

COVNA Executive Board Meeting
January 11, 2022, 6p - via teleconference

1. Call to order & Attendance - Michelle, Matt, Katy, Will, Ron, Sean, and Denise. Members Rachel Coff and Allison Klein in attendance. Quick introductions of Board members. The question of why members who are not on the executive board were in attendance at the meeting was raised. Discussion followed regarding the difference between Executive Board meetings and general meetings that include the entire membership. The Board planned for a later discussion of how meetings should be handled and apologized to guests for the confusion. Guests left and the meeting resumed.
2. Pending Business
 - a. Are there any outstanding housekeeping items from last term? (ex: City of Austin Community Registry info, etc.) Ron suggested that we name the president and secretary as contacts for the city community registry page. Katy advised against providing personal contact information in the registry, and suggested that, like other neighborhood associations listed, we provide generic association info. Katy also suggested setting up a group gmail account for executive board. Denise asked Matt if there is already a COVNA officers email listserv? Matt confirmed and provided the email address (covna-officers@freelists.org), which is maintained like the main covna listserv where he allows, denies, maintains the email addresses in that group. Will suggested that we stick with what we've already got instead of creating something new - all agreed. Matt sent the link to sign up for the listserv in the meeting chat and provided brief instructions for registering (click on the link to subscribe, then follow the prompts to confirm subscription). Will also offered to use his home address on the Austin Community Registry.
ACTION ITEM: Denise to enter generic info as much as allowed and update the Austin Community Registry data for COVNA.
ACTION ITEM: All executive board members are to sign up for covna-officers free list.
 - b. Austin Neighborhood Council (ANC) - When is the next meeting? Will stated that the ANC sector meeting was to be held in person last Saturday, but the meeting was canceled due to stage 5 restrictions in Austin. Will added that he had not received any further communication on when the next virtual full ANC meeting will be held. Nelly has agreed to forward anything to Will that she receives regarding upcoming ANC meetings; Will anticipates them to occur at the end of each month. Ron added that he submitted this year's ANC dues and named Will as the COVNA ANC rep and Michelle as COVNA president. Michelle asked Will to keep her in the loop on the ANC meetings so that she can attend if he is unable to.
 - c. Is there an update on a COVNA venmo account? Ron stated that he has been struggling with Venmo and their questions regarding the association and venmo's business entity requirements; he did get them to verify the bank account, but he is working with them to get it resolved. He will keep us posted on the progress.

3. New Business

- a. **What are the goals for this term?** Michelle stated that she wanted the Board members to share all of our goals for the association and started by stating that her number one goal is to increase transparency and communication between all the various places that people communicate in the neighborhood, and being flexible when neighbors have needs and concerns they want us to voice on their behalf. Michelle asked that her phone number be included in the officer contact information in the newsletter to improve accessibility. Will stated that he looks forward to streamlining all the communication platforms and would like to see membership numbers go up. He asked about current membership numbers. Ron stated that the COVNA boundaries include 402 rooftops and that the highest membership number we've had is 150 households. Ron added that our current membership for 2022 includes 55 paid memberships and 2 honorary.
- Ron stated that his goal is to restart COVNA business and that his highest priority is to form a committee to address revenue. Ron added that the first newsletter of the calendar year is the key to reaching higher membership numbers - historically, the January newsletter includes a membership form and typically 75% of the paper newsletters come back with the form completed and a check enclosed. Will suggested that we set a goal to raise membership incrementally, first by 10%, then another 10%. Ron also stated that his understanding is that COVNA exists primarily for social gatherings for the neighborhood, and that the association was created to tackle the oak wilt issue many years ago.
- Katy added that her goal is to increase membership by getting a better read on what people are looking for the neighborhood to do or what they are expecting from the association. Katy suggested that we publish a poll on the COVNA website to get feedback and point members to the poll through the various communication channels available. Matt stated that he would look into the ability to post a poll on the COVNA website.
- Katy added that it may be helpful to put a start and end date on the membership drive to let the neighborhood know if there is a deadline to become members. Ron stated that, per the association by-laws, membership runs from January through December, but if dues are paid after July 1, the fee is \$10. Ron also added that most members sign up at holiday party at the end of year, then the first newsletter in January serves as the membership drive. Ron stated that about 15 households paid dues at the December meeting.
- Michelle stated that we should set a goal to increase membership - perhaps form a committee to streamline the membership increase, and find out what the neighborhood wants from this organization.
- Denise stated her goal was to increase membership. She suggested that, based on the number of neighbors at the December meeting who were not aware they had not joined or renewed, we start by cleaning up the membership roster and distributing it so people know if they've joined/renewed or not, and by getting newsletters out regularly.
- Matt added that it's easy to get members to join when the weather is nice and people are socializing with their neighbors at an event. He would like to see us get newsletters out again, mention the membership drive in the newsletter, and get a QR code people can actually scan when they get their newsletter, and get the parties and dates on the calendar.
- Ron mentioned an issue with paypal payments is that sometimes we only get a name of the submitter and no other contact information. Katy suggested that we include instructions underneath the QR code to include contact information.
- Katy asked if the membership roster exists and is posted anywhere. Denise stated that

