

AGENDA
FEBRUARY 2024 MONTHLY MEETING OF
THE NEIGHBORHOOD CLUB OF BALA CYNWYD
ANNUAL MEETING
LEVERING MILL TRIBUTE HOUSE & ZOOM
Zoom Account: 823 745 2538
Password: 850924
February 6, 2024

Attendance: Kay Sickles (President), Vanessa Coke Cohen (Vice-President), Jason Landau Goodman (Secretary), Marion Williams (Treasurer), David Haas (Solicitor), Aaron Gross (Past President), Maxine Goldberg, Frederic Goldfein, Anne Greenhalgh, Joseph Hirsch, Sandy Kornhauser, Bill Krebs, Brian McGuire, Randy Myer, Roger Moog, Jim Remsen, Dan Russionello, Molly Wallace, Merle Zucker

Absent: Linda Sagman

Public Officials in Attendance: Commissioner Lou Rossman, Commissioner Gilda Kramer

CALL TO ORDER
ANNOUNCEMENTS, Kay Sickles

POLICE REPORT: Officer Kirke Gardner

Officer Gardner introduced himself and shared that he has been with LMPD for 12 years. Officer Gardner provided a summary of the recent burglaries in the western part of Lower Merion which have mostly stopped with the capture of several individuals involved with the organized criminal enterprises responsible. Officer Gardner highlighted LMPD's Vacant House Program and the importance of not leaving valuables in plain view in a car. Office Gardner also suggested to not bring valuables to a park. Officer Gardner discussed the shooting at the Delwyn. Officer Gardner shared LMPD's continued vigilance in monitoring faith-based institutions and focus on traffic safety.

BOARD ELECTIONS

Discussion and action on filling Board member vacancies and Board Officer position vacancies.

Kay made a motion to install Molly Wallace as a Board Member with a term ending December 31, 2025. Maxine seconded. Unanimous vote in favor.

Kay made a motion to install Marion Williams as Board Treasurer with a term ending December 31, 2024. Anne seconded. Unanimous vote in favor.

Kay made a motion to install Jason Landau Goodman as Board Secretary with a term ending December 31, 2024. Maxine seconded. Unanimous vote in favor.

Kay made a motion to install Sandy Kornhauser as a Board Member with a term ending December 31, 2025. Brian seconded. Unanimous vote in favor.

The new Board members who have joined in 2024 introduced themselves: Joe Hirsh, Sandy Kornhauser, Molly Wallace, Marion Williams, and Bill Krebs.

ELECTED OFFICIALS REPORT, Commissioners Gilda Kramer and Louis Rossman

Commissioner Kramer: She sent out a newsletter with what is happening this week. Discussed the proposed paving program including Meeting House Lane and other streets off of it, and interesting capital projects in our community: Levering Mill Road at Old Lancaster Avenue and Montgomery Avenue in order to make a dedicated turn lane safer for pedestrians; for the Cynwyd Heritage Trail the Barmouth Trail Head is scheduled for development this year and two major trail extension projects are being planned.

Commissioner Rossman: Took a tour with Chris Leswing at the Pencoyd Landing and walked along the Schuylkill River. Commissioner Rossman shared that funding is in place with the American Rescue Plan to make a safe thruway for people to travel through and to expand the culvert.

Commissioners both discussed: Planning for increased cell service is ongoing. Planning for Bala Avenue ongoing. There are biweekly meetings with Bala Avenue of the Arts, the City Avenue Special Services District, Jilliam Dierks from LM Township, to try and move along activities. Regarding the Cross Properties property, a developer may be making an offer in the near future, but it is not final.

Randy asked about the dedication of the Pavilion in the Bala Cynwyd Park.

Jason asked about property owner notification or consent for the placement of cell towers in Township right-of-ways.

Kay asked about the proposed LM Township Noise Ordinance updates.

Marion asked about gas-powered lawn equipment.

EXECUTIVE REPORTS

President's Report, Kay Sickles

A switch to a new layout and printing arrangement for the newsletter is being finalized. Proposed idea for membership recruitment tables at Election Day precincts, as a supplement and not a replacement of the newsletter outreach. Recognized that this year the Primary Election Day is the second day of Passover. The next in-person opportunity would really be the Fourth of July. Trying to find free ways to increase membership. Kay offered to send out a sign up sheet in March for interest.

Kay noted there is an issue with membership signing up online. Aaron shared that the web manager is working on it.

Dan suggested reinvigorating the tradition of having a dinner with Lower Merion Township officials and staff. Dan summarized how it was done in April for many years, before covid and that it costs about \$2,200.

There was discussion that it was intentionally suspended NCBC after 2019 and so by 2020 it was null, so not covid related, regarding budget concerns. Discussion continued that with increased membership, the Board can get a handle on the budget and develop future priorities, so that this idea can be revisited in the fall. Usually about 40-50 people attended the dinner and there were reflections that it was a nice evening and a valuable opportunity to thank officials and staff, develop relationships, and have meaningful conversations.

Further discussion proposed considering it either once a year or once every other year.

