

# Braeburn Valley Civic Association

Sections I & II

**Minutes August 13, 2024**

**Braeburn Valley Civic Association Meeting**

**Location: University Park Baptist Church, 7887 Beechnut, 77074**

**Board Members: Bert Ruiz President (present)**

**Darren Spriggs Treasurer (present)**

**Jonathan Soffar Vice President (present)**

**Barbara Haney Secretary (present)**

**Christine McKeon At Large (present)**

- I. 6:30 pm Welcome.
- II. 6:40 pm Approval of May 13 2024 minutes. Approved by Ted Holubec and seconded by Rita Whilhite.
- III. 6:45 pm Treasurer's Report. 2024 update year to date (details will be kept with the printout minutes as well as digital records)
  - a. Actual budget and variance: We should end the year with surplus of \$2,998 at end of 2024. (Forecast to bring in \$41,584 in revenue from all sources)
  - b. 18 homeowners have not paid their 2024 dues
  - c. Cash balance is \$93,525
  - d. Bert reminded attendees that residents will be able to pay their annual homeowners fees via credit card through the website. There will be a convenience fee associated with this option.
- IV. New Business/Announcements/Presentations
  - a. Dept of neighborhood presentation Veronica Hernandez. Veronica is the SW liaison, she has been with the city for 26 years. Her dept's mission is to improve the quality of life in neighborhoods by: 1) engage with the community regarding violations of city ordinances with regard to houses and vehicles 2) mentoring at risk youth, prevent gang involvement, 3) encourage civic engagement and other ways. There are several divisions within the dept of Neighborhoods. Jeannie Spriggs and Bert Ruis have brought up the incongruencies of the city breaking its own ordinances of houses that the city owns. Veronica mentioned that the best way to handle this is to write a letter to the mayor.

The dept of neighborhood is broken up into several depts. They are:

    1. Inspection and Public Services – this involves inspection of homes that are in violation of city ordinances and nuisances. This is most of all the calls they receive, vacant homes and lots. She gets a lot of calls from the Braeburn area. Last year there were 3 properties that were demolished last year. On overgrown lots, if the grass is higher than 9 inches, that's a violation. Inspections have been delayed because of the storms. The dept also works in conjunction with heavy trash. First step at looking at properties in violation is to check 311 to see if there have been calls in to that number from a resident saying that their heavy trash was not picked up. Vehicles on the street is maintained by the HPD. If the vehicle is on private property and is in violation (inoperable, expired tags, etc) than it falls under the jurisdiction of the inspection and public services dept. If your neighbor has a lot of trash in their back yard, this is also a violation of city ordinances. Vacant properties. If the house is open (windows or doors), they will notify the owner that it needs to be boarded up. They also do neighborhood sweeps to see if there are large swaths of violators and will go door to door to educate and pass out pamphlets with information.

2. Mayors Anti-Gang Office works with our at risk youth on gang and truancy issues. They work with local sports teams and they coordinate parent engagement to alert them to signs of gang activity.
  3. Offices of New Americans – this is to help immigrants with their applications to become American Citizens. They also work with non-profits like YMCA and Catholic Charities to provide resources to immigrants. There is an advisory council that attempts to connect with civic associations and then advise the mayor regarding issues that they are seeing.
  4. Office of Neighborhood Engagement – this is a volunteer program where you work events. They offer free legal services and also offer senior services. Neighborhood matching grants that neighborhoods can apply for. If you have a certain project in your neighborhood you can apply for a matching grant. There's also Mayors Youth Council – Youth bring ideas to the Mayors office.
- b. So the question came up - how do you report anything? Veronica said if residents have issues, they need to call 311 and then also they can request neighborhood updates, you can also email 311 or download the app.
  - c. Bert Ruiz asked how are repeat offenders handled like homeowners who are in violation of a city ordinance. In the initial report, the inspector goes out plaquards the property, owner gets 30 days to fix. Check back takes place. Inspector goes back to see if its resolved, if not they will issue a citation. If the citation takes longer like for dangerous building then the owner is given longer to take care of the issue because the city knows there are processes that have to take place. Fines increase with multiple citations. At some point, if the city demolishes the property, they will place a lien on the property and the owner will have to pay the city for the demolition of the property plus potential fines.
  - d. Rita Wilhite asked about road issues like telephone poles that impede driver views of oncoming traffic, potholes, etc that are not taken care of properly and was told that you need to let your councilman know about it. Jeannie mentioned you can also email people who are involved in the Bissonnet Road Project. For sewage issues, as in our neighborhood problems with the apartment complex, call the Health dept.
- V. Property Updates: 1) 1 Hideaway Circle, there was an incident with a homeless individual occupying the house with his dogs. The dogs rushed Bert and the owner came out to constrain them. There was a conversation between the two and Bert reported the incident to the city. Bert also requested an update for the demolition of the house. The city representative said there are a few processes that need to be taken care of first. Another resident mentioned reporting 3 separate incidents at that house as well. 2) Valley View lane house has sold to investors and is in the process of being rehabbed. 3) Nairn house has sold and new owner has been out clearing out the back yard. He has indicated that he plans to live at the house. Bert had a conversation with him mentioning he needs proper permitting and will need to contain the dumpster on the driveway. 4) Corner of Braes Bayou and Wanda, owner there has indicated that she wants to tear down and rebuild, no time-table mentioned. Bert mentioned that there is a lot of tree debris that the city had to take care of and the back needs to be secured. 5) Abandoned car was reported to HPD. Owner came and picked it up. Ordinance is that if a car is on the street for more than 48 hours it's in violation of city ordinance.
- VI. Hurricane Preventative Steps. In regard to debris pickup, the city is supposed to come back out to pick up tree and fence debris. Bert has counted at least 21 properties that still have debris piles that need to be picked up. One resident mentioned that in certain instances the cranes can't get to the piles because of trees and other things in the way. District J may have a separate initiative for debris

pickup. Centerpoint is out trimming trees near power lines in nearby areas, as noted by several residents. The board mentioned that there are properties along Braes Bayou that have a lot of trees not maintained that back up to power lines that caused issues. Bert mentioned that we all need to be thinking about our trees and keeping them trimmed and maintained so that the power won't be out for so long in future outages.

- VII. Traffic Study Update – barrier was approved and is going up in front of city council for final vote. Bonham Acres will take responsibility of final design. Bert recognized Derrick and Cheryl who were on the committee.
  
- VIII. Braeburn Country Club Wall Construction Project – they are finalizing details for fencing prior to submitting it to the officers to vote. Still needs to go through permitting.
  - a. Neighborhood Safety. Bissonnet Safe Street Initiative has emailed out their recommendations to help with issues of pedestrian and school traffic safety along Bissonnet. They are planning to redesign medians, plant trees, restripe roads, enlarge sidewalks, improve crosswalks at Sharpstown. The initiative is requesting feedback.
  
- IX. Other – Rita Wilhite mentioned our neighborhood has so many older trees, maybe we can go in collectively with a tree company to come in and give discounted rates to trim or take out trees. Another resident is having issues with the sewer situation coming from the apartment complex backing up into the back yard of Nairn. Resident said she is going to call the Health dept and Mike Pollard.
  
- X. 8:00 pm Adjourn. Dick Akkerman approved the motion to adjourn; this was seconded by Lance Roseborough.

The Civic Association is mandated in our deed restrictions and is responsible for maintaining common areas, the private back-door waste service and representing the neighborhood in civic matters. Membership comprises the property owners within Braeburn Valley Sections I and II.