

Drew Valley Civic Association – Meeting Minutes

Date:	5 Feb 2020	Time:	6:30-7:30 PM	Location:	Briarwood Recreation Center
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Position	Attendees
Executives:	Kirk Martin (President/Vice President), Mike Edelson (Treasurer)
Board Members:	Joshua Sinclair (Chair), Blair Belton, Stacey Morris Miller
Other:	Ted Morris, Brent Adams, Mario Vivarelli, Rosemary Padgett, Allison Mangone, JP Halliwell, Wes Robinson, Michael Sussman, Matt Rachford, Laura Ross, Lydia Phillips, Kathryn Wingler, Monique Hudson, Vivian Lowery, Adam Klein, Charles Collins, Jim Masone, Gaby Sussman, Sara Hansen, Victor Herec, Charles Evans, Dwight Lyman

President/Vice President Kirk Martin opened meeting with a welcome, introduction of Officers and Board members, state of the Drew Valley Civic Association (DVCA), and statement of purpose for the meeting as follows:

State of DVCA: The Association has experienced periods of activity and inactivity over the years. Most recently it went inactive in 2017 as a result of the past President (Rich Wilson) moving from the neighborhood and a lack of participation and follow up. However, the Zoning Committee, chaired by Blair Belton, a 30-year resident of Drew Valley (DV), has remained active and vigilant though without the structure of the Association to support it.

Purpose of Meeting:

- To gauge neighborhood interest in having a CA
- To describe benefits of a strong civic association relative to the effort to build and maintain it
- To describe the structure of the DVCA as it stands, the duties of Officers
- To seek people who might be interested in becoming the next generation of leadership

Several years ago Kirk reactivated the DVCA with the Georgia Secretary of State (SoS). The Association had slipped into administrative dissolution as a result of a failure to pay registration fees to the SoS during a prior administration. The Executive Committee (EC) has been keeping the registration current ever since.

While the DVCA is still a legal and viable entity, it has come to a crossroads where a decision has to be made regarding whether or not the DVCA will continue or whether it will be dissolved. The current EC is unable and unwilling to continue in their roles for personal and practical reasons. Unless there is interest by neighbors to serve in officer, board, and committee positions, there is no point to having an Association.

A gentleman from the audience asked Kirk to explain the difference between a Home Owner's Association (HOA) and a neighborhood or civic association. Some differences include:

- Level of authority: A civic association has no enforcement authority whereas an HOA can assess penalties for noncompliance

- Paid Officers: Civic associations are generally volunteer whereas HOAs usually have some paid positions
- Membership Requirements: Civic association membership and dues payment is completely voluntary and typically nominal whereas HOA membership and dues are compulsory and oftentimes substantial

Stacey and Ted Miller Morris proposed the possibility of having ad hoc, loosely federated, task or issue forces related to specific issues in lieu of a formal, structured civic association. Stacey cited a couple of examples where neighbors coalesced over issues and contributed to positive change. She gave an example of school redistricting. There was discussion about the merits of such a means of neighborhood self-empowerment relative to a formal, structured, official neighborhood association that would serve to facilitate and support committees or task forces.

Treasurer Mike Edelson, gave a report on the state of the Treasury. He confirmed that the current balance in a business investment account stands at \$8,007.42; that it earned \$.13 per month for the past 13 months for a total \$1.69; \$0 were collected; \$0 were spent since 2016; and that Kirk had incurred \$335 in fees to reinstate and maintain the DVCA registration with the SoS. Jim Masone reminded that, according to the bylaws, expenses in excess of \$100 that are not in the budget must be voted on and approved by the majority of dues-paying members in attendance. Someone put a motion on the floor to reimburse Kirk \$335, it was seconded, and unanimously approved by all voting at the meeting. Mike also confirmed his intent to not stand for re-election. He encouraged folks to self-nominate to replace him as Treasurer.

Vic Herec asked what had happened to the funds that were in the treasury when he was an officer until 2015. Kirk indicated that he had no knowledge of what had happened before the current EC came on board to fill vacancies. All the current EC could do was account for the funds they inherited from the prior administration and earnings, collections, and expenditures during their tenure. Josh stated that the leadership team had voted to buy liability insurance for the officers in the event that they got sued by a developer. This would have accounted for approximately \$1,000 but it was unclear how many years the premium was paid. Stacey mentioned that we paid for one of the stone signs at the Thompson Road entrance which was not inexpensive.

Jim Masone, Nominating Committee Chair, made a presentation on the merits of having a strong civic association. He discussed some of the many things the DVCA has done in the past to make the neighborhood a good place to live. He discussed some things that the DVCA could do to enhance the quality of life of all residents. He emphasized Kirk's point that having a strong civic association takes a good volunteer base – something that has waxed and waned over the years in Drew Valley.

