

BLACKSTONE/FRANKLIN SQUARE NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION

GENERAL MEETING MINUTES

Tuesday, March 15, 2016, 7:00 p.m.
D4 Police Station, 2nd Floor Community Room
650 Harrison Avenue

Eric Huang	President
Donny Gorbis-Kolb	Vice President
Lisa Jenks	At Large
Andrew Parthum	At Large
Matt Mues	Treasurer
Michael Broderick	Clerk

Meeting started at approx. 7:00 p.m.

1. Eric Huang begins by explaining that we have developed the habit of holding elections in September, which is not in compliance with the bylaws. We have decided to get back on track with bylaws. Therefore, we will hold May elections. Mike Broderick will run for Clerk, Eric Huang will run for President, Lisa Jenks will run for At Large, and Andrew Parthum will run for At Large. Unfortunately, Donny Gorbis-Kolb will be leaving the association and not running for Vice President, which role is thus open. The Board encourages contested elections are all members are encouraged to run for any seat, regardless of whether an incumbent has declared an intent to run.

Development committee chair, currently held by Donny will also be open. Donny speaks as to responsibility of the chair, relationships with developers, communications, scheduling meetings with the association; accountability; keep eye out for new developments. Committee wants to formalize development committee policies and guidelines for developers.

Parks Committee (Friends group) Chair is now also open, and the Friends group is actively looking to expand its Board. 9 people have expressed interest in joining and some of the goals, some of whom are present tonight.

2. Everyone in attendance takes a turn introducing self. Sign-in sheet is attached to these minutes.

3. Community service opportunities: Lisa Jenks introduces USES José F. Massó, Senior Director, Youth and Family Engagement at the United South End Settlements (“USES”) will share the good work at USES and opportunities for neighbors to be involved: Jose explains that USES has been for 124 years a neighborhood organization, serving lower income families, the *whole* family 7 programs: senior service; workforce readiness; youth development; early childhood ed; preschool; afterschool programs; Camp Hale in NH; one of oldest children’s art centers in the nation; opportunities: April 26 neighborhood annual gala fundraiser; art exhibits at

Harriett Tubman house March 30 (free, open to community); openings at Camp Hale available. Thanks the association and membership for their time and encourages them to get involved.

4. Treasurer's Report by Matt Mues:

Operating 6,900

Scholarship Balance 49,642.00

Friends of the Park 22,349.00

5. Public Safety matters: Mark Howard introduces Kerry Ryan, BPD Director of Community Engagement and Collaboration, who gives a presentation on modern neighborhood watch techniques and teaches group how to be a better observer and reporter of crime in the neighborhood; brings Eliza along who will be contact when Kerry is out of the office on upcoming maternity leave. Advises that we are way ahead of the game. Goal is to get people to know their neighbors and connect with each other, and get to know police officers to share information, back and forth. Neighborhood Watch Unit gets people to start these groups, which run themselves, and then we ask neighborhood units to support those groups. Programing includes coffee with cop program, give out flashlights to everyone and do a walk to bring the neighborhoods together; last thing we do is national night out program, which has been going on since the 80s, allows police department to further connect with residents. One event per section of city, hand out awards for crime watch group of the year. Best way to get it off the ground is to connect with neighbors and gauge community interest. Police can provide records of calls from the neighborhood if we want it. The squeaky wheel gets the oil – encourage all neighbors to call something in. Get “dots on the map” with reference to tracking call statistics. Suggested scope of a watch: its better to have two or so for your association per the particular areas. Its shaped and formed by the residents. Next step, talk to the residents on a street and organize a meeting, then BPD contact will assist.

Sgt. Luke Taxter reports on recent crime: Mass Ave and Melana Cass is an ongoing challenge with all the social services offered to needy people. Police department has to deal with quality of life fall-out from centralization of social services; we dedicated a bike squad during the day, when a lot of those problems happen. Many other law enforcement agencies patrol there, and three district borders meet at that intersection.

Sgt. Taxter Provides some city wide crime states; D4 robbery is down, burglary up 29% for a total of 10, but one person Orlando Ambert, now in jail, was responsible for 8 of the 10. No one's been shot, no homicides, 5 fire arm arrests; 10 calls for shots fired, 5 confirmed.

