

# Historic Wooster Square Association, Inc.



## Board Meeting Minutes May 25, 2022 6:00-7:00pm

**Present:** Cordalie Benoit, Edward Dunar, Sarah Greenblatt, Barbara Lamb, Keith Lorch, Charlie Murphy, Charlotte Murphy, Bonnie Rosenberg, Cheryl Szczarba

Cordalie welcomed everyone to our first meeting since January.

**Minutes Approval.** Charlotte Murphy moved we accept the minutes from January 26, 2022 and Keith seconded. Discussion – Barbara Lamb added that she was present at that meeting. All approved the minutes as amended.

**Treasurer's Report.** Keith shared the Treasurer's Report and mentioned that Cherry Blossom Celebration funds are still due to the Conservancy, including the second half of the Mayor's Grant. Cheryl added that the CBC is so far \$220 in the black, which is great given that we started planning 3 months late.

Keith also shared that he, Cordalie and Sarah have been working to bring the HWSA into IRS compliance with 990 filing requirements as a 501(c)(4); and in trying to do this, he learned that the IRS doesn't have a record of our incorporation and establishment of 501(c)(4) status. He explained that we have the documents to show that we were incorporated in 1990 and established as a 501(c)(4). Cordalie explained that prior to 2007 filings weren't required for groups with less than \$25K income, and then rules established that 990s required by postcard for corporations with less than \$50K. Since we hadn't filed 990s after 2007, we seem to have lost our tax exempt status. Keith is in the process of re-establishing our 501(c)(4) status; filling out back 990s to 2011 (we have documentation for 2011-2021, not further back). We will also share our early IRS approvals going back to 1990. Cordalie advised that the HWSA should be ok to take the state \$500K if it is awarded as we are a 501(c)(4) doing business as a neighborhood organization – not a charity – spending our funds to improve our neighborhood. Charlie suggested we ask Rosa's office for assistance as needed – due to her strong commitment to Wooster Square.

**CB Celebration Update.** Cheryl reported how wonderful the Cherry Blossom Celebration was and that feedback indicates people were happy with the changes made. She reported that we await word on the grant proposal from the Library but that we did receive the Mayor's grant. Sarah shared that we held a debrief and will be writing up those notes. Cheryl suggested that next year Wooster Place in addition to Academy Street should be closed to ease the traffic delays on Wooster Place/Greene Street. We took in \$85 in donations at the CB Celebration for posters & pillows.

**State Funding Update.** Sarah reported that the State has delayed the decision on our grant proposal as they are reviewing its compliance with federal requirements. She has talked with and written to both Roland Lemar (State Rep) and Martin Looney (State Senator) and awaits their responses.

**Discussion of HWSA Advocacy Role.** In response to requests that the HWSA sponsor a petition regarding plans for the 78 Olive Street development, and the Board taking an email vote not sponsor the petition, Cordalie suggested the Board review the advocacy role of the Association and its Board. She explained that we originally were formed to protect the Historic District, but we have expanded recently to preserve, enhance and celebrate the quality of life in our entire Wooster Square neighborhood. With this expanded role, she suggested that can take stands on issues that might impact our neighborhood – observing, doing our research/homework, and taking a stand.

Edward shared that he and Rahul weren't sure what the extent of our role could be in relation to the 78 Olive Street proposal. Sarah clarified that when Rahul and Anstress asked if the members of HWSA could be referenced in the petition, and then asked if the HWSA would sponsor the petition, she shared that we couldn't do that without a Board vote. Unfortunately, there was not enough time for the Association Board to make an informed decision, hence the vote not to sponsor the petition. Sarah suggested in the future, we might have a committee that is responsible for being involved neighborhood development discussions so that we can take a more informed positions as needed.

