

Passyunk Square Civic Association
General Membership Meeting
Tuesday, March 6, 2018

President Sarah Anton called to order the General Membership Meeting of the Passyunk Square Civic Association (PSCA) at 6:46 PM in the South Philadelphia Older Adult Center. Board members in attendance included Sarah Anton, Ilene Wilder, Henry Sullivan, Andrew Emma and Jeff Brown. Absent were: Monica Montiel, Andrew Stober, Suzanne Tavani and Kristi Buchholz.

Sarah indicated that this meeting will provide an overview of what PSCA does. The next Membership Meeting, April 3, will be a candidates' forum with local candidates as well as people running for the PSCA Board. Board elections will be held at the May 1 meeting and the final Membership meeting of the year will be on June 5.

The Board is the governance body of PSCA Sarah explained. People don't have to be on the Board to be on or chair a PSCA committee. The Board knows neighbors and neighborhood issues and gets a lot of e-mails. It meets the week before the membership meeting.

Alysea McDonald, Chair of the Communications Committee, stated that the committee uses social media, the newsletter and the website to provide information to the community. She is always looking for volunteers to help.

Sara Reckahn handles the Stoop of the Month, which comes out every three months. She mentioned that it is hard getting in contact with some homeowners who have been nominated to ensure that they want to participate. Nancy from Benna's get the prizes for the winners who also get a window decal. Being involved is a great way to meet neighbors.

Sarah explained that PSCA is an RCO, a Registered Community Organization. As such it functions as the official community organization used by the City to get feedback regarding neighborhood development. The Zoning Committee is the official one that makes recommendations regarding zoning variances. The revitalized Planning Committee has more of a global overview regarding development in the neighborhood. Karen Thompson who co-chairs the Planning Committee mentioned that it is looking at Percy Street and ways to help the Zoning Committee. She said that the committee is open to ideas from neighbors.

Sarah reported that the Zoning Committee meets the second Tuesday of each month at St. Maron's Hall. The next meeting is March 13 and will include cases at: 1211 Annin Street, 635 Tasker Street, 1301 S. 8th Street and 829 Wharton Street. A question was raised by a neighbor who said the log on the zoning website was terrific. However, nothing had been posted since February. Also there is no indication of what variance is being requested. Sarah replied that she realized the problem and it is being worked on. The goal is to get all the zoning cases from the Board meeting on the website the next morning.

Trash, Sarah stated, is a huge problem in our neighborhood. A majority of PSCA's budget is spent on a trash contract beyond Passyunk Avenue. Sarah encouraged people to clean up their own blocks. She said that she would be happy to explain how people could become block captains.

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PSCA's biggest fundraiser is the annual Art Auction. This year it will be held on April 27 at St. Maron's Hall. The committee is asking for artists and art donations are due by March 9. The cost for the auction is \$15 on line and \$20 at the door. Sarah mentioned that PSCA solicits donations from those who can contribute.

Nick Ventrola reported on how the PSCA Board election will work. He will oversee it. Since Nick no longer lives in the neighborhood he will be an unbiased third party. A total of eight positions are to be voted on, four current Board members are up for re-election and there are four open seats. Those interested in running can go to PSCA's nomination link. Nominations must be in by March 30 and nominees will be introduced at the Membership meeting of April 3. Sarah reiterated that the Board is a generalist group. It makes decisions on the organization. Board members don't have to chair committees. However, they must attend meetings, happy hours and represent the organization.

Sarah opened the meeting up for any questions but there were none.

Ilene Wilder reported on the Crosstown Coalition, an association of associations, with Ilene being the treasurer. She explained that it represents 34 RCOs from neighborhoods around Philadelphia. It started many years ago and recently has become more of an advocacy group. City Council members are now coming to the Crosstown to ask its positions about issues. Each RCO has three Delegates to the Crosstown Coalition. PSCA's Delegates are: Ilene, Sarah and Andrew Emma. The Crosstown is looking at many issues and how they impact the neighborhoods, a big one being zoning. Representatives of the Crosstown help write the new zoning code. Matters like the City's budget and proposed tax hikes will also be an issue. The Crosstown is also looking at affordable housing with the idea of encouraging mixed income neighborhoods. A recent affordable housing bill was held in City Council and is being re-written. Ilene is chairing a sub-committee on parking and it will attempt a parking strategy for the City.

Sarah indicated that PSCA's newsletter is on the tables. She also mentioned that PSCA has a monthly Language Exchange where Spanish speakers get together with English speakers to help each other learn the others language. It meets monthly at a different restaurant.

Sarah stated that we are trying to get all the candidates we can at the April 3 membership meeting. The Congressional boundaries have recently changed so we are now in the 2nd Congressional District with the southern boundary being Tasker Street. Dwight Evans is our Congressman. He will be invited as well as other candidates running for Congress and state positions. Candidates for committee persons will also be invited.

On April 5, Capitolo Playground will have a community meeting to get input on the design for a new playground, Sarah reported. Ilene mentioned that in June Parks on Tap will again be at Columbus Square. The City is bidding out Columbus Playground's renovation so Ilene expects that construction should begin next spring and be completed by next fall. Gold Star Park will also get new playground equipment and there will be a new playground at Kirkbride Elementary School.

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Sarah pointed out that Holly Keefe keeps PSCA's Google calendar so people should check it out to find out what's happening.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 7:15 PM.

Submitted by Jeff Brown