

History and Mission

The Old Oakland Neighborhood was originally built in 1922 as the Westlawn Subdivision. Our [borders, as officially recognized by the City of Lansing](#), are: North: Willow Street; East: Cawood Street; South: Oakland Avenue and Old Oakland Avenue; West: Stanley Street Our membership and involvement is not limited to those borders; we welcome participation from community members who do not reside in the neighborhood!

The mission of the Old Oakland Neighborhood Association (OONA; “OOH-nah”) will be to:

Work cooperatively to improve the Old Oakland Neighborhood with regard to inclusive community welfare for neighborhood residents.

Encourage communication and foster relationship building among OONA members, and other local entities (e.g., community leaders, government organizations, local businesses, etc.).

Make the Old Oakland Neighborhood and our community at large a welcoming place to live by initiating and/or supporting activities beneficial to all residents, regardless of sex, age, race, religion, or social or economic status, sexual orientation, veteran status or gender identity.

Non-profit status: Old Oakland Neighborhood Association is not a non-profit association but shall work with various community partners to utilize tax-exempt status.

Article I: Membership

Section 1. Name.

The name of this organization shall be the Old Oakland Neighborhood Association (OONA; “OOH nuh”). The Board of Directors (Article III) will be henceforth referred to as “Board.”

Section 2. Boundaries

The boundaries of our neighborhood as recorded with the city of Lansing are defined by the following borders: the South side of Willow Road on the north, the east side of Cawood street on the east, the north side of Oakland Avenue on the south, and

the western borders of Dunnebacke and Westside Parks on the west.

Section 3. Members

Voting membership is open to anyone who lives in the Old Oakland Neighborhood (as defined in Section 2) of Lansing, Michigan *including* the surrounding community extending to North Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd. between Willow and Cawood, and is at least 18-years of age.

Article II: Membership Meetings

Section 1. Annual Meeting and Regular Meetings

Beginning in 2024, the annual meeting shall be held during September each year (in conjunction with the culmination of the City of Lansing grant cycle; grant reports are traditionally due at the end of September). The annual meeting shall include an election to fill vacancies in the board of directors, the presentation of a financial report for the preceding fiscal year, and such other matters as are properly determined by the membership.

Additional regular meetings shall be held at times and places fixed by the Board of Directors, with an emphasis on accessibility including virtual meetings which are often more accessible and inclusive of members' abilities and other commitments (i.e., by alleviating dependence on fair weather, childcare, etc.). The board should make a good faith effort to publicize notice of these meetings at least one week in advance through various modes at the current board's discretion (e.g., physical notification in the form of canvassing is not feasible for a small board, and social media only notifications can be restrictive of elder members; the board should remain responsive to community need and communication trends).

Section 2. Special Meetings

A special membership meeting may be called by the President at any time, with good faith notice including the time, place, and purposes of the meeting, within one week of the meeting. A special meeting shall act only on matters included in the notice and should make every effort to include all Board members (Article III).

Section 3. Quorum, Voting, and Procedures

At Annual or Regular Board Meetings, a majority of directors and members present can decide any matter. At all other meetings, each member present may cast one vote; no votes may be cast by proxy. Except as otherwise provided in these bylaws, meetings of the membership shall be conducted in accordance with general rules of order determined by each board. This could include, but is not limited to,

Robert's Rules of Order or Consensus.

Article III: Board Officers

Section 1. Composition, Selection, Removal, and Terms

The affairs and property of the organization shall be managed by a Board consisting of ideally not fewer than four (President, Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer; see Article IV) and not more than 15, as determined by the board subject to revision by the members at a membership meeting, elected by a plurality vote of the membership at the annual meeting. Officers shall serve for one year and may be re-elected at the annual membership meeting. If an officer is unable to serve or is absent without reasonable cause from two consecutive meetings, the Board may declare the position vacant, after giving that person at least 10 days written notice of its intent to do so.

Section 2. Meetings

The Board shall make every good faith attempt to hold regular meetings not less than quarterly, at times and places it determines with an emphasis on accessible and inclusive meeting modalities (e.g., virtual or hybrid). A special meeting shall be held on the call of the President or any four officers from the Board, with not less than one week advance notice to each director of the time, place, and purpose; a special meeting shall act only on matters included in the notice. When there is a need for urgent action or when it is difficult to schedule a meeting, a decision may be made by the board asynchronously provided a reasonable effort is made to include all officers in the process and at least a majority of those in office can actually participate.

Section 3. Conduct of Meetings

Except as otherwise provided in these bylaws, all decisions of the Board shall be made at a meeting attended by a quorum of officers of the Board. A quorum shall consist of a majority of the directors then in office. No officer may cast a vote by proxy, but may be contacted during or after the meeting for a vote. Except as otherwise provided in these bylaws, meetings of the Board shall be conducted in accordance with general rules of order determined by each board. This could include, but is not limited to, Robert's Rules of Order or Consensus.

Section 4. Committees

The Board may create such committees as it requires and may delegate to them any of its powers, subject to the Board's power to review and revise committee decisions. Unless otherwise determined by the Board, the President and Vice President may appoint the members and designate the chairperson of each committee.

Article IV: Officers

Section 1. Offices, Terms, and Selection

Traditionally, at any time when necessary to fill a vacancy, the officers of the organization shall be elected by the Board from among its members for terms of one year or until their successors take office. At any time, the Board may vote to change the election process such that Members elect for specific offices if the Board deems that a more effective election process. Officers shall consist of a President, a Vice-President, a Secretary, and a Treasurer with the flexibility to add more OPTIONAL officer roles as necessary (e.g., Community Outreach Liaison). Officers may be re-elected in the following year; however, the president may serve no more than two consecutive years at a time.