Masone discussed the task of the Nominating Committee (NC) which is to ensure that the membership has a field of candidates to vote on come election time. Nominations from the floor are still encouraged during the voting meeting but the NC is charged with making sure that there are people there for the residents to consider on election day. The committee is typically appointed in July for elections in October. This year there will be two NCs – one to facilitate elections early this year that traditionally would have taken place in October 2019 for the EC elections and the second one in July 2020 for the October 2020 elections of the BoD members.

Since the EC elections are the most instant and pressing concern, Masone discussed the duties and responsibilities of each Executive Committee position as specified in the Bylaws as they are written now. He acknowledged that the Job Descriptions might be a bit proscriptive with regard to

committee responsibilities but that can be changed with an update of the Bylaws. While the Bylaws document is a pretty excellent and well-crafted instrument, it needs to be amended to reflect new technologies, processes, and neighborhood demands. The time commitments for the positions both now and going forward were discussed. Time demands will be more intense in the early stages of rejuvenation and they will drop off as the organization rebuilds structure, processes, and policies.

Masone asked anybody who is interested in serving in any capacity (EC, BoD, Nominating Committee, Bylaws Committee, Zoning Committee, Communications Committee, Social Committee, or anything else to please let him know (jimmasone@bellsouth.net or 404-679-9927).

Blair Belton, Chair of the Zoning Committee (ZC), made a most excellent presentation about that committee's work, what it has accomplished in the past and what some of the current and future challenges will be. He affirmed that the ZC has been active and advocating for DV neighbors even during the time of DVCA inactivity. The ZC has over 60 years of zoning review experience between all of the members and that they have developed processes and strategies to keep informed of what is going on in and around DV and for responding accordingly. While they have been successful on many accounts, Blair's experience confirmed that with the backing of a formal, visible, and active civic association, the ZC can advocate better for all neighbors. There was a round of applause for Blair and the committee members for their efforts and devotion to their mission of looking out for us all.

Kirk deferred the Secretary's report because Ryan Simmons, Secretary, is out of town on business. Jim Masone promised a report of the results of the 2020 Neighborhood survey at a later time when we had more responses to tabulate.

Kirk opened the floor for general discussion. Someone brought up their concerns about the lack of communication and the lack of a newsletter in particular. There was general discussion about NextDoor and, because of its algorithms, it's inability to keep important subject matter visible. Lost dogs and chickens seem to get higher visibility than notices of Association meetings. There was also concern about the interactive nature of the tool creating a forum for disorganized and uncontrolled dialog that would obfuscate the core messaging. Josh proposed using NextDoor as a push-down tool for communication but relying on Association meetings for upward communication. Someone else proposed reverting to an old Yahoo list serve but someone else indicated that that tool was being discontinued. There did not seem to be a resolution to the issue other than to try to assemble a Communications Committee who could make determinations regarding the best ways to communicate to the most households.

Kirk closed the meeting by thanking everyone present for their interest and participation but reaffirmed that the continuity of the DVCA is going to rely entirely on the willingness of a large enough bolus of folks to reinvigorate and sustain the mission of the Association. He stressed the importance of following through on commitments. He drew Blair Belton's name out of the hat to win the \$25 Lowe's gift certificate. Blair tried to give it back for a re-draw but everyone seemed to agree that there was nobody in the room more deserving than Blair.

After the meeting, folks stayed around and visited for a bit. A group took a peek at the new swimming pool. Another group went to dinner together.

All in all a successful meeting with lots of neighbor engagement and interest. Looks like we're overcoming inertia – let's build some momentum!

Drew Valley Civic Association – Action Log

Date:	5 Feb 2020	Time:	6:30-7:30 PM	Location:	Briarwood Recreation Center
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Action	Assigned to...
Kirk to provide Mike with receipts or documentation to support expenditure of \$335 for SoS fees.	Kirk Martin
Mike to issue check to Kirk for \$335	Mike Edelson
Identify nominees for the upcoming EC elections and present to EC and BoD for consideration.	Nominating Committee
Tabulate and report results of 2020 resident survey	Jim Masone
Plan and schedule Association and EC meetings for the balance of 2020	Kirk Martin
Solicit volunteers for Nominating Committee (need two more) and seek EC appointment.	Jim Masone
Volunteer for standing and ad hoc committees	All residents
Follow up with all meeting participants to get surveys, gauge level of interest, and discuss opportunities that they see	Jim Masone
Document meeting via minutes/notes.	Jim Masone & Stacey Morris