

Gifford Park Association
Membership Meeting
January 16, 2020

Meeting called to order by President, Dan Miller at 7:02 PM

Members in attendance: Peg Bernar, Bill Briska, Amanda Carlson, Barb Evans, John Fitzgerald,
Mike Haskins, Laura Knoerr, Paul and Sue Kuester, Dan and Pat Miller, Officer Ramirez

Welcome and Introductions: Everyone in attendance introduced themselves and many gave home address to help everyone get to know each other a little better.

Update by ROPE Officer Ramirez (847-289-2700): Officer Ramirez wished everyone a Happy New Year! **Updates** from November 1st to current, there were two home burglaries and an additional attempted in the area. On December 5th, 2019 near Fremont street a neighbor called regarding a weapon seen, resulted in arrest of individual who had possession charges outstanding from 2018 and 2019. Officer Ramirez reminds everyone that if you see something that doesn't look quite right, call the police department. GPA members encouraged enforcement of parking restrictions, blocking driveways, crosswalks and fire hydrants.

Upcoming events: **January 27th** Chief Lalley's monthly meeting, 6 – 7 PM, at 151 Douglas Ave
February 16th, ALICE Training, 4:00 – 7:00 PM, this is training for what to do in active shooting civilian response training methods, cost is free, must sign up in advance.

February 19th EPD – The New Citizens Police Academy, 6:30 – 9:00 PM, registration required. Meets once a month for 8 months.

Additional information for any of these programs can be found on the EPD website.

Secretary's Report – Minutes of November 2019 meeting approved as presented, no meeting in December.

Treasurer's Report - Checking account - \$ 58,814.04

CD's (4 in total) \$ 84,540.57

Total \$143,354.61

In 2019, GPA had \$1,800.00 in interest from the 4 CD's. This was as a result of Pat moving CD's into better interest earning accounts.

Many expenses incurred, since November, which included Fall Fest prizes, baskets for welcoming new neighbors, prizes for the Christmas contest, Christmas Wreaths, as well as contract with Constant Contact for email. Donation from Symonds Funeral Home for \$120.00 for Fall Fest and \$1,000.00 grant from ECN related to the Community Garden.

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Officers Elected in November

- President: Dan Miller
- Vice President: Peg Bernar
- Secretary: Sue Kuester
- Treasurer: Pat Miller
- At Large 1: Tom Lee
- At Large 2: Barbara Evans
- Past President: Karen Bach

Committee Chairs to be elected:

- Hometown: Mike Haskins
- Public Relations (Social Media): Peg Bernar
- Membership: Janine Hnatusko
- Historic District: Amanda Carlson

Motion to accept new officers approved by those in attendance. Huge thank you to those that have given years of service to the board and our committees – Bill Briska, Moe Lee, and Paul Bednar. Thank you to all committee chairs for your willingness to help GPA continue to improve our neighborhood.

Committee Reports

- **House Tour – Mike Haskins, Chair (630-880-7276)** Mike informed us a refund of \$650.00 from the after party has been obtained. Thanks to the many who helped make that happen. Mike is calling out for Gifford Park Members to attend and become more active in the planning of the 2020 Historic Elgin House Tour. The first meeting will be on February 11th at 7 PM at the Elgin History Museum, 360 Park Street. All the homes have been selected and confirmed. Pictures of the homes were on display for all in attendance. The tour this year will be in the North West neighborhood near Wing Park. Additional thank you to Barbara Evans, Mike Zimmer, Karen Fox, Bill Briska, Brian Schmidt and Matt Martin as the team for site selection for this year's homes.
- **Public Relations – Peg Bernar, Chair** GPA Facebook page has 898 likes. Largest post viewed was of Fall Fest. Continue to post additional events such as the Mayors Awards and the City Grant Program. Also posted reminder of city council meeting on January 22ND, 7 pm to further discuss the status of the David C Cook building. Peggy thanked everyone who participated in the Christmas decorating contest. Special thanks to Tom and Moe Lee for judging. Congratulations to the winners.
- **Membership – Janine Hnatusko, Chair** Looking for new members to help with the membership committee. First meeting will be at Blue Box Café on January 31st at 1:00 PM Janine would like anyone interested in helping to attend.

