

Aurora Highlands Civic Association

Monthly Meeting Minutes

June 14, 2017

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Attendees: 17 people signed in.

Proceedings:

President Natasha Atkins called the meeting to order at 7:06 p.m. in the Aurora Hills Senior Center.

Minutes for the May 2017 monthly meeting were approved.

A request from the Oakridge Elementary School PTA for \$250 for the annual Spring Fling was discussed. Historically the Association has supported this event, but the 2017 event has already occurred. After talking about how the Association decides which charitable contributions to make and how much we need to keep in the bank, it was decided that we will ask someone from the Oakridge PTA to come to a meeting to explain how the \$250 would be used.

At an upcoming meeting, Association contributions to the Boo Ha Ha will be discussed. Finances are tighter now than they were when the Boo started many years ago as an effort to bring the community together. It has now grown into a major event attracting huge crowds at considerable expense. Much funding for the event comes from outside donations. AHCA currently has \$7,325 in the bank.

Nelly Custis Park Renovations

David Litman, who is chairing the Nelly Custis Park Design Working Group, outlined the planning process and goals. The all-volunteer group held its first design meeting on June 7. They hope to get their ideas to the Association by November. It would take about 18 months after approval to complete the park renovations. County engineer surveys of the park show storm lines, tree roots, and sanitary lines that can't be disturbed.

The county had allocated \$795,000 for this project and \$758,000 of that is left. Construction will probably cost \$550,000 with an additional 10-percent reserve. Members of the working group have visited many parks to see what might be wanted in terms of equipment and plantings. An overall increase in the tree canopy is one goal. If some trees need to come out, they will be replaced. One existing fence can be moved to get more space because we have more easement along that line.

Next, the county designer will come up with a proposal. David will post that design on the AHCA website for review and consideration and after that will want to get the Association to vote on it. The working group is operating on a consensus basis and wants to be sure that the opinions and ideas of different people and groups are heard in this process.

Water Pollution Control Plant Update

Tom Broderick, Mary Strawn, and Lisa Racey presented an overview of what is happening at the plant and plans for the future. Tom is the water pollution board chief, Mary is the chief engineer, and Lisa is in charge of day-to-day construction.

Mr. Broderick said that the Solids Master Plan should be a vision that reflects our values. He commended Paul Guttridge, our AHCA representative in the planning process, for his efforts.

The plant started when Arlington first put sewers in around 1933-38. There have been several expansions over the years and new government requirements. The last capacity expansion was in the 1980's. Our plant treats 25 million gallons of waste water a day and is the largest energy user in the County. They want to upgrade the way solids, the residual material from waste water treatment, are treated.

They have gotten input from stakeholders and the community and have considered economic, environmental and operations impacts. They are looking at four alternatives and are limited by the small space of the plant. There is consideration of exporting biogas back to Washington Gas or to the nearby ART facility, which would bring money back to the county. They are looking at the impact of emissions at the plant and in a one-mile radius of it. They will keep looking at new technologies as they emerge. The community has concerns about emission increases and if the solids were to be trucked to DC's Blue Plains treatment facility, it would disperse the emissions further from our neighborhood. They are reviewing an emissions study proposal from a consultant and also are contacting the Washington water authority regarding a regional solution involving trucking our solids to DC's Blue Plains facility. Paul Guttridge raised concerns that once an approach is in the Master Plan, the emissions study results will not be included, and no changes will be possible. The plant will stay within its present boundaries. Paul asked to see the draft Master Plan as soon as possible.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:45 p.m.

Maureen Quinn

Recording Secretary

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