

East Kensington Neighbors Association
Monthly Meeting Agenda
Monday, January 15, 2024
In person at PBC and via Zoom
Andy Ortega, President
Contact: president@ekna.org
www.ekna.org



January 2024 Meeting Minutes

Meeting Called to order at 7:12pm

Budget Report (Treasurer - Catherine)

December Income (\$973.66 Total)

- Interest: \$8.66
- Donations: \$200
- Hagert Mural Donations: \$765
- Pass Through Fees: \$43.82

December Expenses (\$621.78 Total)

- Squarespace: \$15.12
- Zoom: \$17.27
- Crosstown Coalition Annual RCO Membership Fee: \$250
- Hartford Qrtly Liability Ins: \$237.25
- Paypal Donation Fees: \$22.97
- Kensington Cans Supplies: \$79.17

Bank Balances as of December 31st (\$38,409.30 Total)

- PFCU Checking: \$19,029.75
- PFCU Money Mrkt: \$18,611.58
- Paypal: \$762.97
- PFCU Savings: \$5

Cash Flow Changes Due to Pass Through Transactions

- \$1,700

Green Space Balance as of December 31st

- \$8,039.27

Receivables as of December 31st

- Loan Principal Outstanding: \$12,000
- Loan Interest Outstanding: \$1,921.66

- Richard: Do we know the origin of the donations we see in the report?
- Catherine: They're from individuals.
- Bernie: From organizations?
- Catherine: Yes, that would be put in.
- Bernie noted that nearly \$15,000 receivables is in the current report.

Alex Doty 9Parks and Rec Hero Fund

- Advocate for better green and park spaces in Philadelphia
- Over 300 spaces in the Philly park system
- Everyone knows our local rec centers don't have enough
- Why is that? We spend \$50/person on parks and rec operations (paying for staff, mowing, day to day operations, capital, repairs, etc.)
- National average is \$98/person.
- Noted other cities that spend more (including Baltimore and Detroit)
- Much of our spending is on emergency spending
- Recent rule bans rec centers from operating and opening/closing rec centers with one person, must be at least 2 people. These staffing mandates are making it harder to pay for those spaces
 - Mayor Parker committed during the campaign to doubling the size of the parks and rec department

Q&A

- Bernie asked if Doty put the graphic on per capita spending for various cities. “Do you see a correlation between the amount of parks and rec spending and the level of crime in cities?”
 - Alex: There have been multiple peer-reviewed studies that find a correlation between more greening, trees, and fewer vacant lots with decreased crime in those areas
- Josh Graff: 6 parks are receiving funds from the recent opioid settlement. Are you involved with disbursing those amounts or influencing that discussion?
 - Alex: Beyond his purview, but agreed that having public spaces in the area around Kensington is essential to serving people, especially those who need it most.
- Bernie: Do you work with Parks and Rec on projects, or are you more focused on expanding funding for the department?
 - Alex: We have many other orgs working on specific projects that are neighborhood specific. Not just one person addressing this. Referenced new Philadelphia Tree Plan - the city forester position has been posted, who will be in charge of all the tree canopy in Philadelphia. 20,000 tree backlog for care. We’ve lost tree canopy in the last 20 years.
 - Alex: Tree cover is an issue of equity. Leafy Chestnut Hill vs Hunting Park with its dearth of trees. We need a deliberate, concerted effort to plant that needs city support. Goal is to put pressure on the new mayoral administration to increase funding for parks and rec, **will ask for support next month on a citywide letter**

Zoning (John Theobald)

- Meet every 2nd Weds of the month at Fireball Printing on Coral St
- 2 cases this month: 2628 Martha St - special exception for a tattoo studio
- 2216 Frankford Ave (expanded mixed-use building) check notes from email
- Both cases 10 in favor, unanimous
- It’s important that we have a process in place and can turn folks out when bigger cases do come up
- Encouraged folks to show up to zoning meetings!

