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## Walnut Hills Area Council: Business Group

### Minutes

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Minutes: March 17, 2022 - Walnut Hills Area Council: Business Group Meeting

Taken by Michael Rountree, Childress & Cunningham, Inc.

#### Attendance:

Marvin Abrinica	Christina Hartlieb	Samir Kulkarni	Samantha Reeves
Kathryne Gardette	Noelle Johnson	Tim MacConnell	Michael Rountree
Cathy Gould	Jane Keller	Chinedum Ndukwe	Jerod Theobald

#### Opening:

Meeting called to order by Samir Kulkarni at 9:08 AM. Meeting was held as a video conference using Zoom software. Several new faces in attendance introduced themselves.

Minutes from the January 20, 2022 meeting were approved, Samir Kulkarni 1<sup>st</sup>, Michael Rountree 2<sup>nd</sup>. Minutes from the February 17, 2022 Executive Committee meeting were approved, Samir Kulkarni 1<sup>st</sup>, Michael Rountree 2<sup>nd</sup>.

The current committee heads were reviewed: 5K Race = Samir Kulkarni; Events = Ben Gammon; Communications/Marketing = Jerod Theobald; Beautification = Tim MacConnell; Traffic/Safety = Jane Keller; Finance = Tim MacConnell and Cindy Fischer; Membership = *TBD* (no volunteer yet).

Treasurer's Report – Our general account balance is \$6,666; the 5K Race account has \$1,880; and beautification (flower pots) account has \$734. New member dues have recently come in from Kingsley Consulting, but very few renewals have been received from existing members.

#### Committee Reports:

*Beautification* – Tim MacConnell

Tim has been trying to contact Ann with the Parks Department, as they seem to have a limit of 30 flower pots (instead of the 36 that they serviced last year). We will not be able to expand within their program, and Samir noted the possibility of a disjointed look if we engage another private service to handle excess pots. Kathryne asked whether Parks would remove the six pots, but Samir replied that the pots belong to us, they would just go empty. Michael commented that an alternative service provider could do the full allotment and thus allow us to grow to 50 or whatever number we might target, but Samir noted that the price per pot could increase due to lack of subsidy. Tim said that he needs to make the first payment, and planting is expected to happen by the end of March, and he will ask that they continue to service 36 pots.

*Events* – Samir (reporting)

For neighborhood clean-ups, hopefully to occur each month from April through December (with the possible exception of August, when college students may not be available), Samir said he will ask Fred Orth to help with planning. However, we need to involve someone else to whom this responsibility can transition. Kathryne suggested seaking with Vanessa Henderson.

*Traffic & Safety* – Jane Keller

Jane will look at options and suggestions for improvements, and asked that members bring any feedback they may have regarding priorities to her. Samir noted that there have been more “No Parking” signs being placed in the neighborhood.

*Communications & Marketing* – Jerod Theobald

We have been sharing on Instagram mostly as well as on Facebook, trying to post daily. We have not run any paid or boosted ads/posts since the 5K Race last year. Jerod has drafted a questionnaire to send out to all on our mailing list, to collect information about our local businesses that might be later turned into content to share on social media. This draft will be reviewed by the Executive Committee and then sent out to all.

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*Finance* – see NBDIP discussion, below

*Membership* – no report

This committee is in need of a volunteer to serve as chair.

*Peebles 5K Race* – Samir Kulkarni

As one of the main priorities for 2022, the race date has been set as October 16<sup>th</sup>. The same course as last year will be used, and we have begun the process of submitting for permits. Thompson-MacConnell Cadillac will be contributing a pace car, and we are looking for additional sponsors. Kathyne asked Marvin of Esoteric whether they would be able to help promote, and he agreed since there is a group of about a dozen runners that they see weekly.

### **Other Matters:**

Regarding business district banners, Samir said he still hopes to have a conversation with Emily Ahouse at the City to determine the path of least resistance, whether it be mounting on existing poles or on buildings, or other factors. There is already a banner design that has been created along with designs for all Cincinnati neighborhoods, or we could consider our own design.

As we consider our path towards becoming an independent organization instead of just a Committee of the Walnut Hills Area Council, the Executive Committee has turned over draft comments to an attorney who is working pro-bono with Samir. An updated draft was not available in advance of this meeting, so the timeline for consideration by the general body has to be pushed back. The Executive Committee will consider the attorney's draft during their April meeting, and will present a document at the May full WHBG meeting.

Samantha Reeves presented a proposal for major and minor project funding requests, for NBDIP. For the major project, the WHRF proposes combining two funding sources (NBDIP and NBDSDG) together with some amount from business owners to continue a Small Business Building Improvements program. This program is to be offered to a select list of addresses already identified (no expansion) and NBDIP would fund \$124k of \$391k total. WHRF is working with HGC and SSRG to manage all the projects, in an effort to streamline. Chinedum asked how SSRG was selected, and Samantha said that it was based on their familiarity and availability, there was no RFP process.

For the minor project, NBDIP would fund approx. \$34k of \$47k total for a public mural project, to be done on the south-facing wall of Ohio Blue Print. Several concepts were presented, and Artworks may partner with Photo-Focus to develop a mural that expresses the neighborhood's voice. Samantha requested a letter of support that can accompany the submission of these requests. Motion to provide a letter of support for these major and minor projects was approved, Kathyne Gardette 1<sup>st</sup>, Jane Keller 2<sup>nd</sup>.

Samir mentioned two new businesses that are about to open in Walnut Hills – Daniel Souder should open his establishment in April, as he is just waiting on inventory to come in; and Milk Jar will also be opening, serving bubble tea and ice cream. Samir is likely to begin gaining weight.

Kathyne mentioned that Artworks will be reopening its student gallery on March 25<sup>th</sup>, at the Scholar House location. Jane said that this will be the first of 5 exhibits planned for 2022, and the gallery will be open by appointment.

Meeting adjourned at approx. 9:54 AM.