Sgt. Detective Johnny Keanen is introduced: head of best drug unit in city, and the busiest at the moment because they're proactive. Work in plain clothes, cover back bay, south end Fenway Kenmore, we know where most drug dealers are, hitting Franklin Square pretty hard in the fall and we'll be back. This is the type of the policing that you don't see; they blend in and catch people in the act. About Franklin Square: suggestions or game plan for the park, 4 p.m. to 11:45 p.m., surround the park then move on; sometimes we'll park a marked car in the square, we'll start getting people for drinking in public if we have to, but generally arresting people for

drinking creates more paperwork and doesn't really accomplish anything. It's the same amount of paperwork for someone arrested for drinking as it is for someone arrested for selling cocaine, and we'd rather be getting drug dealers.

Eric comments that sweeping out those people who publically drinking is essential to getting people to use those parks, even if you aren't arresting them. Drinking in the park creates a sense of danger and discourages healthy uses of the parks.

Sgt. – we agree, you're right. We'll take swifter action. Perhaps take another action like writing a citation. Dealing drugs is not as much an issue as using or sharing there. Nobody is really setting up in there. They know not to deal there.

Kerry Ryan – lobby your representatives for harsher sentences, write a letter to the DA. Reviewed possible solutions for getting more people in the park and taking advantage of the shade.

A Member asks Sgt. Taxter what can be done about youth leaving certain afterschool programs on Albany who are then headed to the corner of Mass and Cass. Is there a number that can be called to alert the police to watch out for those kids? Sgt. Taxter responds that that corner has many officers at all times and gives his cell number to the concerned Member.

Lastly: Sgt. Taxter advises on an upcoming "active shooter training" re: work related violence to anyone who wants to come, Last Monday of the month right here at 6 p.m. No advance registration required.

6. Development Committee matters: Donny provides overview of Feb. 4 meeting on BHA/IBA redevelopment of West Newton public housing; looking for historic tax credits, landmarks compliant and will look even more beautiful when done; working with parks dept. to take over management of O'Day Park with its security vendor, Longwood Security, who can kick people out of the park.

600 Harrison a little behind schedule but on track to complete this year. Some commercial retail tenants showing interest. 61 Harrison purchased by a developer, Legacy Real Estate Ventures. Immaculate Conception condos coming.

Update on anoush'ella: saj kitchen + bar, mediteranean breakfast lunch and dinner, etc., "fast casual" w/ bar, outdoor seating on rear patio, 35 W. Newton signed lease and are going through zoning appeals process and need a variance for conditional use and putting together abutters meetings, plus one above required by city ordinance, planned timeline to hold informal meeting with abutters, anticipate formal presentation to us in May.

Leggat McCall Development to come out with their expanded project notification form, but has not come out yet. 700 rental units, studios and one bedrooms. There are renderings that were presented but are not available on the BRA website.

Update on Natural Health Care, Inc. proposed marijuana dispensary at 591 Albany Street: In February, they sent letter to police department, letter saying they were tabling the proposal, Randy LaMattina from Natural Health Care placing everything on hold, and “we do not have a plan.” Randy LaMattina appears, having travelled from Maine, to thank us for our consideration, and that, due to the concerns raised by the BFSNA at our previous meeting with Natural Health Care, they realized we were within 300 feet of a church at 591 Albany street, which has a pre-school operation, and therefore prohibits the dispensary per zoning. Thank you for saving us a lot of problems.

Eric advises that the South End Forum wants to make south end a marijuana dispensary free zone, proposal has been circulated

7. Parks Committee/Friends matters: Friends of Blackstone & Franklin Squares seeks candidates for president and board members who are passionate about the parks and interested in steering their future. Discussion of park needs and improving the quality of life for both dog and human users of the parks to be held immediately after this meeting for anyone interestd. Individuals interested in serving on the board are invited to stay briefly after the meeting to meet the current Friends board.

8. Scholarship Committee matters: Andrew Parthum presents on recent Heart of Gold fundraiser and next steps in scholarship process, over 100 people, netted approx. \$24,000; next part is to get applications out through our networks, pdf on our website of the scholarship app; let high school seniors know.

9. Jocelyn from Endurance Pilates introduces self on intent to use parks for classes; tested out a couple of classes in Blackstone; fills up space with something healthy and positive, make people with 40s feel uncomfortable.

Comment from Member that some people have been jumping around and disturbing peaceful bench sitting, and damage was done to a bench last year by a boot camp. Jocelyn notes that she will make an effort not to disturb other park users.

10. Prior meeting minutes were circulated and duly approved.

Meeting adjourned: 8:50 p.m.

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