

Westcott Neighborhood Association

Minutes of the May 12, 2025 Meeting

Board members attending: Sam Gruber (co-president). Galyn Murphy-Stanley, (co-president). Carol Johnson (vice-president), Kevin Montgomery (treasurer), Adam Felleman, Kim McCoy, Marilyn Zaleon

Other attendees: Chrissy Burd, Chris Dunhan, Virginia Felleman, Paul Harvey, Judy Jerome, Don Johnson, Lee Kennard, Andy Leahy, Ben Lockwood, Michael Stanton, Charles Tremper, Common Councilor Corey Williams, Ginny Felleman, Chris Dunham, Lynda Hanrahan, Ellen Ford, Tracy Hogarth, Brett Mosier

On Zoom: Chris Devoe, Vance Ostrander, Mac Puckett

Co-President Sam Gruber opened the meeting at 6:30, and all the attendees introduced themselves. The board approved the minutes with some changes and noted that the list of attendees needed to be included.

Treasurer Kevin Montgomery reported a cash balance of \$2,000. The contract for the CNYArts grant of \$1,000 has been signed, and that the grant from TNT for the Summer Poetry Reads was pending. The issue of a damaged trash can at the corner of Euclid and Westcott was brought up, and it was suggested that the TNT might pay for its replacement.

Co-President Sam Gruber reminded that it is necessary to recruit new board members, as we will lose members over the next two years due to term limits. Sam put to a vote the renewing of a booth at September's Westcott Street Cultural Fair. There was unanimous agreement. Carol and Kevin will arrange the payment. Planning for the Westcott Art Trail on June 14th was discussed, and it was agreed to have a table at the library again. Galyn agreed to man the table, and other volunteers are needed.

The Board decided not to have a meeting in July, but to continue to communicate via email, and to have a meeting in August to prepare for the Fair and fall events.

Andy and Adam said that rain thwarted a big turnout for the Earth Day Clean-up, but still some neighbors had persevered. Sam announced that Don Deschamps had taken over work on the kiosk from Zeke Leonard, and work was to resume next weekend. The budget for the project was also discussed, with a total of \$3,400 available with around \$1,500 spent so far.

The status of upcoming events was quickly reviewed. These are Westcott Remembers (May 31), Summer Poetry Readings, Summer WACC — sponsored concerts and the Halloween Dog Parade (Oct 25). The program needed to be set for Westcott Remembers, and Sam stated that it was important to arrange insurance for WNA for these events. He reported that Suzie McPherson from the city has reported that there was progress on getting decorative lights for Westcott Street, and there would be a full report at the next meeting.

Council Corey Williams reported briefly about the ongoing budget dispute between the city administration and the Common Council. The Council was making cuts to the Mayor's budget. Corey

discussed the city's budget and the need for more diligence in planning, especially with the end of federal funding for so many programs.

Attendees discussed the need for more transparency and open city and Council meetings. They also talked about the importance of updating the Westcott.syr web page and the need for volunteers to contribute to the community. Don Johnson, who is running for a citywide seat, shared his plans and the process of collecting signatures for the election. The conversation ended with a discussion about the upcoming primary and the possibility of having a forum with the Council candidates.

Sam reported briefly on the UNSAAC 2025 funding recommendations, and he described something of the deliberative process. Funds were allocated for the Westcott Community Center, the Westcott Street Cultural Fair, and the University Neighborhood Preservation Association (UNPA). Two representatives of UNPA then joined the meeting to discuss the past, present and future of that organization. After a difficult year in which UNPA did not have funds to disperse, the group has reorganized and gotten special legislation from the Common Council that will restore money that had been allocated in past years but not claimed. Once these funds are in hand, UNPA will begin a new 1% Home Improvement Loan program in partnership with Home Headquarters. This will be especially beneficial for those making application for the Historic Property Tax Credits, as it will make the cash necessary for home improvement available at an affordable rate.

The meeting was adjourned at 8 p.m.