Derby

- Jen put out a pitch for the Derby
- Encouraged volunteers to join us at our beer tent to help us raise money
 - Should make a volunteer interest form
- Date is TBD, likely in May
- Bernie: Is EKNA actively negotiating with Fishtown BID on the number of beer vendors?
 - Jen said yes, we are actively in talks with them to ensure EKNA has a prominent spot and to know what the vendor landscape will look like
- Richard: How did the board vote on my motions in December? Would like his two motions recorded in the minutes (see below for the two motions)
 - *I will move that the Board change the Zoom settings to allow all members to see all the names and hear and read the chat for all Zoom participants at all times.*

- *I will move that during any election related activity, the Zoom room audio must be fully functional. If the audio signal fails in any way the election activity will be halted and resumed only when the Zoom room audio has been fully restored.*
- Jen: We offer Zoom as a courtesy, not a requirement. The vote was unanimously opposed on both motions.
- Bernie withdraws his two proposed motions because the issues were just fixed (monthly Treasurer reports must include all Accounts Receivable, as the bylaws require

Small Business Spotlight: Nic Esposito (Unless Kids)

- Proponent of the “Circular Economy,” which recycles goods, furniture, toys, so that they can be used by other folks to the end of their useful life, rather than thrown out prematurely
- Unless Kids picks up folks’ unwanted toys, spruces them up, and then people can pick up the fixed and refurbished toys from their online “toychest”
- Unlesskids.com - we can pick up your toys from your home for your convenience (include in social media post -= Justin)
- Bernie: Is there a monthly fee for the families that participate?
 - Nic: Yes, we have a \$4-5 monthly subscription, but also allows folks to buy things a la carte

Jennifer: Election Update

- Board has approved a new motion allowing for October 2024 elections to unify those elections, rather than have them be separate months
- Second motion was to make board meeting minutes public upon request if board has capacity
- Bernie: Can we email info account to get a copy of any given month’s minutes for board meetings?
 - Jen: Yes, as long as we have capacity.
- John and Bernie: Discussed why we can’t be required to put out meeting minutes. We won’t always be able to do this necessarily. We are volunteers with full-time jobs and so it doesn’t make sense to put unreasonable mandates on the board in the future. We don’t want to be caught out of compliance unnecessarily.

Molto Benne: Small Business Spotlight (Andy)

- Excited to be at EKNA, has wanted to meet more folks in the community
- One of the owners, co-owner is his childhood best friend from the Atlanta area.

- Lived in Philly for 6.5 years
- Fell in love with food trucks - was at a music festival, how fun the atmosphere was, knew that this is what he wanted to do with his life!
- Has worked in restaurants since he was a teenager
- Earned a finance degree, became an entrepreneur
- Internship with a successful food truck in Atlanta
- Got tired of the South and visited Philly, has some family roots in the city
- Felt that Philly was similar to Atlanta, came here to build his fortune
- When he arrived, he drove Uber Eats, became manager of 4 different brands of food trucks
- Oversaw 2 bars and 9 different food trucks
- Decided to make his own business and bring his friend up to the area
- Loved cooking everyday with his best friend, bought a food truck
- Specialty ravioli company
- Eventually bought a permanent space, Frankford and Dauphin bank location
- Now just figuring it all out, how to operate a retail pasta store! Really enjoys it and the process
- <https://www.moltobeneravioli.co/>
- Lots of variety, catering is available with the food truck
- How to get a truck to an event? There are catering options for pre paying for a certain amount of people, travel within 40 mile range, reach out to their email, \$1500 minimum, can give phone number for the truck, 3 entree options (pasta, sandwich, salad, ravioli)

Richard: Motion to change the minutes

- Second bullet point references derisive board member, Richard believes that the board member should be mentioned by name
- After brief discussion and the opportunity for people to hear Richard's argument, the motion to amend the minutes is not passed

November and December Minutes Approvals:

- Both meeting minutes approved.

Meeting adjourned at 7:59pm