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- **Historic District – Amanda Carlson, Chair** Looking for new members to help with Historic District. Amanda remembers when she moved into the neighborhood, how welcoming people were and would like to try and bring that back in the Historic District. Plan to attend the brainstorming meeting on Wednesday, January 29th from 5:30 – 6:30 at the Gail Borden Public Library, second floor conference room. Children are welcome.
 - **Community Gardens – Laura Knoerr** There are now forty garden beds, and all have been confirmed for this year. There will be two meetings, for the gardeners, explaining rules expectations, planning their gardens. Trying to confirm a master gardener will be at the first meeting. Hoping to get these meetings scheduled early enough so gardeners can be working in their beds by the end of March. Additional plans for the community garden park: floor to be completed on the pergola, butterfly garden and planting of some fruit trees. Also allowing gardeners to keep the same beds so may plant perennials. Laura feels there have been some relationships among gardeners forming. She also shared the Seventh Day Adventist Church, on Bode Road is interested in starting a garden.

Special Committee – Grant Program- Tom Lee, chair – submitted minutes from December and January meetings. Initially ground rules for meeting were established. Committee continues to lay out the specifics for the Grant Program.

Dan thanked everyone who was involved in the following: holiday decorations, wreaths on the historic district signs, GPA Christmas party which included donations to the crisis center and raffle prizes donated to the crisis center. A letter was received from the Crisis Center thanking GPA for their donations.

Neighborhood Outreach – Barbara Evans – Sharing the information regarding the Sidewalk Heroes, sponsored by the City of Elgin and School District U-46. Looking for neighbors willing to clear the sidewalk on an entire block after a snowfall. Especially with a focus on clearing the walks where children are walking to school. Also looking for people to help the elderly clear their walks. Check out the following site for more information. <http://www.cityofelgin.org/2365/Sidewalk-Heroes>

Discussion and Approval of the Budget for 2020 – Dan included proposed budget for 2020.

Mike Haskins requested increase to many items for the 2020 house tour, as a result of increases to printing costs, advertising, additional expense for tent rental for registrations, etc.

Grant committee was not entered as line item on budget, concerns verbalized regarding changes to identifying reoccurring expenses such as website maintenance, storage etc. Also need line items for donations, such as supporting the ROPE camp to White Pines Dude Ranch. Discussion continued and was suggested that each committee propose their budget. Sue volunteered to recreate proposed budget including line items missing for next meeting. Tom stated per bylaws proposed budget is to be voted on in February when new fiscal year begins.

All in attendance agreed to table voting on current budget and review in February.

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Amendment to Treasures Report – Barb requested amendment to treasures report to be reported monthly going forward and for these items to be identified in the proposed budget.

1. Committed \$50,000.00 to be given to new owners of the former Bowes Nursing Home, i.e. prior David C Cook house on corner of Gifford and Division. This money is available when the owners bring forward a plan for exterior work in restoring the home.
2. Committed \$1,000.00 to be given to Iglesia Principe de Paz, formerly the First Universalist Church corner of Villa and Dupage, for restoration of stain glass windows.

Goal Setting for 2020 – Dan included in handouts the Brainstorming Suggestions from March 24, 2012.

Prior to goal discussion Tom Lee presented his personal views on the current state of the Gifford Park Association. Copy is included in these minutes. Tom and Moe have been members of Gifford Park Association for eight years. It is very concerning to them both to see this neighborhood association lose site of its focus. He feels there is no structure and we need more focus on committee driven goals. It seems many new neighbors come for couple meetings and then no longer participate, WHY? Tom is anxious to move GPA back to committees. He is also a strong believer in revitalizing the Gazette.

Others in attendance also voiced similar opinions about the state of GPA and what we may be able to do to get us back on track. From some stating they miss the programs like Fall Fest which gives a sense of friendly neighbors. It was encouraged that the current committees create a few goals to accomplish in the next year and bring those to next meeting. Those goals will also help develop the realistic budget for the next year. However, it was stated that even those few goals need to focus on bringing neighbors together. John Fitzgerald, a long time resident of the Historic District said he is trying to get more involved, stressed the importance of all committees focusing on neighborhood. He stated the brainstorming 2012 document was just too large to accomplish anything.

Meeting adjourned at 9:02PM

Respectfully submitted

Susan Kuester