she needs to coordinate with Ron on getting updated membership information from the December meeting to update the roster for 2022, adding that the by-laws state that the secretary must distribute the roster to all members no later than April 1st of each year. Katy suggested the roster be posted on the COVNA website but require a login to access. Matt stated that he will research whether the membership roster can be posted on the COVNA website behind a log in.

ACTION ITEM: Matt to investigate whether we can publish a poll on the COVNA website.

ACTION ITEM: Denise to get updated dues payment information from Ron to update the roster.

ACTION ITEM: Matt to work with Daniel on how to securely publish the membership roster on the COVNA website.

- b. Can we utilize a to-do list tracking tool (asana or trello) to assist with planning events?
Tabled for next meeting

Can we set the 2022 events calendar and publish the dates? Past official COVNA events include: Ron stated that the list in the agenda was not complete as two non-revenue events had been added to the calendar: 4th of July and Halloween. Michelle asked if events are typically added or removed by the executive board and Ron stated that the previous event that was added was the spring fling many years ago. Discussion followed regarding the event dates and timing of the city bulk pickup schedule, holidays, weather limitations on outdoor events, COVID restrictions, and feasibility of multiple events on the same date. Discussion also included feedback received from neighbors regarding past events. The group decided on the dates below for the annual COVNA events:

- i. Neighborhood garage sale (~~March~~) - Saturday, April 9, 2022*
- ii. Spring Fling (~~April~~) - Saturday April 9, 2022*
- iii. 4th of July Parade - July 4, 2022, in the morning.
- iv. Summer Picnic (June) - Saturday, May 21, 2022
- v. National Night Out (October) - Tuesday, October 4, 2022
- vi. Halloween Block Party - Saturday, October 29, 2022 (Trick or treating to occur on October 31st, but not as an official COVNA event)
- vii. Holiday Party/Elections (December) - Saturday, December 10, 2022

*both events to be held on the same day

ACTION ITEM: Katy to get newsletter publishing/printing/cost details from Matt and draft a newsletter that includes membership information, including a QR code and instructions, and the calendar of events to the executive board for approval.

- c. Financials update - How to resume earning ad revenue from the newsletter and website? Ron provided an update on the association's finances and the goal to remain revenue neutral. He added that when he became treasurer in 2019, the account balance was \$9,153 - it is currently \$9,344. He added that the membership voted and approved an annual budget of \$3,000 per year for all events and we managed to stay very close to that number last year. However, Ron expressed his concerns that with current membership numbers, and a lack of advertisements for the newsletter as the main revenue stream, we will have a difficult time putting on all of COVNA events while staying revenue neutral.

Ad revenue subject to be put on the next meeting agenda.

- d. Do we have any concerns/comments regarding renovation of Cobblestone Court Apartments (2101 Davis Ln) to send to Tracy Fine to Ann Kitchen's office (see email from Nelly dated 1/5/22)? - *table for next meeting*
4. Future agenda items - *tabled items will be added to next meeting agenda*
5. Future meeting dates - *Executive Board will meet the second Tuesday of each month at 6pm. The next meeting will be on Feb 8th. The board agreed that as long as the majority of the executive board can attend the meeting, it does not need to be rescheduled. The next meeting will be scheduled as a Zoom meeting, but if pandemic restrictions allow, we can change it to an in-person meeting.*
ACTION ITEM: Denise will send out a meeting invitation for the next meeting with Zoom info.
6. Adjourn