**Plan for Annual Meeting / Board Nominations.** Decision to hold Annual Meeting outdoors around the DeLauro Table on Wednesday June 22, 2022 at 6pm. Cordalie will provide an update of our activities over the past year, there would be a vote on nominated new Board members, and an informal discussion with Roland Lemar - if he were available that date. The short meeting would be followed by a tree tour in WS Park, led by Cordalie. Rain date could be the next week. We discussed providing drinks and individualized snacks similar to what we did with the tree trimming in 2020. The Board can have up to 21 members. Bonnie and Sarah agreed to interview three new neighbors who may be interested, and Cheryl agreed to send out an announcement of the Annual Meeting along with letting people know we are looking for new Board members.

**Membership Update.** Cheryl reported that we have added 4 new members – 3 individual homeowners and 1 renter. Good Copy is ready to print another mailer to recruit new members. Cheryl will place displays in the new apartment buildings for our brochures.

**Other Business.**

- Bonnie suggested we work with City to effectively prune our trees; Charlie suggested we work with URI to update our Cherry Tree Management Plan and make a modest contribution to them. City has a contract to take care of big trees with Care of Trees. Cordalie moved and Keith seconded that we spend up to \$4K on pruning of Cherry Trees and set aside \$500 in reserves for URI to accurately update the maintenance plan. Motion passed. Care of Trees – Charlie will check with Elsie about the contact; Cordalie will contact URI.
- St. Michael's lights – need to contact the Mayor about our requests.
- Piece of granite stone around David Wooster Memorial in the middle of the Park needs replacing.
- Harvey's Bench – Bonnie has contacted a company that can make the Victorian mold and install the pieces for \$3800 – they make the molds twice a year, with June the next time. There are 2-3 bench spaces in the Park – this will be one of them. Billie Iovanne can ask those on waiting list to fill the other bench spaces. Sarah and Cheryl agreed to walk through the park to verify the number of bench spaces available.
- Cheryl suggested we check with LCI re: tree stumps that are left tall after cutting down trees – can they be cut lower so that plants might be planted around them? Near 541 Chapel and along Warren Street.
- HDC – Mayor asked Charlie to recommend new Commissioners, as the City having a hard time finding people to step up.

**Adjourned at 7pm.**

Respectfully Submitted,

*Sarah B. Greenblatt*, Secretary

## Historic Wooster Square Association, Inc.



**Zoom Board Meeting  
January 27, 2021  
6:00-7:00 pm**

### **Revised Minutes**

**Present:** Cordalie Benoit, Alison Drda, Sarah Greenblatt, Ellen Kean, Barbara Lamb, Keith Lorch, Charles Minotti, Laura Morrison, Charlie Murphy, Charlotte Murphy, Bonnie Rosenberg, Cheryl Szczarba; and Alder Ellen Cupo

#### **Welcome and Introductions**

Cordalie welcomed everyone and asked that they introduce themselves and share one good thing that has happened since our last meeting.

#### **Approval of Minutes from November 18,2020 Meeting**

Cheryl moved and Charles Minotti seconded that minutes of the 11.18.2020 Board Meeting be accepted as presented. Accepted as written with one abstention.

#### **Review Revised Officer & Board Roles/Responsibilities**

Bonnie reviewed the revised descriptions of Board members and officers, a tool that can help existing and new members understand Board and Officer roles and responsibilities.

#### **Treasurer's Report**

Keith shared that we began the new year with \$19,719 and after two expenses of \$196.50 related to the website and UHaul Storage, we now have \$19,532 in our account – with \$10K restricted to Cherry Blossom Festival, \$1000 restricted for legal fees, and \$8532 uncommitted. He also provided a written close-out of the 2020 calendar fiscal year, showing total expenses of \$972 for the year. See Below.

#### **Planning for Annual Meeting**

After a discussion of options for format (a socially distant walk through Wooster Street and meeting in the park) and speakers ((Mayor, Rosa, developers), it was agreed to hold a Zoom Annual Meeting during the 3<sup>rd</sup> or 4<sup>th</sup> week of March, depending on when our invited speaker, Mayor Elicker, can join us.

