

Allegheny West Civic Council, Inc.
Membership Meeting Minutes
February 13, 2024

7:34 PM Call to Order by Tim Zinn, President. A quorum was present.

I. Reports of Elected Officials, City Departments, and Other Organizations

- A. City of Pittsburgh Zone 1 Police
Ofr. Defeo reported there were three incidents at North Shore bars. In addition, an automobile stolen elsewhere was recovered on Western Avenue.
- B. City of Pittsburgh Mayor's Office (Lindsey Robles)
 - The mayor's new biweekly newsletter was launched. It contains event listings, job openings, etc. It will also include resources such as "frequently asked questions" on subjects of interest.
 - The membership then brought the following items to Ms. Robles' attention:
 - Bike lanes on Brighton Road need to be cleaned because the street sweepers cannot reach the curbs due to the lane divider poles. Ms. Robles will inquire with the Department of Public Works.
 - Will the city's budget be affected by the declining property assessments in the Downtown area? Ms. Robles will inquire with the mayor's office.
- C. Pittsburgh City Council District 1 – Cllr. Bobby Wilson (Jordyn Gilliard)
 - There is talk of a zoning change for the homeless, and there is concern that the designated areas would have an adverse impact on public parks. Ms. Gilliard responded that Cllr. Wilson opposes this change and did not sponsor the legislation. A public hearing will be held on February 20. Following that, it will go to the City Planning Commission.
 - There is another proposed zoning change, that Cllr. Wilson is sponsoring, that would make it easier to build attached homes in areas that are currently restricted to detached dwellings. Some members objected that zoning should be changed for individual street blocks, rather than changing the zoning code for the entire city.
 - Parking fees in neighborhood districts were brought up.
 - One member reported that a local radio station was reporting that Cllr. Wilson requested his staff to look into the possibility of building 10-story high-rises. Ms. Gilliard responded that she had not heard this from Cllr. Wilson.
- D. Pennsylvania State Representative – Rep. Aerion Abney
No one appeared on behalf of Rep. Abney.
- E. Pittsburgh Parks Conservancy – Erin Tobin
Ms. Tobin is on temporary leave of absence.

II. Minutes

The minutes of the last meeting were approved. (A. Gilligan / D. Adam)

III. Reports of Officers, Standing Committee Chairs, and Others

A. Treasurer's Report – Cathy Serventi

- There were no major changes in the financial condition of the organization.
- The membership approved a motion to submit the treasurer's report for the annual audit. (F. Barbush / J. Beatty)

B. Communications Committee – Trish Burton

C. Vice president Elizabeth Barbush reported in Ms. Burton's absence. She requested that members report faulty hyperlinks and misinformation on the organization's website.

D. Membership Committee – Aaron Bryan

E. There was nothing new to report, other than that Allegheny West bowling is in full swing at the Elks Lodge on Cedar Avenue.

F. Property Committee – Michael Shealey

- The Property Committee has met several times concerning 806 Western Avenue.
 - There is a leak in the apartment. A plumber was called.
 - The roof needs to be repaired. The committee estimates the cost to be approximately \$1,000.00.
 - Several windows need to be replaced. Estimates were sought, but they all appeared to be too expensive (\$2,000.00 to \$3,000.00 per window). The committee was encouraged to seek an additional bid or two, after several members reported purchasing wooden windows recently for under \$2,000.00. The members voted to allocate \$15,000.00 to installing new wooden windows. (A. Gilligan / T. Barbush)
- The membership then debated the future of 806 Western Avenue. The question of whether to keep or sell it was raised. After much discussion, the members voted to retain ownership of the property. (F. Barbush / S. Graubarth)
- The members then discussed the property's use. Some felt that the apartment should be renovated into a higher-end market rate apartment. Others supported keeping it as affordable housing. Eventually, the membership voted to keep the apartment as affordable housing, but to exit the Pittsburgh Housing Authority's subsidization program. (F. Barbush / S. Graubarth)

G. Housing & Planning Committee – Jim Wallace

- The organization is scheduled to close in March on the sale of its vacant lot at 827 Western Avenue.

H. Friends of Allegheny West Committee – Deb Lantz

- The committee is halfway to the goal of selling 45 hanging flower baskets to decorate Western Avenue.
- The committee will be working on memorial trees for neighbors who have recently died.

I. Ways & Means Committee – Carol Gomrick

- There will be a website update completed by March for upcoming tours.
- The committee aims to increase advertising revenue from the printed programs for the summer Wine Tour and the winter House Tour.
- Tour ticket prices will be increased to keep pace with inflation and demand.

- Ms. Gomrick intends to meet with representatives of Calgary United Methodist Church concerning our ongoing financial arrangement for meetings and tours.
- J. Nominating Committee – Adrian Skinner
There was nothing new to report.
- K. Executive Committee Actions – Tim Zinn, president, and Bob Griewahn, secretary
- The secretary reported that the executive committee voted to recommend that ticket prices for our tours be increased.
- L. Northside Leadership Conference Report – Ann Gilligan
- Ms. Gilligan reported that the conference has finalized both its new bylaws and its strategic plan.
 - Additionally, the Neighborhood Community Development Fund (formerly known as the Northside Community Development Fund) is seeking to change its bylaws to comport with new federal regulations. The change would result in the Conference losing sole control of the Development Fund. The Conference would still retain multiple seats on the board of directors, but it would no longer have a majority.

IV. Unfinished Business

- A. Registered Community Organization status
Cathy Serventi is updating the organization's website, and uploading its minutes, in order to comport with the city's RCO rules.
- B. Western Avenue Neighborhood Improvement District
President Tim Zinn reported that the last meeting of the WANID committee was sparsely attended due to scheduling conflicts, but that he met with one of the property owners of McIntosh Row who refuses to sign an easement agreement. The owner's proposed solution is to keep the existing poles on the south side of the 800 block of Western Avenue between Rope Way and Brighton Road.

V. New Business

- A. It was announced that Calvary UM Church is fundraising for new pews or pew cushions.
- B. AWCC Budget – This was tabled until next month.
- C. Proposed Homeless Zoning legislation – The membership voted to have AWCC appear and oppose the existing proposal. (R. Malakoff / A. Bryan)

The meeting adjourned at 9:15 PM (D. Adam / S. Graubarth).

— Bob Griewahn, secretary.