Jim passed around a draft flyer for membership recruitment and further discussion on promotional materials to be added to the agenda in March.

Kay proceeded with Committee Chair appointments. Kay appointed Bill and Roger as Co-Chairs of the City Avenue District Committee, Molly as Chair of the Pedestrian Safety Committee, and Brian as Chair of the Zoning Committee.

Jim and Jason will be meeting soon to better coordinate communications between the newsletter, website, and social media.

Molly offered to add content to a new resident basket, including a packet that included listings of local businesses. Bifurcated with Bala Cynwyd and then the wider community.

Discussion on website updates. Suggestion about collecting all website feedback together and pushing to a committee to make decisions on substantive updates.

Joe mentioned work on a Cynwyd Park project.

Noted Linda Sagman is the new Chair of the Federation Committee.

Treasurer's Report, Marion Williams

Marion spoke about the financial situation of NCBC and the status of accounting she inherited. Marion discussed July 4th and memberships, and that the current cash position is about \$16,000. Marion commented that the accounting is currently cash based and not accrual based. Marion indicated that she will be moving the accounting to accrual based going forward.

Kay made a motion to approve the December 2023 Monthly Meeting minutes, seconded by Vanessa. Approved unanimously.

Kay made a motion to approve the January 2024 Monthly Meeting minutes, seconded by Anne, with the accepted suggestion to remove one clause in the drafted minutes. Approved unanimously.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Membership Committee Report, Vanessa Coke Cohen

There will be a meeting with Vanessa and Marion to discuss getting a handle on the membership lists and coordinating PayPal, cash, and checks. Vanessa shared that she will be working with Marion on membership events as the budget will allow, hopefully rolling out one event per quarter, such as an Election Day membership drive/food collection, July 4th, back to school event for new/returning families at the Pavilion or Cynwyd Trail Park, as long as the budget will allow. Potentially coordinate a blood drive or CPR training session. Proposed welcome baskets. Brian mentioned that about 20 new homes are bought a month. Randy suggested a coat drive in November. A discussion was had about modernizing NCBC messaging on social media and the website. Randy expressed an intention to talk to local Title companies to add NCBC as a resource upon buying a home in the neighborhood. Jim mentioned it would add a personal touch to have the welcome baskets delivered by an NCBC member near the resident who moved in. Aaron suggested that on the membership form an option could be added to indicate interest in delivering a basket to a new neighbor. Marion suggested using the welcome basket to share information on

trees and growing native plants. Kay mentioned that any table for NCBC at events can put that information out there.

Communications Committee Report, Jim Remsen

Jim shared that several Board members are now coordinating more together around communications for the organization.

Zoning/ Public Service and Improvement Committee Report, Brian McGuire

Brian noted how the Zoning Committee comes from the bylaws, but suggested a collaborative committee with both what is being proposed and what is being developed. It was discussed how this committee should generally be comprised of more than one person.

It was proposed that a fuller conversation take place about not just taking no position or opposing a project, but how to support one.

Pedestrian Safety Committee, Molly Wallace

Molly mentioned ongoing issues with Bryn Mawr Avenue.

Independence Day Committee Report, Maxine Goldberg

The discussion returned to the timeline of outreach for membership recruitment and a membership drive related to outreach for July 4th. Consensus about coordinating all outreach efforts. Randy suggested business memberships come with ads. An idea was discussed about fundraising for specific funds (restricted funds in certain situations). Maxine suggested meeting immediately before the next monthly board meeting with those interested in further discussing fundraising efforts.

Ad Hoc City Ave. District Committee Report, Bill Krebs and Roger Moog

Bill mentioned a speed and reduction initiative around the Fairmount. Following the City Avenue Special Services District presentation on January 10, 2024, a presentation on the City Avenue Master Plan's retail and landscaping aspects took place on January 17, 2024, and Bill offered to share a link to the report.

Environmental Committee, Marion Williams

Marion shared that there is a planned spring planting with the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society, maybe planting a small number of trees. Marion shared concerns that Tree Tenders can sometimes be felt as being 'free labor' for

residents and that there is a need for a clear mission for the program. Marion explained how Bala Cynwyd Tree Tenders is an initiative of NCBC, only for Bala Cynwyd, and that it can be a priority to first help organization members and invite them to join. Marion shared that Tree Tenders has a focus on education and not just planting trees, as she noted it is not sustainable with a volunteer group. Marion explained that ivy is prohibited in Lower Merion Township as it is a noxious plant. Marion added how the program has a lot of work to do but that it will be important to set up boundaries for the effort going forward.

The discussion on Tree Tender volunteer recruitment was suggested to be continued offline.

New Business

Bill noted that an area to look into for the Beautification Committee would be near the corner of Union near the Bala Cynwyd Post Office.

Anne inquired about NCBC support for cross country skiing being welcomed on the Cynwyd Heritage Trail when it snows. Brian suggested reaching out to the Friends of the Cynwyd Heritage Trail.

Anne moved to adjourn the meeting at 9:57pm.