

Woodshire Civic Club Meeting Minutes

Date: 5/18/22

Time: 6:30PM-8:00PM

I. AGENDA/DISCUSSION TOPICS:

A. WELCOME/HOUSEKEEPING/INTRODUCTIONS

Christian Gubitz, the newly elected Woodshire Civic Club President, called the meeting to order at 6:40PM.

- A quorum was established with more than 10 households represented. (See below attendance list).
- Minutes from the April 20, 2022, meeting were distributed and accepted.
- Christian Gubitz shared a PowerPoint presentation (attached) and welcomed feedback throughout the meeting. He then introduced the newly elected 2022-2023 Woodshire Civic Club Board Officers. Each officer provided brief background statements.
 - Christian Gubitz – President
 - Gracie McClure – Vice President
 - Jon Le Grand – Treasurer
 - Bendi Saindon – Corresponding Secretary
 - Mary Shapiro – Recording Secretary
- The remaining agenda included the following highlighted topics (via PowerPoint Slides attached):
 - Communications,
 - Beautification,
 - Community,
 - Security,
 - Finance/Dues, and
 - Closing Remarks.

B. COMMUNICATIONS

Understandingly, due to CoVID-19, in person and other means of communications decreased sharply. However, communications will be a priority of the 2022 elected board officers. We will aim to revitalize all means of communication to increase connection and participation. The following communications topics were discussed in more detail as first action areas.

- Branding,
- Website,
- Newsletter,
- Woodshire Roster,
- Block Captains, and
- Survey.

BRANDING:

A logo for our neighborhood will increase our brand-identity and enhance all communications (from website, newsletters/memos, signage/car stickers, and so on).

Currently we are enlisting graphic designers through *LogoTournament* for concepts. More to be shared by next meeting.

WOODSHIRE WEBSITE:

Currently the Woodshire Website is one of the top priorities for the Civic Club Officers to ensure we have an up to date and centralized "one-stop shop" for communicating area news, events, and a means to accept annual Civic Club dues payments, etc.

Investment dollars will be needed to revamp current dated (code heavy format) and hosting service provider to create a more user-friendly version that will be easier, faster, and less expensive to maintain over time.

More information to come and feedback is welcome.

WOODSHIRE NEIGHBORHOOD ROSTER:

There is also a large effort underway to gather data and complete the *Woodshire Neighborhood Roster*.

A bulk of the attendees raised their hands indicating they received an email invite and reminders about the Civic Club meeting. We plan to continue to send emails about upcoming meetings and events to increase methods of communication and participation.

We also will need to leverage the use of Block Captains to identify missing contacts on the neighborhood roster.

If someone comes and knocks on your door, it may be a Block Captain assisting with this project.

NEWSLETTER:

The newsletter will be a means to remind the neighborhood that our Civic Club is present and active.

We will create an updated electronic and physical format of the Woodshire Civic Club newsletter. There is a lot happening around us now with several developments, etc.

The Woodshire Newsletter will be quarterly, and we hope that it creates a greater sense of connection in our community.

All suggestions for topics are welcomed.

BLOCK CAPTAINS:

An email went out to prior Block Captains (on May 16th) to assess ongoing interest/availability to serve. Several existing Block Captains have opted to continue their service in this capacity and others are yet to respond or unable to serve this year. We will need several unfilled Block Captain positions for 2022 and asking everyone who is interested, to reach out to the Officers after the meeting in person or by email (or indicate on the Neighborhood Survey with contact info).

Block Captains have historically covered 14 block areas in Woodshire. Note: Names of current Block Captains as well as the blocks still needing Block Captain volunteers are provided in the minutes as a reference (on last page). Even if there is a Block Captain mentioned, backup volunteers are still being sought to participate in upcoming efforts.

In addition to helping to complete the neighborhood roster, Block Captains will assist with handing out quarterly newsletters, will play a strong role in the *Welcoming Committee* for new residents, and also help with organizing local events.

One meeting participant also suggested that Block Captains may help better connect neighborhood renters to make them feel welcomed as well. Renters are often residing in the rental property for at least 1-2 years and have a role to play in the community.

SURVEY:

An optional 2022 Woodshire neighborhood survey was provided at the May 18th Civic Club Meeting. The survey will also be emailed out to the full community to maximize responses from all in the Woodshire community. It is an anonymous survey, if elected.

A summary of collected responses along with corresponding plans, is expected to be shared at the next community wide Civic Club meeting on July 20th, therefore the survey will be closed by early July.

