

**SQUIRREL HILL
URBAN COALITION**



Board Meeting, April 18, 2023, 6:30 PM,
In-Person - Room 220 JCC
Minutes

Board Members: Ray Baum, Justin Berk, Dalia Belinkoff, Heather Graham, Guy Costa, Mardi Isler, Melissa Hiller, Jon Prince, Lisa Steindel, Marshall Hershberg, Erik Wagner

Guests: Carissa Snedden, Kelsey Lenard, Connor Baumle, Sean Harrington, Barb Warwick, Dmetri Black

Staff: Maria Cohen

1. Action Items

- b. Approve March Minutes – Motion to Approve Lisa Steindel; Second by Melissa Hiller; All in favor

2. Executive Director's Report

- a. Clean Sweep Week- Starting on Saturday, 4/22 we will have a soft kick off with a community Earth Day event in Summerset at Frick Park, followed by an in person litter patrol kick off event on Sunday, 4/23 (9 am – 12 pm). Participants can sign up to join or just come out for the event. There are opportunities for to sign up for individual or group clean ups all week! We would really appreciate the board coming out to support us! There is a sign up for help at the SHUC booth, for a photographer and to help direct participants. We will give you directions if you sign up. Prizes are awesome and are from: Games Unlimited, Littles, Blue Monkey Tea, Chocolate Moose, the Refillery & a Phipps Family Membership. Please also try our new, fun clean sweep BINGO!
- b. Forbes Funds Update – As most of you know the Coalition was awarded a \$20k Management Assistance Grant to partnering with Uncover Squirrel Hill develop a new strategic & financial plan including a technology piece. We are hosting community meetings at the JCC Levinson Hall on Wednesday, April 26th and Tuesday, May 24th to engage the community. 1st Meeting: Community members will be asked to share their thoughts and wants about business district improvement, celebrations, quality of life in our Squirrel Hill Neighborhood. 2nd Meeting: Include the experts for a robust discussion with the community. Depending upon the outcomes of the first meeting, SHUC will invite local councilmembers, Zone 4, DOMI, Parks, Merchants/Uncover etc. For our board members, please complete the doodle poll to share which meeting for our board's brainstorming session to select whether May 11 or

- May 15th from 6 – 8 pm is best for you to help us with your input. We are so excited to have this incredible opportunity for our Squirrel Hill Community!
- c. JCC Center for Loving Kindness – SHUC attended, and Maria was a table captain for the event the JCC CFLK Passover Tapas. The event hosted 140 guests, many of whom had never attended a Passover Seder. Mayor Gainey + several of his team members participated. It was a beautiful, event with some challenging discussion points sparring thoughtful, wonderful discussion. It was an absolute honor for the Coalition to be a part of it! The JCC CFLK's Upstanders are participating in 4 clean ups for Clean Sweep week. Stay tuned for more important collaborations!

3. Treasurer's Report

- a. P & L for March - For the Month of March we had income of 6,622 dollars. Of that, 4,000 dollars was from sponsorship income for the treasure dinner. We also had magazine revenues of 1,329.

We had operating expenses of 19,149 dollars for March. Most of the significant expenses went towards the publication of the magazine, including 6,845 dollars in printing, and 3,228 dollars in miscellaneous magazine expense. This means that our net income was negative 12,526 dollars for March.

We have 18,497 dollars in our main checking account as of March 31st, compared to about 25,300 dollars last year at this time. Our financial position is not quite as strong as it has been in previous years at this time but with lower expenses expected in the coming months we expect it to be better during summer, when more money starts coming in for the treasure dinner.

- b. 990 and BCO 10 FYI

4. Committee Reports

- a. Built Environment - CMU and Irish Center DAM –OPID, the City & SHUC set up a DAM for Wednesday, May 3rd @ 5:30 pm for a CMU project involving an addition to the existing Hamerschlag House (5122 Skibo Drive - near Margaret Morrison St) for use as a student commons. A DAM has been scheduled for Wednesday, May 17th @ 6 pm for the Irish Center proposed residential development and a JAA project.
- b. Litter Patrol – Already reported about clean sweep week.
- c. Ped-Bike – Family based Fern Hollow – Sunday, June 4th or Sunday June 11th event with a bike ride and walk. Supply: H2O, popsicles Families can stay for A picnic lunch after.
DOMI planning to complete the remaining deliverable for Forbes/Dallas/Beachwood will be completed over the Summer. Our bike ped committee was asked to help the city brainstorm for an event for the week of May 8th.