Section 2. Duties

[Current duty descriptions](#) live outside of the bylaws, allowing the roles to flex practically with the needs of the board without having to amend the bylaws. What follows are examples of duties for these roles in the past for illustrative purposes only.

1. The President

Shall schedule meetings, lead Board communication, delegate administrative tasks, form committees (e.g., for grant writing and event planning), and other duties. Shall preside at general membership and co-sign checks on behalf of OONA.

2. Vice-President

Shall conduct meetings when the President is absent and represent the organization when the President is unable to do so. Shall take notes in absence of the Secretary. Shall assume other board membership roles when particular roles have not been filled in a particular election cycle due to poor turnout (e.g., Parks Liaison).

3. Secretary

Shall record all minutes of all OONA meetings, shall assume correspondence duties as required, shall maintain those files and records as requested by OONA.

4. Treasurer

Shall receive and deposit all funds to the OONA account, authorized to co-sign checks on behalf of OONA, shall make a financial report at general membership meetings, shall make financial records available when requested, shall arrange for a yearly audit of the financial records.

Optional officer roles (if participation is bountiful):

5. Community Outreach Liaison: Shall work as a liaison between Community and Municipal organizations and OONA to help facilitate communications within the neighborhood and with the surrounding community.

6. Parks and Recreation Liaison: Shall work as a liaison between Lansing Parks and Recreational and OONA to communicate updates regarding Dunnebacke and Wilson (Westside) Park.
7. Old Oakland Neighborhood Community Garden Representative: a newly elected board can determine without adjusting the bylaws that this role can be purely a liaison role involving direct communication with the board but not requiring board meeting attendance based on availability and depth of engagement. This role takes lead on garden planting and events and communicates with the Board regularly (e.g., via email, the neighborhood Facebook group, Slack, etc.)

All officers should make good faith efforts to attend meetings, share administrative duties, and plan events, etc. The President is the organizational and administrative lead, but elected officers should be prepared to share the workload of these volunteer positions.

Article V: Finance

Section 1. Acceptance of Funds

Grants, donations, bequests, and other funds and property may be accepted from any source in conformity with policies adopted by the Board.

Section 2. Depository Accounts

All funds of the organization shall be placed in such depository or investment accounts as the Board may designate (e.g., in 2024, this is an account with Michigan State University Federal Credit Union). Association Checks must be signed by at least two (2) persons authorized as signers by the Board.

Section 3. Management of Funds

The Treasurer shall be the principal custodian of all funds, shall see that accurate books of account are maintained and shall provide the Board with financial reports and statements as needed. All financial records shall be open to inspection by any director or member. All expenditures shall be authorized by the Board and all expenditures in excess of \$50.00 shall be approved by the Board and members at a regular meeting.

Section 4. Payments to Directors and Officers

There shall be no compensation for serving as an officer or director, but officers and directors may be compensated for other services to the organization by vote of the majority of officers, and reimbursed for approved expenses incurred on its behalf.

Section 5. Fiscal Year

The financial records and reports of the organization shall be based on a fiscal year ending September 30.

Article VI: Communication and social media

Each Board should decide how it wants to communicate among its members and be consistent in using that method or platform (e.g., Slack). Every effort should be made to save past communication from disused platforms before losing access to it.

In the case of any social media or communication outside the Board, all Board members should ideally share equal responsibility in monitoring Member communication to maintain an inclusive, constructive, safe, and welcoming community space whether online or in person.

Article VII: Institutional knowledge and record-keeping

The board will make a good faith effort to keep helpful, appropriate, and open access (to the Board only) records, including but not limited to physical files, financial records, past grant applications, etc. This includes, for example, making an effort to send email messages from and storing files within the officially designated email/cloud storage account for the neighborhood (if applicable).

Article VIII: Election process

Beginning in 2024, the election process is as follows.

1. Announce the end-of September annual meeting at least 1 week in advance. At this time, post the organization bylaws (online, minimally) so Officers, Members, and the general public get a sense of the duties involved in Board positions as well as the election process.
2. Elections kick off at the annual meeting near the end of September (after grant reports have been submitted to the city.) In 2024, this is in conjunction with OONA's in-person

“Fall Festival” 9/28. At this event, there will be a report on the year’s grants, our summer events schedule, and an overview of the election process.

3. At the annual meeting, announce the final elections meeting scheduled for no earlier than two weeks later (mid October). The Board should make a good faith effort to remind neighbors of the upcoming elections leading up to the elections meeting and publicize widely through multiple channels available to the board.
4. In mid-October, Members elect Board members at-large.
5. In a following board meeting, which should be open to the public and announced with one week's notice, the elected Board will select individual officer roles from among them. At any point, the Board can vote to amend this process to be more streamlined (e.g., Members electing to specific roles from the start) by following the Amendment of Bylaws process (Article IX).

Article IX: Amendment of Bylaws

Section 1. Amendment

All proposed amendments to these bylaws must be presented at one regular meeting and voted on at the next OR presented online with a good faith effort to reach neighbors who may not use all platforms (e.g., posted on the website) one week in advance of a meeting. These bylaws can be amended in any general meeting by $\frac{3}{4}$ majority of board members present at the meeting.