

October 18, 2023

at SMILE Station in Sellwood

Main Website

www.SellwoodMoreland.org

Procedural

www.SMILerecords.org

OFFICERS PRESENT: David Dugan, President [*via ZOOM*]; Elizabeth Milner, Vice President; Eric Norberg, Secretary; Pat Hainley, Treasurer

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT: Grant Huling, Elaine O’Keefe, Bob Burkholder; Jim Friscia; Zack Duffly

GUEST: Grant O’Connell, TriMet

SMILE President David Dugan, attending the meeting via ZOOM, called the October Board Meeting of SMILE to order at 7:32 p.m., and began by asking for a review of the September 20 Board Meeting minutes. Two errors were noted and corrected, after which Pat Hainley made a motion that the minutes be approved as amended. Grant Huling seconded the motion, and the motion carried with one abstention.

Dugan then introduced Grant O’Connell, Tri-Met representative and a resident of Sellwood-Westmoreland, who was present to discuss developments in bus service to our neighborhood, and elsewhere in Portland. He recalled the sharp reduction in bus service during the recent COVID-19 pandemic, as ridership declined in a major way. Since then, bus service increased 38%; and TriMet is engaged in a long-term re-evaluation of all the bus lines to better match ridership patterns, with “a focus on equity” – which, he said would, for example, mean reducing bus service to higher-income areas. For Sellwood-Westmoreland, a new bus – Bus 4 – will replace the Bus 19 segment in our neighborhood – and will provide more frequent service. 30 bus lines will change this year in Portland; next year 34 lines will change, and in the year 2026 all lines will have changed.

Bus 70 now travels on Milwaukie Avenue through Sellwood and Westmoreland, and zig-zags northward to serve Cleveland High School – getting there by turning on Powell and going east via the railroad underpass, greatly reducing train delays it previously encountered at intersections in the Hosford-Abernethy neighborhood. Bus 70 has eliminated the loop on S.E. 13th in Sellwood, which drew a protest from a resident in that area. O’Connell said that next year a new bus – Bus 5 – will replace the weekday, drivetimes-only Express Bus 99 on Tacoma Street in Sellwood. It will have more stops, more hours and days of service, and it will stop at both 13th and 17th, allowing western Sellwood residents to catch Bus 5 near their homes, and then transfer on 17th to catch Bus 70. Bus 5 will also serve the Tacoma Street MAX Station, he said.

The current feedback period on TriMet’s proposed changes to bus lines ends soon, but a second outreach ends on January 10th; the first TriMet Board hearing will be on March 27, 2024, with a second hearing and a vote for adoption on April 24th. The beginning of the next wave of bus changes will be on August 25th of next year.

David Schoellhamer, Chair of the SMILE Land Use Committee, was next on the agenda,

to present testimony from his committee for the Portland Planning Commission by its deadline, next Tuesday, on the 16 proposed temporary or permanent relaxation of various rules binding on contractors who build large apartment developments – with the stated aim of getting more housing built. (None of the sixteen proposals involved reducing any city fees or reducing delays and paperwork in authorizing such construction.) The testimony, for which the Land Use Committee was seeking SMILE Board authorization, related to only four of these proposed changes. Schoellhamer recapped the gist of this proposed testimony (which had been submitted to Board Members previously by email, and is incorporated into these minutes by reference). There were a number of comments and concerns voiced by Board Members, at least one of whom was disinclined to vote to submit the testimony. A woman present said she wants to urge the city not to end the requirement for builder “neighborhood contact meetings”, one of the four points on which the SMILE testimony would be commenting. When the discussion ended, Eric Norberg moved the testimony be accepted by the Board and forwarded to the Portland Planning Commission; Elaine O’Keefe seconded the motion; and the motion carried with one abstention.

President Dugan next referred to the process defined in our bylaws for replacing our recently-resigned Board Member (MacKenzie Torres, who moved to Bend), and said he wanted to proceed with that process expeditiously – asking for volunteers from the Board to assist with the process. Zack Duffly and Elizabeth Milner volunteered. The vacancy-filling election will be announced at our November Board Meeting, and the election is expected to occur at our December General Meeting.

Dugan also wanted to get Board feedback on how SMILE should evaluate and respond to requests from other neighborhoods in the city or various organizations, asking us to officially support them in their efforts. Pat Hainley and Zack Duffly suggested that such requests should go first to an appropriate SMILE committee for evaluation and a recommendation to the Board. Jim Friscia and Elaine O’Keefe suggested that such might best be done by an ad-hoc “Executive Committee” of SMILE officers.

Dugan and Treasurer Pat Hainley moved to the last agenda item, a SMILE fiscal year recap. Our revenue (mostly rental income) was \$186,786; expenses totaled \$165,609; so we enjoyed a positive balance for the year, when we had originally projected a substantial deficit. In addition, we received a \$250,000 grant from the city to remodel SMILE Station’s basement into usable meeting and office space, of which \$27,740.50 still remains to be used – it is contemplated that we will raise the ceiling in the main upstairs meeting room and improve the lighting, at an estimated cost of \$28,100. SMILE has a reserve threshold of \$70,000, and has liquid assets of approximately \$105,000 on hand.

-----EXECUTIVE SESSION 8:57 p.m.-----

(No minutes taken; Executive Session was for a discussion concerning personnel.)

-----EXECUTIVE SESSION ended 9:17 p.m.-----

Elaine O’Keefe made a motion to award a net \$3,500 (gross \$3,800) bonus to Christine Timberlake, our Facilities Manager, for her success in improving our financial condition this year, and for her initiative in obtaining the grant for the remodel of SMILE Station. The motion was seconded by Bob Burkholder, and carried with one abstention.

Pat Hainley then moved the meeting be adjourned; Bob Burkholder seconded the motion; and the motion carried with apparent unanimity at 9:19 p.m.