

CHARLES STREET AREA COUNCIL / CORPORATION
Board of Directors Meeting Minutes
June 11, 2024 @ 6:30 PM – 7:30 PM (via Zoom)



Attendees: Angela Williams, Ericka Wingfield, Isreal Williams, Rebecca McDonough, Tor Taepaistitphongse, Dr. Archish Maharaja, Shalace Moore, La Rita Alston

Absent: Quincy Swatson

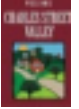
Guests: Neashia Johnson & Abdulkadir Chirambo (Mwanachue Farm)

1. Check-In / Introductions

2. MOU Review (Neashia Johnson) 6:40 PM

- a. Want to clarify the responsibilities of each party so that we can develop and maintain an effective collaborative relationship between CSAC and Mwanachue Farm (MF)
 - Identifying grant opportunities (both)
 - Determining Lead Grant Applicant (MF)
 - Completing Grant Application (both)
 - Disbursement of Funds (both)
 - Recruiting Volunteers (both)
- b. Questions:
 - What is the value proposition for CSAC to sign an MOU with MF?
 - It would save time and money rather than establishing
 - What value does the farm add, or plan to add, to the community?
 - The Mwanachue Farm distributes food, mostly in Northview Heights
 - This is an opportunity for CSAC to shape the relationship with MF and have a say in how they might bring value into the Charles Street Valley community
 - Abdul shared that with funding available, the farm would hope to share employment opportunities for both youth and adults locally
 - Would CSAC be able to suggest edits to the MOU?
 - Yes – this was intended to be an introductory meeting, but Mwanachue Farm is open to receiving any suggestions to develop an MOU that makes sense for both organizations. “Tell us what you want to see, and we will write collaboratively.”
 - Suggestion: maybe you can work with CSAC to develop changes to the MOU
 - Neashia wants CSAC to take the lead in expressing our needs and sharing our thoughts as a next step
 - Does Neashia have any experience involving youth in planning programming?
 - Yes, she worked at Pittsburgh Public Schools and ran after school programs, and having experienced the need for investment, she began
 - Has Mwanachue Farm done youth programming in the past?
 - Yes, MF has previously engaged youth in planting in the garden, delivering donated food, and hosting soccer games. Due to a lack of funding, programming has taken place on a volunteer / word of mouth basis.
 - Abdul would like to be able to work with CSAC – we have yet to get to the point where we’ve been able to operationalize roles for marketing / outreach, volunteering, etc.
 - How can residents of the Charles Street Valley get food from the farm?
 - There were previously vouchers available for seniors to get discounted produce

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from the farmers market, but it seems like that has slowed down

- They have tried to spread the word with door knocking but have had limited success
- Abdul also connected with Johanna to confirm that they would be able to give out excess produce without any issues, and it seems as though they are – the other farm location has started putting out free produce
 - AW asked that Abdul share in advance when they will have extra food so that we can make sure everything is organized and residents are aware
- Potential conflict of interest:
 - AW has been appointed to the Food Justice Fund committee, and would be reviewing grant applications– if MF intends to apply, there could be a conflict wherein AW may have to recuse herself; thus CSAC must use caution with food-related MOU's
- If CSAC works with MF on grants, would we be interfacing with Neashia?
 - Abdul would have to check. However, he likes the idea of having a mediating party that would be able to help our organizations mediate any conflicts that arise and to stay organized and on track – to build an equitable relationship.
- **Vote:** Motion made to decline the MOU at this time – Motion seconded and added that we can revisit the issue when there is a clear justification of benefit for CSAC. The motion passed unanimously with one abstention (RM not voting as an exiting board member)
 - Discussion:
 - Treasurer is still unclear about what the benefit is to CSAC in signing the MOU, and would need a better justification before considering one
 - Vice President reiterated that the farm should be offering programming and community benefit anyway, and mentioned that the land was donated
 - ED note that CSAC submitted Public Service (4/12) grant for programming on the farm, CSAC included for 10% admin; thus, we already have an existing relationship on case by case basis
- **Action Item:** Executive Director will relay our desire to hold off on signing an MOU until the benefit for CSAC / CSV is clear (completed on 7/2)

3. May Meeting Minutes (Angela Williams) (vote)

- a. Motioned made to accept the May meeting minutes as written with standard edits, Motion was seconded. The motion passed unanimously with one abstention (RM).

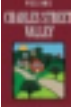
4. Financial Report (Archish Maharaja) (vote)

- a. Motion made to approve the financial reports, Motion seconded. The motion passed unanimously with one abstention (RM).

5. Safety Report (Angela Williams)

- a. No safety concerns shared by board members

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- b. ED reported that there have been 10+ lot maintenance 311 requests submitted in advance of June 22 Community Day

6. ED Report (Angela Williams) (vote)

- a. With current Secretary exiting the organization, board must vote a new Secretary
 - i. VP/ Governance Chair suggested checking the bylaws for procedure and / or conducting the vote via email – AW wanted to ensure that the vote happened today to ensure continuity.
 - ii. ED suggested splitting the Secretary responsibilities into administrative and governing to avoid potential conflicts of interests. Treasurer shared that he does not believe that would be necessary.
 - iii. ED shared that she was uncomfortable submitting the GEDTF grant listing current Secretary knowing that a transition may take place, Treasurer stated that there should be no conflict because the role is valid through the end of today, since this is when it was formally announced.
 - iv. **Vote:** Motion made to nominate IW for the role of Board Secretary, given his prior experience; Motion seconded.
 - 1. Discussion: VP/ Governance Chair reiterated that she does not feel prepared to vote on this matter because it was not on the agenda, and she was therefore not able to review the bylaws and give the matter appropriate consideration.
 - a. There are two options for executing the vote – waiting until next month or conducting the vote via email.
 - 2. **The vote was not conducted during this call.**
Action Item: Vote for Secretary to occur during July meeting
- b. Strategic planning process with RGG
 - i. This should include discussion around future programming and ensuring that we are able to follow through on home building plans through transitions occur

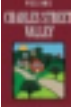
7. Events (Angela Williams & Interns)

- a. Juneteenth Community Day – June 22, 2024
 - i. Tor reported that they are continuing to collect registrations and work on the logistics for the activities at the event
- b. Governor's Reception – June 12, 2024
 - i. Angela and Shalace will be attending (gas & toll travel expenses to CSAC)
- c. NSLC Annual Awards Dinner – June 15, 2025- **CANCELED & FUNDS REFUNDED**
 - i. CSAC will not buy a table, but EW will attend as CSAC rep
 - ii. CSAC will buy a ticket for RGG executive board coach

8. Housing Update (Angela Williams)

- a. Looking for a bank sponsor for FHLB program for August application

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9. ED Appointments & Commitments (Angela Williams)

- a. As mentioned earlier, AW was appointed to the Food Justice Fund review committee
- b. ED will be participating in Pittsburgh Black Media Federation Advisory Committee – 6 month cohort with other black org leaders

10. Committee Updates (All)

- a. IW shared that the Northside Litter Getters had a successful trash cleanup, and plan to work at Bright-Chuck Point for their next work day.

Adjournment: Motion made and seconded to adjourn at **8:40pm**