- Cordalie will invite the Mayor
- Cheryl and Charlotte will work on a collage of photos or a video of our WS community
- Cordalie will provide the Association update
- Sarah will coordinate a nomination process for existing and potential new Board members. It was suggested that Board members identify potential neighbors, share our brochure/roles & responsibilities, and if there is potential interest, candidates should send a short bio paragraph with the reasons they are interested in joining the Board. She indicated that the election of officers will occur at the first Board meeting after the Annual Meeting.

Cordalie mentioned the idea of having a zoom scavenger hunt – it was agreed this could perhaps happen during a virtual cherry blossom celebration.

### **Membership Discussion**

Cheryl thanked Allison and Charlotte for their work on the new membership recruitment brochure, which should be ready for final review and then mailing in the next few weeks. She also thanked the Board for their detailed feedback, and that most agreed that the Wooster Street arch should be included as one of the photos. Cheryl is updating addresses for new developments and businesses. She estimated that costs will include printing and mailing and will confer with Charlotte on a printer to use. The Board agreed that asking \$150 for a lifetime membership is a fair price. The Board also agreed that asking for additional donations will be included on a separate brochure and made easier on the website, per Laura's recommendation.

### **Neighborhood Updates – Alder, WS Watch**

Ellen Cupo – along with her adorable 15 month-old son, Hunter – shared that she is proud to have supported the Board of Alders' "recall rights" policy re: hiring back hotel workers upon COVID re-openings; and that she is equally as proud about opposing the 19 Wheeler Street recycling proposals which eventually were withdrawn by the company. She participates on the Health and Human Services Subcommittee which typically meets on the 4<sup>th</sup> Wednesday of the month at 6pm – and is on a working group to identify barriers and potential solutions for 'racism as a public health crisis'. She also indicated that she will be making calls to the 55 neighbors in Wooster Square who are 75+ and eligible now for the COVID vaccine and asked those who might want to assist to contact her.

Sarah did not get to share a Wooster Square Watch update at this meeting and will do so next month.

### **Association Priorities**

Cordalie mentioned that there are two lamps missing in the Park – one that was knocked over by the Parks Department; and that the lights on St. Michael's steeple have not been lit due to cost.

### **Other Business**

Cordalie mentioned that our very own Elsie Chapman will be honored at this year's NHFPL Mardi Gras. Sarah mentioned that she plans to share in the next WSW email.

The meeting adjourned at 7pm

Respectfully submitted - Sarah B. Greenblatt, Acting Secretary

**Historic Wooster Square Association  
Treasurer's Report  
Jan 1 2022 to May 25 2022**

	<b>Period</b>	<b>YTD</b>
Starting Balance On Hand	\$ 20,544.72	\$20,544.72
<b>Income</b>		
Membership Dues	\$ 696.33	696.33
Cherry Blossom Festival	\$ 3,325.00	3,325.00
Donation	\$ 85.00	85.00
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>\$ 4,106.33</b>	<b>\$ 4106.33</b>
<b>Expense</b>		
Christmas Concert	\$ 0	\$ 0
Membership Mailing	\$ 364.59	\$ 364.59
Meeting supplies	\$ 0	\$ 0
Cherry Blossom Festival	\$ 11,556.63	\$11,556.63
HWSA/Smart Bank Scholarship	\$ 0	\$ 0
Ads	\$ 0	\$ 0
PO Box	\$ 0	\$ 0
Memoriums	\$ 0	\$ 0
Pumpkin Decorating event	\$ 0	\$ 0
Preservation Trust Membership	\$ 0	\$ 0
Bank Checks	\$ 0	\$ 0
Website	\$ 151.55	\$ 151.55
Tree Lighting	\$ 0	\$ 0
State Registration	\$ 0	\$ 0
<b>Total Expense</b>	<b>\$ 12,072.77</b>	<b>\$ 12,072.77</b>
<b>Balance on Hand 5/25/2022</b>	<b>\$ 12,578.28</b>	<b>\$ 12,578.28</b>
Committed to Legal	\$ 1,000.00	
Committed to Cherry Blossom Festival	\$ 10,000.00	
Uncommitted	\$ 1,578.28	