

Historic Spanish Town Civic Association Board of Directors

Minutes

Sunday, December 11, 2011

6:30 p.m.

The Basler House

845 N. 8th St.

Baton Rouge, LA

Board Members Present: Jeff Duhé, *Chair*; Cherine Patin, *Treasurer*; Derek White; Allan Williams; June Pulliam, *Recording Secretary*; Travis Moore, *Vice-Chair*; Shawn O'Brien, Michael Beck

Members/Guests Present: Beverly LaBauve, Fr. Pat Mascarella, Lee Eisenberg, David Brown

Jeff Duhé called the meeting to order at 6:35, there being eight (8) board members present.

Approval of Minutes

Chair Duhé passed out the minutes from the November 2011 meeting. **Cherine Patin moved that the minutes be accepted as is. White seconded the motion, which carried.**

Treasurer's Report

Patin presented the amended Treasurer's Report from the October 2011 meeting. At present, we have \$14,055.75 in our fund.

Allan Kirkpatrick will be paid \$50 for having the Yard of the Quarter.

Duhé made a motion that Shawn O'Brien be reimbursed from the general fund the \$200 she has spent to replace the dog poop bags for the dog poop station. June Pulliam seconded the motion, which carried.

The Board instructed Chair Duhé to speak with the DDD about stocking the dog station boxes with bags so that residents no longer had to bear the cost.

Patin reported that Regions Bank, who had previously charged the Board \$200 for a box of checks, has since decided to give us free checking and has refunded the money for our check order.

Patin also explained that as a non-profit, we have to fill out a tax form 5100 to keep our non-profit status. She also explained to the Board the benefits of having the HSTCA re-classified as a 501-C3 organization. At present, the HSTCA is a 501-C4 organization, a designation that prevents contributors from claiming their contributions as tax-deductible as a 501-C4 organization is generally engaged in lobbying. However, as the HSTCA does not officially engage in lobbying, we could be re-classified as a 501-C3, which might make donating to us more attractive to other organizations. Based on this information, **the Board asked David Brown to investigate the possibility of our changing our status from a 501-4C to a 501-C3.**

Patin presented to the Board a copy of the Spanish Town patrol for the end of the month,

Security Report

Allan Williams reported that the crime in the neighborhood had been reported via the Google group. Patin also reported that the officers patrolling the neighborhood had been citing people for illegal parking or parking without a permit.

Pulliam commented on the patrolling times of security patrol officers, either in the late afternoon early evening, or after 7:30 a.m. She observed that it would be more helpful to us if we had officers patrolling the neighborhood during the small hours of the morning when most of us are not out. Patin said that the problem was that the BRPD lacked the capacity to cover us during the small hours.

Duhé requested that Williams speak to Cpl. Don Coppola about patrolling the neighborhood between 10:00 p.m. and 7:00 a.m. rather than the times they are patrolling now when most residents are out and about.

Beautification Committee

Derek White brought the Board up to speed on former resident Rebecca Breeden's bequest of \$10,000 to Spanish Town. The Society for the Preservation of Laginappe in Louisiana (SPELL) has suggested that they would like to match this amount, and that we come up with a mechanism that would generate more funds through the years. Travis Moore wondered if we needed a separate account to take Breeden's bequest and the money from SPELL to avoid running afoul of the law on how much money a non-profit organization is permitted to have on hand

Discussion ensued about what might be done with Breeden's bequest and the matching funds from SPELL. Suggestions included incorporating some sort of permanent fixture into the neighborhood such as special decorative tiles that might be placed on an entryway to Spanish Town rather than in front of individual houses, as the later action would necessarily have to include the property owner.

Moore discussed the progress that Beck has been making removing paper mulberry trees from the neighborhood. Michael Beck added that Kia Bickem of the Mayor's office visited Spanish Town to see what the block grant money was doing in Spanish Town. Bickem said that she has many volunteers who are eager to reproduce Beck's paper mulberry erridication project in the rest of the city.

Moore mentioned that he and Sam Corso will talk to Bill and Peggy Goode's renters on North Street about maintaining the community garden in this part of Spanish Town that has since fallen into disrepair.

Moore also reported that there are some inconsistencies in how Whitker Drive/Kismet Alley comes up in the police system—both are not listed on city maps.

O'Brien reported that Mrs. Rhorer fixed her broken sidewalk in front her property on University Walk.

Other Reports

Duhé reminded us that the Board passed a general statement of support for Rep. Tara Wicker's rental property ordinance. However, the ordinance was never presented to the Metro Council, and is not slated to come up any time soon.

The production company filming *The Breakout Kings* in Spanish Town gave the Board \$1000 for inconveniencing residents for the three days of filming. This \$1000 will go into the general fund.

The Louisiana Marathon will be coming to Spanish Town on January 15th, but their route will only take them by 4th Street by the State Capitol, not through Spanish Town.

Duhé also discussed changes to legislation governing the Historic Preservation Commission (HPC), which removes Spanish Town and Dreher Place's seats from the Board, as well as seats from the Foundation for Historic Louisiana and no longer addresses the qualifications required to serve as a board member. Moreover, now all HPC board members will be appointed by the Metro Council, and all "minor" changes to property must be approved by the Planning and Zoning Commission rather than by the HPC. This legislation does not define what constitutes a "minor" change.

Williams moved that the Board charged Duhé with working to reverse the removal of Spanish Town, Dreher Place and the Foundation for Historic Louisiana's representative seat on the HPC. Beck seconded that motion, which carried.

Website Improvements

Moore updated the Board's website, adding new photographs and minutes from past meetings. In future, Moore said that he will put on the website Beck's report about paper mulberry eradication in Spanish Town.

Other Business

Patin reported that her other professional commitments prohibited her from serving on the Board unless we had liability insurance. This coverage would cost the Board approximately \$450 annually. Duhé asked what activities the Board sponsors or licenses that could expose us to liability. David Brown guessed that the Board might be liable for an injury sustained by someone participating in Beautification Committee activities, but we have protection for other types of DNO liability. Williams requested that we further investigate how such insurance will benefit the Board before purchasing it.

Because the Board was unable to commit to purchasing this insurance during this meeting, Patin regretfully resigned from the Board.

Other Business

Lee Eisenberg suggested that a parabolic mirror be placed on a poll at Spanish Town Road and North 8th so that people can see if traffic is coming towards motorists attempting to turn from 8th St on Spanish Town Road. Beck made a substitute suggestion that DPW be consulted about eliminating one of the parking spaces on Spanish Town Road to improve visibility at this area since people generally don't expect a mirror and won't make use of it.

The Board instructed the Chair to contact Traffic Engineering about visibility issues on Spanish Town Road at 8th St. Beck seconded this motion, which carried.

Eisenberg also requested that the Board do a community program to eradicate fire ants. Eisenberg, who is an entomologist, thought that the fire ants were becoming immune to Amdro, and that perhaps a better bait would be a mixture of boric acid and sugar water.

White requested that the Board move up the meeting time to 5 on Sundays and that we commit to being on time and that the meeting not run beyond a certain time. White also requested that we re-evaluate how we do business, and perhaps more closely adhere to Roberts Rules of Order.

Williams motioned that a second notice letter go out to everyone who has not yet contributed to the Security Fund this year. Pulliam seconded that motion, which carried.

There being no other new business, Moore moved that we adjourn the meeting. White seconded the motion, and the meeting was adjourned at 8:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

June Pulliam

HSTCA Recording Secretary