

## **Notes from the Fulton Finance committee meeting of February 1, 2017**

### **Present**

Jane Kohnen, Jim Tincher, Ruth Olson, John Dillery, Vikas Narula, and Dave Delvoye

### **Community Engagement committee**

The next neighborhood networking event is set for 2/6 at Pig & Fiddle. The free event is "sold out" – at least 45 community members signed up to attend. FNA Board members are also encouraged to participate. There was a suggestion to play a bingo-style game to encourage attendees to interact and get to know each other, and to have a drawing and award two prizes. Ruth will bring the game sheets and supplies.

### **Environment committee**

John Dillery, chair of the Environment committee, submitted a 2017 budget for the committee and funding requests for three projects. The projects include a pollinator garden at Lake Harriet Upper Campus (\$100 budget), a continuation of the 2016 pollinator protection project (\$1,785 budget), and sponsorship of a Neighborhood Forests program (\$5,107 budget) at four area schools (Carondelet, Lake Harriet Lower, Lake Harriet Methodist Preschool, Southwest High School) during Earth Week 2017. There was a discussion about the Neighborhood Forest proposal; director Vikas Narula – who also attended the Finance meeting in January – was present to provide information and answer questions. Altogether, about 2,566 students would be eligible to receive free trees to be planted on private property in the neighborhood, although the average student participation rate for such a project is 15% to 25%. The project at the high school will be promoted by the school's Green Team. If more sponsors participate in the project, the cost to FNA will go down. The Environment committee, which views this as a pilot project which could be repeated if it is successful, will update the Finance committee on the results and prepare an article about the project for Fulton Neighborhood News.

There was a discussion about how to fund these projects. The money for the first two can come from the Bee and Butterfly Fund; funding for the third project can come from FNA's Tree Fund. Jim will work out the details. Ruth will provide the Environment committee with copy cards from the UPS Store per their budget as needed.

After making a minor change to the proposal for the Neighborhood Forests project, the Finance committee recommended that the FNA Board approve the 2017 budget and three project proposals submitted by the Environment committee.

### **Safety committee**

Two incidents in the neighborhood are under police investigation: 1/22 armed robbery of Dunn Bros, 5008 Xerxes Ave; 1/29 arrest for theft at a home on the 5100 block of Zenith Ave. The Safety committee will continue to track and report on these cases.

### **Small Grants program**

There was a discussion about why there were few applicants and little interest in this year's Small Grants program. Questions included why FNA was not getting broader participation; why two of the three applications were from organizations for males only, and why no similar female-oriented groups requested funding; and whether publicity for the program was adequate and reaching the target audience. There were suggestions that the end-of-year deadline for applications makes it difficult for some groups to participate and that qualifying groups maybe don't need money for small projects. The committee decided to consider shifting some of the grant funds toward programs which have proved to be popular, such as those which appeal to seniors in the neighborhood.

The committee reviewed the three grant applications received for this year – Cub Scout Pack 6 (\$650), Venture Crew 6 (\$285), and SWHS Performing Arts Boosters (\$1,000) – and recommended that the FNA Board approve them.

### **2017 FNA budget**

The committee reviewed FNA's proposed operating budget for 2017. The committee made some changes, including adding money from the Tree Fund to the Neighborhood Forest project in the Friends of Fulton expenses, allocating \$1,935 to 2017 FNA Small Grants, allocating \$2,000 to a new program for seniors in the CPP priorities budget, along with a \$1,000 contribution to the Open Streets event at 50<sup>th</sup> & France.

### **Other business**

There was a discussion about the status of FNA's relationship with MPRB.

Ruth reported that the City Council is considering repaying the neighborhood organizations for the funds (about \$10 million) the City borrowed from the NRP program in 2011.

*Notes prepared by Dave Delvoye*