

Meeting of the Historic Decatur Association (HDA) Board of Directors (BOD)

Thursday, May 28, 2020 at 6:00pm

Meeting Location:

Zoom Virtual Meeting

Meeting Attendees:

David Breland
Cindy Upton
Brenda Henson
Mike Meely
Harriette Mathews
Marsha Ercegovic
Kevin Malcolm
Astrid McIntosh
Darcy Hopkins

2020 HDA President Brenda Henson called the meeting to order. The meeting was held virtually via Zoom rather than in person due to precautions involving the COVID-19 pandemic. The meeting was delayed from the normal May 26th meeting day due to schedule conflicts.

Treasurer Mike Meely presented his report, which was sent to all Board of Director (BOD) members. He said that we have \$14,526.50 in the bank as unobligated funds. We have remaining obligated funds for trees and signs. We currently have 51 paid HDA members. This number is down from the 158 paid members we had for 2019. The motion to accept the treasury report was made by David Breland and seconded by Marsha Ercegovic. The report was accepted by the BOD with a unanimous positive vote.

The minutes from the last meeting were approved with Harriette Mathews providing the first motion to accept and Marsha seconding. The approval vote carried unanimously. The minutes will be archived on the HDA website.

Under New Business, Brenda said that Cagle Storage (where we store items such as tour signs and various Christmas Tour items) notified her of a \$5/month increase in rates starting July 1st. The HDA pays for storage a year at a time, so we will not see this increase until we choose to renew this lease. Brenda said that she will ask Cagle if they will continue to offer a discount if the bill is paid annually. Brenda also said that the 2019 tax was filed for the HDA and was accepted by the IRS. The motion to reimburse Brenda for the \$30 for the filing fee was made by David and seconded by Marsha. The motion carried unanimously.

Continuing with new business, Brenda received an invoice from A Small Orange for the domain website used for the old Albany information. The HDA BOD voted last year to not cover the cost to keep this website since we have combined our neighborhoods and have a HDA website. Dodie Hall was made aware via email that the HDA would not reimburse for expenses incurred for a standalone Albany website. Dodie stated she intended to continue to maintain the Albany website anyway.

There was another discussion with Mike concerning the trees and signs budgets. We have not spent even half the tree budget, yet, and there is a possibility that we may need to borrow from that money set aside as the year progresses. The main concern involving funding is over meeting the requirements of the signage grant so that we will get reimbursed the expected \$50K. Both the COVID impacts and delays from Decatur City in installing the current set of signs have taken up much of the allotted schedule time to get the project completely finished and proof sent to the grant organization so that the reimbursement will be provided to the HDA. Brenda delivered a check to McComm to order the next set of signs. She was expecting the order to be placed by June 1st, with a 9 week lead-time for the poles and undetermined turnaround for the signs. Brenda reached out to the granting organization to determine what the real deadline was with COVID impacts considered. They acknowledged the COVID impacts, but advised her to hurry along as much as possible, since it was unknown what overall impacts would affect their ability to get their state funds to pass along to us. Brenda re-iterated to the BOD the delays we had experienced with the City's support and that we would have to repeat the processes already done. The current deadline for completion of this phase 1 signage project is September 3, 2020.

Committee reports were the next several discussion topics.

Cindy Upton reported on behalf of the Garden Tour, which was cancelled this year due to the COVID-19 pandemic. She reported that the 2021 Tour was already scheduled for Sunday, May 16, 2021. Westminster Presbyterian Church has already agreed to allow the use of their Fellowship Hall as the Tour headquarters and our Tour is on the church's schedule.

Christmas Tour Committee Chair Harriette Mathews discussed this year's Tour in light of the pandemic. Since there are no indications that a vaccine or cure will be in place before December, it is not reasonable to ask homeowners to allow the general public to visit their homes. Also, since the pandemic has greatly affected local businesses, it is not possible to get the needed financial support that the business owners provide to support the Tour. So, Harriette and her Committee have developed ideas for a virtual Tour for this year. There are a few neighbors (one in Albany and 1 in Old Decatur) who prefer to have their homes toured virtually anyway, and so the plan being worked would be to showcase these homes online. Since we are unsure about the ability to make any profit from this virtual tour, there would not be a decorating stipend offered to the homeowners. Harriette said that there is some cost to developing the video and hosting it on the website. Since this would have been the 40th anniversary of the Christmas Tour, the Committee is looking into highlighting this milestone. They are also talking about asking for donations from the online visitors. There will be further developments reported as the Tour is planned. The last date for having the sponsors and homes in place to allow the Tour to proceed in the normal fashion (open houses) is in the July timeframe. Currently, there are no indications that appreciable progress to halt the spread of COVID-19, as well as having a cure in place, will happen before this July. Therefore, the Christmas Tour Committee recommends proceeding with this virtual tour plan. Cindy made the motion to accept this plan and Astrid McIntosh provided the second. The motion carried with a unanimous positive vote. Harriette said that especially this year that decorating the outside of everyone's home would be needed and appreciated. Mike asked Harriette for an estimated cost for the virtual tour, as well as any other tour costs. Harriette will discuss this more at the next meeting.

The Tree Committee report was next. Marsha reported that she had talked to several neighbors who expressed interest in getting a tree. She asked about having copies of the "calling card" made so that she could leave the contact information with people. Her plan is to make some copies and distribute them. The motion to allow a budget of \$50 was made by Cindy and seconded by Kevin Malcolm. The vote carried with a unanimous positive response. The "calling card" will also be included in the next newsletter, which was delayed due to the pandemic. Marsha said that she plans a meeting of the Tree Committee at her home on June 29th at 5pm.

The Social Committee had nothing to report.

The Communications Committee had nothing to report.

Concerning the next Newsletter, Harriette discussed the costs of various formats, specifically either a 2 page or 4 page newsletter (black and white) with the non-profit discount. The estimated printing cost for a 4 page newsletter is \$123. David made the motion to accept this cost and Marsha seconded. The vote carried unanimously. The next newsletter is planned for a late June distribution.

Darcy Hopkins arranged for the Zoom call, and asked that her \$14.99 monthly cost be reimbursed. This would be a month to month cost as long as we need to meet virtually. Cindy motioned to reimburse Darcy on a month to month basis, and David provided the second. The motion carried unanimously.

The HDA BOD normally meets at 6:00pm on the last Tuesday of every month except December. The next meeting of the HDA BOD is expected to occur on June 30th. The meeting is planned to be conducted virtually.

Respectfully Submitted,
Cindy Upton
Secretary, HDA