

Sandy Mush Community Center

Minutes

February 20, 2024

Attending: Shelley Baldwin, Cheryl Frisbee, Bruce Larson, Ilsa Myers, Frank Ramirez, Elise Rider, Kent Seber, Brooke Shilling, Elizabeth Weinschel, Gary Crossey, Joice Elam. Eleven people attended.

The meeting was called to order by President Ilsa Myers at 6:00 pm.

MINUTES AND FINANCIAL REPORTS

Minutes: The minutes for January 16, 2025, were prepared by Secretary Betsy Weinschel. A correction was made to add Cheryl Frisbee to the list of attendees. They were then moved, seconded, and approved as submitted.

Financial Reports: The financial reports for January 2024 were prepared by Treasurer Bruce Larson. All the financial reports and operating budgets were moved, seconded and approved as submitted. A question was asked as to the bookkeeper's name, the bookkeeper is Christine Magnarella Ray of Do Good Books, LLC.

NEW BUSINESS

Gary Crossey, Strategic Planning team, reminded attendees that February 21 was the last day to register for the February 26 strategic planning meeting and grant workshop for WNC Communities. The meeting 2/26/24 will be attended by John Lloyd, Peggy Baldwin, Bruce Larson, Shelly Baldwin, Gary Crossey and Frank Ramirez.

At a prior meeting, WNC Communities suggested for SMCC to reach out to our local community by doing a survey. We can combine the survey with our next mailed or emailed newsletter. It was suggested the survey should not be too detailed or complicated but invite suggestions from the local residents and should only be one page. The survey could be placed inside the food pantry boxes that will be distributed the next month if the surveys are ready. It was also suggested that a QR code could be printed on the individual surveys that would make use of the google app mailer SMCC already has in place. This would allow the data to be easily transferred.

A brief discussion about obtaining a grant to help pay for the mailing was mentioned, also discussed was how to make the survey more personal.

The communication team reached out to attendees for updates from the SMCC teams to feature in our upcoming electronic newsletter – please contact by email - admin@sandymushcommunitycenter.org

Additionally, to communication team members, in order to reserve time for our monthly meetup, please contact us at the above email address. Be aware that each booking is limited to 15 minutes, and only 4 slots are available per month, as per policy announced October 2023.

Food Lion Feeds Grant Proposal – Bruce Larson presented the proposal for Peggy Baldwin who was unable to attend. In November 2022, we received our last grant and Manna feels we are a good candidate to receive a new grant since it's been over 12 months. The money is used only for food purchase and help our pantry to purchase staples and proteins for our food pantry boxes we distribute. Food Lion Feeds Charitable Foundation has given away over \$17.5 across Food Lion's operating area since its inception!

Peggy Baldwin has agreed to apply for the grant. Grants are accepted bi-annually: Spring/Summer: January 15 – March 15, 2024. The adoption of the grant proposal was moved, seconded and approved.

ORAL REPORTS

WNC Communities Coffee Hour presentation by Cheryl Frisbee – Cheryl discussed what our youth group does and has to offer since the SMCC youth group is very successful. She discussed free play, how the children were divided into age groups, the importance of having parent participation, how people are encouraged to come. She also discussed their communication system among the parents in order to keep up to date with all the activities.

SPRING FLING – May 18, 11-3 all are welcome! SAVE THE DATE

Activities suggested and mentioned: Children's science fair, bake sale, arts and crafts projects to sell, various games, plant sale, cake walk, Grateful Roots, Herb Nursery Farm, Eco Foresters, Council for Aging, Fire Department. This year we have a special food permit from the county that will allow us to sell our prepared menu items! Volunteer recognition was suggested for all volunteers for their support.

It was suggested that perhaps our mail carrier, Greg Brookshire, might be able to give out cards or the newsletter to the various houses of worship to invite persons interested to come to the Spring Fling. Music was discussed for the boom box that was purchased through the recreation grant. It was suggested that perhaps Jim, the bingo caller, could help. Bingo was suggested and to talk with Diane Thomas. Elise Rider offered to oversee corn hole and use a white board for a tournament. We have 3 new heavy duty pop up tents ready for use at the Spring Fling as well also from the recreation grant.

A side note, it was mentioned that the white stove in the large upstairs kitchen does not work and was it possible to have it replaced. The downstairs kitchen does have a new working stove that perhaps the youth group could use for now. Keith Wells is in charge of the big commercial stove upstairs.

Youth team – The youth team is growing! Team formation is underway including fundraising and updated safety rules. A new welcome letter (draft) was handed out. The science fair is coming up and volunteers and participants are urged to contact Brooke Shilling.

A new vacuum cleaner is needed and rug replacement would be greatly appreciated. A suggested amount for the vacuum and 2 small rugs was \$500.00. The youth group will try to fundraise for the purchase.

Food Pantry – Food Pantry is the second Friday of each month. January served 60 households comprising 168 individuals. February served 83 households comprising 238 individuals. The food is purchased from MANNA and produce is also donated by Full Sun Fam and we are very grateful for their generosity and support!

Purchased foods are paid for with the financial contributions of Payne's Chapel, Chestnut Grove Baptist Church, individuals and grants. Bruce is reaching out to First Bank and their Power of Good grants program. The Golden Leaf Grant awarded SMCC \$26,324 in August for renovation of the coal room/boiler room for pantry use.

The next pantry will be March 8th, the month of Easter.

Library News - Joice Elam reported that the library volunteers have processed and shelved a backlog of donated books and removed and donated duplicated to Habitat for Humanity. They have rearranged things to add more visibility for newer materials on display.

The library is in need of volunteers to help staff the library in order to increase and provide more hours to be open. Their **greatest need right now** is for someone to maintain the computers and copier!

The library team has hosted several coffee hours including 2 during the Come to Leicester Art Tour. They have added 4 bookcases made from SMCC scrap wood and a safer step stool.

The library team is very appreciative and grateful to all the kind people who have helped!

Community announcements and public comment

Open discussion – What are the plans for the updated list of things to do now and future things? Bruce will update the list, the WNC Communities can help with our strategy for achieving our lists.

Kent Seber discussed a community garden and a free greenhouse possibility. Cheryl mentioned the Leicester Healing garden at the Leicester Library.

Nancy Jurek is hopefully going to start yoga again in April. Thai Chi is available in Asheville and we hope to have someone come out to SMCC and present a workshop but it is not free so there will be a fee involved.

Last Bingo and potluck – March 9, 5:30, all are welcome, it's fun!

Adjournment - Ilsa Myers, 7:25