

Willo Neighborhood Association
Meeting Minutes
September 15, 2022

Board Members Present: Bob Cannon (President), Brad Brauer (Vice President), Opal Wagner (Secretary), Linda Doescher (Treasurer), Erika Gagnon, Patrice Wappel, Jackson Modrak, Charlene Gum, Ann Bommersbach, Sandra Lefcovich, Aaron Montaña Searles, Kush Govani

Absent: Jeremy Schachter

Residents attending included: Todd Webster, Vicki Nowack, Tristan Colyer, "VB", Keith Aldridge, Jon Roberts, Joanne Anders, Eric Gilmore, Decker Williams, Joyce, Scott Ferreira, Cassandra, Lisa Benson, Valerie Gentz, Jim Gabler.

The meeting was called to order at 6: 37 p.m. followed by introductions by Board members

Approval of Minutes: Opal Wagner, Secretary, informed the Board she had received no edits to the August Willo Board meeting minutes as presented to the Board members via email. Opal made a motion to approve the August 1, 2022 minutes. Ann Bommersbach seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Treasurer's Report: Linda Doescher, Treasurer, reported that Home Tour money has started coming in and this month we are in the black by a little over \$12,000. This is due to the City of Phoenix Block Watch grant coming in for \$11,160.60 and the cost of the *Inside Willo* newsletter being reduced. We have more newsletter income than expense this month. We have \$145,000 in assets on our balance sheet. The revised budget now includes the Block Watch grant monies that will be used for Willo Kids Club, Luminarias, Block Watch and the willophx.com website. This year's Block Watch grant includes some additional money for promotional items. The Block Watch Grant people expressed approval for what we are doing to promote safety. Creating opportunities for neighbors to get to know each other and build community is a big component of crime prevention, safety, etc. Currently, our cash in the bank consists of: Checking: \$37,861.29; Edward Jones investment account: \$72,055.84; and savings \$5,629.42. Brad Brauer made a motion to approve the September Treasurer's Report. Erika Gagnon seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Willo Zoning Committee update: Brad Brauer reported that a meeting between Willo and City leaders was held on August 16, 2022 at Phoenix City Hall regarding ongoing complaints re 78 W. Cypress. The meeting was attended by Vice Mayor Laura Pastor, Michael Peterson-Incorvaia (the Vice Mayor's Chief of Staff), Deputy City Manager Alan Stephenson, Acting Historic Preservation Officer Helana Ruter, Historic Preservation Planner Kevin Weight, Lisa Huggins-Hubbard from the Neighborhood Services Department, Willo President Robert Cannon, Vice-President Brad Brauer, Secretary Opal Wagner, Board Member Ann Bommersbach, and Cypress resident Maria Hidalgo. After hearing our concerns, City Staff acknowledged the permits for 78 W. Cypress had

already been issued and said they will work with us more closely in the future on Historic Preservation matters and pledged to respond to residents in a timelier fashion on Neighborhood Services complaints. Lisa Huggins-Hubbard has shared her NSD phone no. with residents on the 100-block of Cypress so they can reach out on any issues of concern.

Bob Cannon added the meeting with the City lasted 3 hours and our concerns were heard.

The First Watch restaurant on Thomas that backs up to the alley north of Edgemont has applied for permanent patio service seeking to continue what they had in place during the Covid pandemic. There are 5 outside tables proposed and they are not near the alley. They are also asking for a liquor license. No problems are anticipated.

Opal Wagner reported a variance for outdoor dining had been filed for a new restaurant at the southwest corner of 7th Ave. and Thomas Rd. The previous application for a drive-through restaurant at that location was withdrawn. The owner intends to retain the former Duke's Photography building, which had formerly been slated for demolition, and adapt it for re-use as a restaurant/deli like a smaller version of La Grande Orange.

Willo GO PHX Bond Committee Update: Eric Gilmore reported he had spoken at the Sept. 9, 2022 meeting of the Streets and Storm Drainage Subcommittee at Phoenix City Hall. He presented issues of the flooding in the northeast area of Willo and provided hard copies of photos of flooding to the subcommittee members. The subcommittee members were surprisingly tough on the Streets Transportation Department Staff as to why nothing has been done since Willo began reaching out to the City on this issue in 2017. Opal Wagner also attended the Sept. 9th Streets and Storm Drainage Subcommittee (via Zoom) and requested that the City implement pedestrian scramble crosswalks at the intersections of Central and McDowell and Central and Thomas to enhance pedestrian safety in our area.

Bob Cannon added we will continue putting pressure on the City to fix the drainage issues. Aaron Searles added he had learned from Mayor Gallego and Tony Motola that drainage mitigation is not included in the current 3rd and 5th Avenue re-design through Willo and including it at this point would set the project back for at least a year.