If members receive the survey by email, and have already completed, a different household member MAY complete, if desired.

The purpose of the survey is to collect feedback from neighbors and to use the data to better connect and plan for upcoming events and activities.

C. BEAUTIFICATION:

NEIGHBORHOOD ENTRANCES & SURROUNDING AREA:

We want to send a message when people drive into our neighborhood that this is a nice place. There is currently a lot of trash south of North Braeswood to the 610 Loop, all along the Stella Link Corridor. We want to clean up this area and better maintain it. Currently the City does the bare minimum.

Anticipate upcoming projects ("Stella Link Sweeps" and other efforts) to improve neighborhood entrances to and surrounding Stella Link medians.

In addition, there is a dead tree (fallen as of this week) and several utility box eyesores at the entrance of Stella Link and Latma Dr. We want to address this as well through screening, improved landscaping, and other potential solutions (see below for AT&T Utility Box discussion).

Christian continued, stating that while it's understood not everyone will want to participate in all upcoming activities and clean-up projects, we want to be a good steward of the funds and are passionate about community projects.

Other Project plans include various opportunities identified for "Neighbors Serving Neighbors."

SUBDIVISION SIGNAGE:

Currently we have no subdivision markers outside our neighborhood other than the small, Woodside/Woodshire shared sign that is currently decaying. We are currently investigating the potential of building new Neighborhood sign(s) at the corner of Stella Link and Latma; Stella Link and Leeshire; and/or the Stella Link median(s).

The process for new signage is a complex process which includes a detailed application and city requirement to work with a Civil engineer with drawings and permits to accomplish.

A meeting participant mentioned that there was previously a brick Neighborhood sign that was knocked down several years ago and never replaced. The new Woodshire neighborhood logo will be a part of completing this effort.

UTILITY BOXES:

Christian contacted *Mini Murals run by Up Art* to discuss details of covering/painting utility box eyesores. Evelyn Park is a good example of these – with simple/tasteful natural themes. Our

Woodshire (Stella Link and Latma Dr) located utility boxes are owned by AT&T which may create a barrier, but more information pending.

Suggestions are welcome and multiple options to improve the entrance areas are currently under consideration.

TREE PLANTING/CARE:

Christian continued that we lost a number of trees after Hurricane Harvey, even with the City of Houston replacing some. Christian offered to plant trees for anyone in the community who buys a tree for their yard.

Removing stakes from existing trees is also another project of interest and both President, Christian Gubitz and Treasurer, Jon Le Grand offered to personally help anyone interested in removing these stakes which are now harming the trees. These stakes are generally ready for removal approximately 6 months from the date of planting. Those still existing in Woodshire from street reconstruction have been staked for over 3 years.

One meeting participant pointed out that many trees are planted on the right of way, and it was asked whether that effort should be the responsibility of the City. Evidently, according to the prior Civic Club President, the City's vendors generally have liability for approximately 12 months and are not likely to return to remove the stakes at this point. He also mentioned that we have an Arborist in the neighborhood and could also seek his input as well.

D. COMMUNITY

SOCIAL EVENTS AND CULTURE:

It was noted that a few years ago, before COVID-19, the Woodshire community was starting to have block parties and other events. We really want to reinvigorate these events and more. (i.e., Say hello to others when taking walks, help with neighbor's who may be out of town with their trashcans, etc.)

YARD OF THE MONTH AND HOLIDAY DECORATING CONTESTS:

Yard of the month is returning and the first home to be honored will be selected in June. Please note, as we are awaiting the new Woodshire branding, the prior yard signs are currently dated. The yard signs will be refreshed in coming months.

The hope is that a little competition may encourage yard improvements neighborhood-wide (i.e., sod in yards where none exists, etc.). We may also do Yard of Month awards during October, Nov & Dec holidays, possibly via community-wide votes.

An attendee mentioned that some houses appear to be abandoned and in disrepair and something needs to be done to avoid encouraging vagabonds/squatters, etc. One neighbor indicated they live nearby a home where the owner passed away, and several neighbors now

alternate parking their cars in the driveway and moving the recycling bin to the curb to keep the home appearing occupied (as one suggestion).

3-1-1 was also encouraged as a means to address disrepair and other issues and although the City is known to take or month or so to act, they are required to respond. The Civic Club is ultimately "toothless" in many circumstances, so the community is encouraged to access and utilize these and other local services.

