

Barton Hills Neighborhood Association
General Meeting
1.25.11

Committee Members Present: 5; Ellen Pitluck absent.

Commence: 7:03

New Officers Introduction. Melissa Hawthorne as VP, Craig Brown as President. Jeff Embree will be our ANC rep.

Recognition of outgoing officers: Wendy Papasan, Penley McQueen.

Boy Scout Troop 17 Present: Selling Mulch for \$4 a 50# bag. Scouts get \$1 per bag, and .25 per delivery – does not affect total cost.

Approval of Minutes: Motion and seconded. No opposition.

Treasurers Report: Nearly 12,000 in the account.

Oak Wilt: City Arborist Chris Dolan presenting on behalf of the oak wilt prevention program. Oak Wilt is an infectious fungus that infects trees and fungal spores clog water vessels within trees. 90% of the trees get infected by root grafts, as most the trees are interconnected by root systems. Bugs will burrow open wounds in live or red oak trees. White oaks are not susceptible. The red oaks are the only ones that will form a fungal matt that attracts bugs to eat, and then carry the fungus to uninfected trees, red and live. New infections at Barton Parkway (3). Texas Forest Service maintains website where you can get more information. Please prune the trees only during the 3 warmest, or 3 coldest months of the year, and ALWAYS seal wounds. Beetle can be active at all times of the year. If tree sustains a natural injury, make clean cut and seal. If a red oak is infected, it will die in 2 to 4 weeks. Injections to inoculate a tree are available, but not recommended unless you are in very close proximity and will only protect that tree for 2 to 3 years. If concerned, can call Chris Dolan and he will check out your tree. Infected red oaks need to be removed quickly so they cannot form infectious fungal mats that will spread the problem further. Contact is 512 974 1881; website is www.ci.ausitn.tx.us/oakwilt

Barton Hills Elementary Closure: Kelly Tagley, PTA president, presenting first. District formed a task force last spring to assess facilities and their cost effectiveness. Concluded BHE was underutilized, as the main (non portable) building can only hold 250 and the school holds a large number of transfer students. Tonight is a facilities task force meeting. There are 2 more meetings after tonight to finalize recommendations, and final recommendations presenting on 2/14, and then there will be some negotiation following that, til March 28th when the master plan must be approved. Even if this hurdle is clearly, we will be battling other budget problems in the future. Tina Donahue is the liason for between the neighborhood association list serve and the PTA, posting all current info.

- **What we can do:** BHEPTA.com and saveaustinschools.com have info on the current state of affairs, and the latter has centralized info for all possible affected 9 schools. There are tabs on the site that is for 'what can I do to help'. Join PTA for \$5, buy a sign, join Friends of Barton Hills who coordinates with BHEPTA and published a 120 page manifesto. Make contribution to the school to support current programs.
- **Signs:** Can be purchased on grassy area near Homedale after school.
- **Question: Have PTAs or schools been asked what alternatives they would support?** No.
- **Teacher Ratio:** Kelly & Cheryl Ann. Recommendation proposed and approved last night that teacher student ratio be altered by a few students per class. Aides were cut but librarians were maintained. Hoping for more time for community input following their recommendation.
- **Proposed Resolution by Friends of Barton Hills E:** Cheryl Ann Campbell presenting. Resolution posted on list serve this morning. Focus on taking positions that PTA couldn't, and doing purposeful research and data evaluation, and writing up results. Efficiency attacked. James Findler is a neighbor with preschool kids, and wrote a letter in statesman. Group works primarily with Zilker, and combined we represent as neighborhoods 20% of the voting population in Austin. It's clear in retrospect that the district was looking at transfers and efficiency a long time ago, but didn't realize that we were targets til very recently. As for property, the city has indicated that they would just mothball BHE or use it for another purpose.
 - Julian Rivera: Superintendent conceded that there was a communication problem about this process. Indicated she wants the task force to go after low hanging fruit for cost cutting and a 10 year plan of reorganizing; wants task force to finish their part of the process so the school board can move forward in their role and include the community in that part of the process. Task force concedes problems with the numbers but is unwilling to correct or amend. Their report is merely a report, and has no authority for change. Means that we must maintain constant pressure on our elected officers and the school board until this becomes a topic before the board.
 - "Save our Strong Neighborhood Schools...." (text is in documents from meeting.)
 - Motion by Cherylann Campbell to adopt the resolution, Seconded by Sunny Luther, and all in favor.
- Craig Brown proposal to contribute 2000 to Barton Hills PTA; suggestion to restrict this money to be used strictly for keeping BHE open... Kelly re focuses our attention that PTA does not need the money presently and it's difficult to earmark funds. Would like to have discussions with the board. Proposal to authorize the board to spend 2,000 for a purpose to be determined between the executive committee and the board in the interim before next meeting.
 - Can our ANC rep get this issue before the council meeting? Jeff will try to get this before board tomorrow, and share information with us.
- **BHE Facilities Improvement Committee:** Craig Brown talked with Katy Achterman about the BHE facilities issues. School is in part a city park, and we as

a neighborhood association have been able to make improvements in the past. Need fencing and water fountains. Would like to appoint a committee to identify facilities problems that we can remedy. Please approach Craig after the meeting if you would like to volunteer; especially those who are able to do the work themselves.

- **Julian wrap up** – if it's not about closures, it's transfers, if it's not that it's going to be staff cuts. We need to be cohesive as a group, and flexible.

Rockin Tomato GCs given out to trivia question winners.

Committee Reports:

- **Neighborhood Watch:** John Luther presenting. 3 home burglaries, 1 car theft. Having a great impact and gaining recognition throughout city and state. Thanks to all the volunteers. In 30 days, 29 people have worked over 100 hours. More drivers needed for daytime shifts; only need one hour a week.
- **Greenbelt Guardians:** Sam presenting. Barton Creek Trail Core by Impact Austin to repair trail have been down there since first of the year, doing clearing and building steps at the rock flats at Homedale access trail near Campbell's hole. Craig Smith has been a long time volunteer, and Melissa Hawthorne is a new and active member. Signs are being made to warn of dangers. Parks reports a big reduction in the number of camps on the creek since the invasive species removal, and consequently reduced crime. Work day this Saturday the 29th at the Homedale access to remove invasives and trail maintenance. 10 neighbors, 15 probation teen volunteers, and 15 young kids from Little Helping Hands, 4 Key Club members, 1 Eagle Scout, BHE Science teacher; could always use more support though. Thanks to the BHNA for providing breakfast tacos on work days.
- **Area Development:** Peter Hess presenting. Not much happening in the last 3 months. We did lose a park permit, and he will post on the list serve about it. South Lamar stretch near Reds Porch has been sold, but we don't yet know what the purpose for it's use and development will be.
- **ANC:** meeting tomorrow night.
- **Call for nominations for neighborhood improvement projects.** Please submit creative ideas to the board so we can discuss at the next meeting.
- **Other Business:**
 - **Annual donation to St Marks renewal?** What amount is proposed? Motion for 250; seconded and unanimous vote to approve.
 - **Annual reporting issues:** Ellen cannot review old checks past 90 days. Will need to spend 36 dollars to get last year's checks, and monthly fee of 2 dollars to get copies of checks.
 - **Additional Signs for Meeting:** Motion for 20 dollars to get more meeting signs for the hood. Seconded and voted in favor by all.
 - **Volunteers needed for secretarial position for next meeting.**

Motion to Adjourn, 8:42 p.m.