

**Dupont Circle Citizens Association
Board of Directors Meeting
August 24, 2023**

Present: (via videoconference/phone) Susan Volman, Lance Salonia, Susan Valaskovic, Marcy Logan, Rebecca Martin, John Hassell, Ed Hanlon

Not present: Diane Quinn, Justin Thornton, Patty Zweibel, Joe Caruso

Meeting was called to order at 7:05 p.m.

Approval of Minutes

MOTION: Susan Volman moved to approve the June Board meeting minutes. The motion was seconded by Susan Valaskovic, all in favor.

President's Report

The 100th anniversary brochure will be given to everyone at the Sept 7th meeting, but we will need to verify which members received it using a table checklist system so we don't mail it to them as well.

- An overview was given of the ongoing situation with The Aston, a GW dorm that is technically in the DCCA area, is on track to be purchased by the city with plans to convert it into a shelter with wraparound services for unhoused transitioning services. There will be an advisory board with members from community associations, but based on conversations with Foggy Bottom Association and West End Community Association, who have more members in closer proximity, DCCA will not be getting involved given its location.
- In response to a Church Street resident's inquiry about whether St. Thomas complied with their agreement for inclusionary zoning, Susan looked into this and learned that the report was filed.
- Susan reminded the Board that the eblast is received by an audience that extends beyond members. Susan is the final clearance of the eblast – edits are made as needed to accommodate the format.
 - A discussion about whether to offer **members** accommodations for disabilities when /if possible – there was no disagreement.
 - The board also discussed being mindful of when it was or was not appropriate to mention politicians by name if they are running for office.

Treasurer's Report

Lance circulated the financial report before the meeting. Monthly expenditures were reviewed including a breakdown of September meeting expenditures.

ABCA

Rosemarino D'Italia: No update or changes.

Krave: Settled.

Federation Meeting

DCFCA Luncheon: DCCA has purchased three tickets – Justin and Susan Valaskovic will attend, and the option is available for one other to attend. Susan will follow up to confirm list by 9/28 to submit for base clearance.

Fundraising

Susan Volman suggested board think about fundraising ideas for DCCA.

Membership

Susan Valaskovic drafted a letter to businesses to re-start the preferred merchant's program and offered to share it with interested board members.

***ACTION ITEM:** Susan Vol. agreed to ask Foggy Bottom Association about their approach/program to help fuel ideas for a DCCA program.*

Programming

○ **Special Meeting:**

- Ed reported that he had signs and 250 laminated cards printed to promote the September meeting at the Chastleton but did not yet have a plan on distribution of cards. A discussion ensued about the ineffectiveness of leaving cards on a shelf versus handing them out.
- Ed said signs would be put up near the Chastleton, at intersections and other places inside DCCA boundaries and that he would be holding some signs to put up on Labor Day Weekend.

***ACTION ITEM:** Susan Valas. offered to distribute some cards to merchants. Marcy offered to help. Ed suggested he will drop off cards to each board member and a batch to Susan Valas.*

- Ed stated that the September speaker said that no projector is needed but is now questioning the decision. Ed will contact the speaker again and follow up on whether or not it is needed.
- No sound system was acquired – Susan Valas researched it, and it was difficult to find a single system that will work adequately in rotating venues. There was a discussion about gearing the system toward the Chastleton venue since it is a reliable back up space. Ed will be looking into a purchase in advance of the September meeting.

- An earlier discussion determined that there would be a table/area set up at the September meeting where non-member names could be gathered and where Lance could process any interested new members.
- Committee members will arrive on or before 6:30 for set up and preparation.
- **Future Meeting Venue Search:**
 - **October** – Phillips where sound system requires a \$500 fee. Susan Valas will be following up to determine if The Phillips sound system fee will be waived if we bring our own system.
 - **November (?)** – Rebecca/Ed are visiting the National League of American Pen Women’s Club to scout the venue
 - **February** – Belmont House

John H. and Susan Valas. pursued the Dupont Circle Hotel for meeting space but it does not look viable

- **Meeting Calendar:**
 - Board discussed the importance of maintaining the meeting schedule on first Monday of the month and it was determined that maintaining the standing meeting is important and useful. There was discussion about events that could be held at alternate dates on months where no standing meeting is scheduled, specifically a January social event at Mansion on O was discussed.

***ACTION ITEM:** Susan Valas. will follow up with H to determine if O Street Mansion, which is not otherwise available on Mondays, would be an option for a mid-week January Resolutions Party*

- **Speaker Line Up:**
 - Queries are out to the author of a book about 16th Street as well as the owner of Mansion on O, who is trying to implement the 51 steps to freedom on which she would do a presentation – Susan will share
 - Susan Volman suggested the program committee develop a list with a range of speakers -- political, cultural, historical, environmental etc. and we can survey members’ interest.

Parks and Garden

Freedom Park Tree/Stump:

- Rebecca reported that despite best effort to communicate with the removal company, the tree was removed from the Freedom Garden without regard to the specs provided by the

arborist. The result is an unwieldy four-foot stump. Marcy has gathered quotes for cutting or removing the stump because they do not believe the city will

Marcy offered estimates and is still gathering more – it would be ~\$200 to cut the stump down. Alternatively, it would likely cost \$375 to remove and grind but because the garden is surrounded by fence this may not be a viable option.

ACTION ITEM: Marcy will get additional estimates for fence repair (the initial estimate was \$4,500). Board will discuss if DCCA will cover any of cost after estimates and outside donation avenues have been explored. Once funding/contractor is in place Susan Volman will start process to get the necessary public permit.

Garden committee recommends proceeding with cutting the stump and requests approval for the cost which will be outside committee' existing budget.

MOTION: Susan Valas. motions to authorize \$200 to cut the stump, Ed seconds the motion. All in favor.

Freedom Park Fence:

- Rebecca points out that the stop gap fence needs to be replaced and under DCCA's mission of beautification of neighborhood would like DCCA to pursue.
- Susan Volman suggested and volunteered to do outreach to realtors in neighborhood to contribute to the cost.

Action Item: Marcy will get additional estimates for fence repair (the initial estimate was \$4,500). Once funding/contractor is in place Susan Volman will start process to get the necessary public permit.

Regulatory:

- Ed reported that no testimony needs to be re-submitted for the contested case but that there are potential ways for DCCA to participate, such as serving as a witness. The meeting is scheduled for Monday, November 20th at 4:00 p.m. The meeting date/time was concerning.
- The regulatory committee will continue to work on it.
- Ed reported the Court of Appeals vacated the court order on the Mason Temple.

MOTION: Lance motioned that DCCA draft and submit a letter to **Zoning** to request a more reasonable meeting date/time, John seconded and all in favor

Action Item: Ed will work with Susan to draft a letter.

Upcoming membership meetings:

October: Monday, October 2nd

November: Monday, November 6th

Meeting adjourned 8:59 p.m.

Next Board Meeting will be – Thursday September 28th at 7:00 p.m.