A reminder was also provided to obtain the case number provided by 3-1-1 after reporting issues. Should these need to be escalated and/or shared with others such as Barbara Hite, this 3-1-1 provided case number or requisition number will be very important to reference.

Additionally, the Department of Neighborhoods (DON) often requires great persistence, but once they have a home on their list for yellow tagging, the department is vigilant. The effort can be well worth the time.

A meeting participant then acknowledged all of Edward Puentes's efforts as past president of the Civic Club and all in the room agreed, with applause. It was recognized that Edward did an amazing job shepherding through the street reconstruction initiative and other neighborhood improvements.

E. SECURITY

It was pointed out that having good (yet still tasteful) lighting at night and security cameras are one of the largest detractors of crime. Someone asked Treasurer, Jon Le Grand what type of security camera he used, and he indicated the model was made by SWANN (which cost approximately \$250.00).

GardaWorld is currently patrolling the neighborhood (2 patrols per day, 14 per week).

Edward P., the prior Civic Club Board President, said the largest part of the annual budget is security. We used to share costs with Woodside but following increased costs, they no longer wanted to share the cost burden.

A neighbor who is currently building in Woodshire then indicated several vehicle break-ins occurred recently and another neighbor indicated they experienced a car and subsequent house break-in (via the back door).

Someone asked whether it is possible for *GardaWorld* to post any suspicious activity on Next-door or other. Christian Gubitza responded that while they are evidently not doing any tracking/reporting at this time, we are asking that they start keeping track of activities and reporting. We should have a report shortly.

A meeting attendee asked if the social media app, "Next Door" was available in Woodshire which was confirmed by others in the room.

Another meeting participant asked for *GardaWorld's* number. President, Christian Gubitza responded that there is not currently a central number for residents to directly engage with *Garda World*...but we are working on getting more details and will share.

One attendee indicated the cost of Garda World seemed too great for the level of service provided.

Historically Woodshire used the security company, *Seal* and we were sharing those costs with Woodside. *Seal* was great and had a contact number etc. and more services but the cost was significant. Jon indicated he would address more in the financials for future discussion/planning.

Another neighbor shared that in prior (Old Braeswood) neighborhood, they had separate dues for Civic Club and security dues...as one possible suggestion/approach.

Another neighbor suggested a Neighborhood Watch Program as a possibility– with volunteers taking turns driving through the neighborhood. Jon LeGrand, the Treasurer and Security Committee Chair agreed that may be a good option with enough participation... We all must look out for our neighbors. For example, Jon noticed a moving truck that showed up on a Sunday night in a nearby house where the owner was away – and he reported.

Jon Le Grand, Treasurer, then indicated to attendees, that if someone is interested in being a part of the Security Committee...there are multiple spots available.

F. FINANCE/DUES:

General annual fixed expenses include the following approximate costs.

- ~\$1,500.00 for mosquito spraying
- ~\$19,000.00 for GardaWorld Security
- ~\$500.00 avg per year for website hosting/domain
- ~\$900.00 for Liability Insurance for Civic Club Officers.
- TOTAL Approx. Base Expenditures: **~\$ 21,900.00**

Note: above list represents basic fixed expenses and minimal civic club activities/events – due most recently to COVID-19 impacts.

COLLECTION OF DUES:

We are seeing improvements in dues participation levels, but we are not there yet.

At this time, we have approximately 25% of the neighborhood represented in fully paid annual dues. We would like to increase this to closer to 90-100% participation, understanding renters may have less interest.

PayPal® QR codes for those who wish to use is currently available and Jon shared on the PowerPoint slide for anyone who wished to use during/following the meeting. It was then announced that PayPal®, because of the fees they charge (~\$8/ \$200.00), will remain available but no longer encouraged as a long-term solution.

Zelle® is now available and will be the primary advertised source for paying dues in the upcoming Woodshire Quarterly Newsletters, the (soon to be updated) Woodshire Website, etc. rather than PayPal.

Of course, checks will still be accepted by mail or in person, but we want to create additional alternatives to maximize ease of payment.

A meeting attendee asked how we are going to get this missing 75%. Jon's response was we are going to try to incentivize payments through various concepts such as having different payment levels and recognition such as stickers, plaques and/or yards signs, etc. We will also solicit help from Block Captains and the Welcome Committee and open to suggestions for increased participation levels.

One neighbor suggested, as a possible means to solicit dues payments, to better communicate specifically what expenses dues are covering, as she had no idea that security and mosquito spray were covered by dues until this Civic Club meeting.