- d. Treasure Award's Dinner – Send information to the board regarding the sponsorships.
- e. Trees and Parks – Mardi has not had any tree request form yet. She is expecting some for Denniston. Scott Bluman received his tree care certification and will be increasing his volunteer work with us!
There has been a request to have trees planted on Murray. The city gets Trees assigned for Tree Vitalize, can we request those for Forbes without having forms from business owners. Greenfield on Murray would like to make the request.

5. President's Report

- a. Preserve Our Parks and Gardens – Yesterday, Sestilies Mardi has her property protected with repellent and deer are still coming into her yard! Andy Sheean interview Mardi regarding the deer issue and the interview. Right to know from pendot – pick up an average of 99 dead deer a year. There is an average of 500 dead deer in the city per year. Mardi is requesting a right to know. Data is being collected by the group. The group will use the data to describe specifics with all of the issues and proposed solutions. Hunting in Hayes has helped to keep the deer population under control. Hayes status will most likely be changed to a protected park which will change the ability to hunt in the area. No one has been hurt by any of the over population programs. The group needs to have sufficient data and photos for public meeting and comment.
- b. Neill Log House Update – The FONLH has a signed agreement from the City. All artifacts are out of the house and Guardian gave us climate controlled storage for a year. Construction is expected to start in June. The contract for construction is currently under review.
- c. Board Member recruitment –

6. New Business

- a. Proposed Amendment to the Bylaws – The proposed amendment to the bi-laws for 3 years & 3 consecutive terms. SHUC needs a minimum 20 board members. The Coalition will need 3 more board members if the proposed change is approved. Motion to approve: Ray Baum; Second: Erik Wagner; 2/3 vote of the board members approved – Motion carried.
- b. Councilmember Warwick DOMI proposal – Barb keeps following up.
 - i. Spin Scooter (Guy Costa) – Is Councilmember Warwick going to vote for Spin to stay? NO – nightmare for our disabled community. SPIN has rosy numbers from multiple choice surveys of its own users. There will be another study funded by SPIN. Councilmember Warwick shared that we should write letters. Make 311 requests. At the State level individuals are not allowed to own their own scooters.

- ii. Intersection; Bartlett & Wightman bollards are dangerous & confusing!
 - iii. Downtown Ambassador's program – The pilot program has 8 Ambassadors. They are trained by Block by Block to support and help people who need help.
 - iv. Work on Serpentine Drive: Right now there is an engineer study for the Wall that needs to happen but there is no budget. DOMI feels strongly that it should never go to 2 lanes due to instability. Currently there it is used for walking, biking and one lane. Should it go back to just walkers and bikers. Should it be a community discussion? Is it possible to find a behind the scenes common solution. Can we leave it as a bike pedestrian road? That would be the safest solution.
 - v. PRT Allderdice Bus Stop – Councilmember Warwick will set up a meeting with Curt/PRT. Dr. Walters or a member of the team will be at the meeting. He is in support of the bus stop move.
 - vi. GCA is starting their own litter patrol.
- c. **City Update: City Cuts** is now accepting applications for free lawn cutting services for our older neighbors, our veteran neighbors, and our neighbors with disabilities who do not have the means to cut their own grass. Please direct your neighbors [to this link to apply](#); they can also call 311 and our team stands ready to process applications on their behalf if they do not have computer access or abilities. Additionally, we are still accepting applications from **landscapers** who are interested in contracting with the city for this program. Flyer for vendors attached.

The **Summer Learn and Earn** program is a great opportunity for our young citizens to gain real career experience while getting paid and staying busy throughout the summer. Flyer attached.

The City is actively recruiting lifeguards in preparation for the 2023 pool season. The more lifeguards we are able to recruit, the more of our pools we are able to open for residents to enjoy all summer long. The lifeguard wages have been recently raised to make it a more attractive opportunity, and no previous experience is required - we can train and certify! Please see attached.

The City is currently accepting applications from community groups interested in **Love Your Block** grants for neighborhood improvement projects. Application window closes on May 15; apply here: <https://pittsburghpa.gov/events/community-festivals>

7. Announcements

Adjourn – Mardi called the meeting adjourned.