Willo Home Tour 2023 Committee Update: Linda Doescher and Sandra Lefcovich have been working diligently, along with the Procurement Committee, and now have 7 homes, 2 gardens, and the firehouse committed for the Home Tour thus far. Ticket sales are up now for a reduced price. Super early bird tickets are available for \$18 until Sept. 30th. Ticket prices will go up until Dec. and then up to the final price thereafter. Twilight Tour tickets will go on sale in November. Group sales will be available - if you want to buy 10 tickets, you will get a reduced rate. We're doing a limited-run poster this year. A lot of people asked for a poster last year, but they were created as a gift for the homeowners on tour, and we didn't have any to sell. Linda reported we have \$7000 in sponsorship money thus far. Lisa Pandone is taking the lead on getting us potential sponsors. We're looking to get as much money as we can from sponsors this year to

defray costs. The next Home Tour meeting is scheduled for Oct. 6th at Brad's house (502 W. Monte Vista) at 6pm.

Lisa Pandone Benson said she has a lot of experience in fundraising. She asked that anyone interested in assisting with securing sponsorships for the 2023 Home Tour reach out to her, Linda, or Sandra.

Home Tour is on President's Day weekend now to deconflict with the Super Bowl. 70 tickets have been sold already.

Willo Yard Sale Update: Patrice Wappel and Eric Gilmore reported the semi-annual Willo yard sale will be on Sat. Oct. 15th from 7am to 1pm. They've placed an ad in the Arizona Republic and will do so on Craigslist as well. Eric said he submitted an article for *Inside Willo* and will work on putting the banners out. The yard sale will be promoted on Willo's social media pages, too.

Willo Kids Club Update: Valerie Gentz reported the Kids Club hosted a great Back to School Bash last weekend with a water slide, ice cream truck, etc. We had a really good turnout – 40-50 kids. We are gearing up for our Halloween event on Oct. 29th. We'll have a bouncy house, face painting, etc. This will be held jointly with the Block Watch GAIN event for the entire neighborhood. Erica Gagnon, Block Watch Chairperson, reported that the joint Kids Club/GAIN event will be held on Sat. Oct. 29th from 5-8pm. Monte Vista and Holly will be closed at Walton Park west of 3rd Ave. for the event. There will be a costume parade, food trucks, bounce house, face painting. City Council people, fire trucks and Phoenix P.D. will be there also.

Social Media Update: Sandra Lefcovich reported the Willo Events (public) page is growing nicely and the Willo Neighborhood page (for residents) is growing as well.

Willo Block Watch Update: Erika Gagnon reported we're missing about 13 blocks that don't have captains. If your block is missing a captain, or you are interested in becoming a Block Watch captain, please contact Erika. She attended the Zoom meeting for Super Bowl 2023 Community Outreach. The Super Bowl will be on Feb. 12th with most events in Downtown Phoenix. The 2015 Super Bowl had a \$700,000,000 impact for Phoenix and an even greater economic impact is expected for 2023. The Super Bowl experience at Hance Park starts Feb. 8th with more experiences at the Phoenix Convention Center February 3rd through 5th. Road closures are not finalized yet. The Arizona Super Bowl Host Committee is looking for over 200 volunteers and are looking for veteran-owned and LGBTQ-owned businesses to get involved. Volunteer opportunities can be found online at azsuperbowl.com/volunteer.

Willo Streets and Traffic Safety Committee Update: Opal Wagner reported the design phase of the 3rd and 5th Avenues improvement project through Willo is nearing completion, with 100%/ final roll plots expected to be completed in November. City of Phoenix Streets Transportation Director Kini Knudson is scheduled to present the final plan to Willo at the November 10th Willo Board meeting.

Social Committee: Jon Roberts reported the Luau/Tiki-themed September Happy Hour at Venancio and Sandra's house was very well attended and a wonderful time was had by all. The next Willo Happy Hour will be on Oct. 14 at 90 W. Virginia, hosted by Nic and Lawrence Andrews. Jon announced he has also assumed the Willo Welcome Committee role of giving out the welcome packets. He asked anyone who knows of new neighbors on their street to let him know so he can make sure they receive a welcome packet.

Inside Willo: Sandra Lefcovich reported she had rolled out the new, smaller format this month. Everyone seems to be really happy with the full color aspect. There will be an erratum in the October issue because we got Jackson's name wrong. The new format has worked well to cut the costs. We're not subsidizing advertisers anymore. We have more advertisers than we've had in a while, which is helping to defray costs as well.

Old Business: None.

New Business:

Long-time Willo resident "Spunky" Helen Ernest passed away. Services will be Sept. 24th at 1pm at 710 Bethany Home Rd.

Brad Brauer reported the City is not maintaining the roundabouts at 3rd and 5th Avenues. He'd like the Board to consider taking care of the roundabouts. Bob Cannon asked Brad to come up with a proposal, including costs, so the item can be placed on the October agenda for consideration and a possible vote.

Bob Cannon stated a modification to the Willo By-laws will be on the October agenda to change the two-year residency requirement for Board members to one year. The Board and Officers are up for re-election next year and the election process begins in December, 2022.

Aaron Searles asked how the construction of the 3rd and 5th improvements might affect the Home Tour. Bob said the City has told us to plan for digging to start January 1st and we will work closely with them to mitigate impacts during the Home Tour.

Adjournment: Brad Brauer made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Patrice Wappel seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned at 7:34 p.m.