G. CLOSING

In closing, Christian Gubitza reminded the community in attendance to participate in the survey and then stated that Civic Club Officers, Block Captains, and other Committee Members will not elevate Woodshire to the level we envision by themselves, we will need everyone to contribute in some way (there are many opportunities that will be available to get involved, pick the one(s) you are interested in)

We encourage everyone to get involved (so reach out if any interests in helping and provide ideas.

Final Thought: **"BE THE CHANGE YOU WANT TO SEE"**. The Board Cannot Do Alone. Get Involved, Do Something About It. We All Need to Have Ownership in Our Community.

II. MEETING ADJOURNED TIME

Meeting adjourned at 7:55 PM on Wed, May 18, 2022.

III. 2022 CIVIC CLUB MEETINGS & UPCOMING EVENTS

- ✓ **May 18, 2022** - (Wednesday) 6:30pm – 8:00pm - First Introductory Neighborhood Wide Civic Club Meeting (Post Board Election)
- **July 20, 2022, Wednesday) 6:30pm – 8:00pm - Civic Club Meeting**
- **September 21, 2022, Wednesday) 6:30pm – 8:00pm - Civic Club Meeting**
- **November 16, 2022, Wednesday) 6:30pm – 8:00pm - Civic Club Meeting**
- **Other Dates to Be Announced...**

IV. GENERAL INFORMATION/CONTACTS:

CIVIC CLUB OFFICERS 2022-2023 CONTACTS			
Officer Role	Name	Email	Phone
President	Christian Gubitz	Woodshirecc@gmail.com	713-818-7415
Vice President	Gracie McClure	graciemccl11@gmail.com	713-254-4614
Treasurer	Jon Le Grand	jonlegrand@hotmail.com	832-596-8137
Corresponding Secretary	Bendi Saindon	bwsaindon@gmail.com	713-254-0116
Recording Secretary	Mary Shapiro	Maryshapiro7@gmail.com	225-362-2986

WOODSHIRE BLOCK CAPTAINS 2022-2023 CONTACTS			
Name	Block Position	Email	Phone
Jesus Patino Wild	Block captain - Bassoon	jesuspat@gmail.com	832-547-4902
TBD	Block captain - Breakwood	TBD	TBD
Pat Mourgouris	Block captain - Fordshire	No Email Available	713-667-8088
Tobi Troxel	Block captain - 4000 Glenshire	tatroxell@comcast.net	713-667-4221
Tobi Troxell	Block captain - 4100 Glenshire	tatroxell@comcast.net	713-667-4221
Su Zhang	Block captain - 4000 Leeshire	suzhang4030@gmail.com	713-432-1551
Barbara Puente	Block captain - 4100 Leeshire	bpuente@sbcglobal.net	713-592-6273
Margaret Shelton	Block captain - 4000 Levonshire	sheltonm4007@gmail.com	713-666-4190
TBD	Block captain - 4100	TBD	TBD

	Levonshire		
TBD	Block captain - 4000 Martinshire	TBD	TBD
Carolyn Rivers	Block captain - 4100 Martinshire	cvrivers@aol.com	713-661-1038
TBD	Block captain - 4000 Mischire	TBD	TBD
TBD	Block captain - 4100 Mischire	TBD	TBD
Bendi Saindon	Block captain - Lakeland & Newshire	bwsaindon@gmail.com	713-254-0116

***Please express all interests even if a name is already listed above for your block. Multiple volunteer opportunities are available.**

V. ATTENDEES:

Alan McClure, Gracie McClure, Mario A. Yearwood, Dee-Dee Hernandez, Angie Gubitz, Christian Gubitz, Jon LeGrand, Manual Centeno, Betty Lockhart, Mary Shapiro, Bendi Saindon, Dave Saindon, Paula Cox, Edward Cox, Ike Adotama, Paul R. Johnson, Kay Ackerman, Pat Wills, Jerry Lynch, C Wright, Basil Colston, Liane Lecour, Stan Boganwright, Donna Boganwright, Clarice Droughton, Judy Barrish, Eric Pieters, Dwayne Guarino, Matt Wigder, Edward S. Puente, Barbara Puente, Jonna Hitchcock, Omotola Hope, Shishi Ahmadi, Johnte Archer-Adotama

VI. ATTACHMENTS

- ✓ Prior Meeting Minutes – From 4.20.22 Meeting (Approved)
- ✓ PowerPoint Presentation Slides

**These May 18th Civic Club Meeting minutes will be shared for official acceptance during the upcoming July 20, 2022 Civic Club meeting.*