

Ghent Neighborhood League Meeting Minutes November 15, 2023

Approximately 35 current and prospective members attended the November 15, 2023, GNL meeting held at the Williams School.

The agenda included the following topics. Shown with discussion highlights:

1. Safety Report: Officer Dreer, Norfolk Police Department

- Overall crime activity has declined in the Ghent area, however there is a slight uptick in individual and business burglaries.
- Most concerning is car thieves exploiting a weakness in the ignition systems of Kias and Hyundais using nothing more than a USB cord. It is recommended that owners of these vehicles use steering wheel locks to protect their property.
- Additionally, bicycle larcenies have climbed. Again, strong/sturdy locks are recommended.

2. Treasurers Report: Bob Kelly, GNL Treasurer

- Bob Kelly submitted the latest GNL savings and Certificate of Deposit report. The latest expenses include payments for work on the website, posters and flyers, and purchase of GNL logo items for members from Printify.com.

3. Ghent Beautification: Trees for Clean Water Project: Bob Kelly

- Approximately \$4,775 is required to purchase 33 plants and planting supplies. This expenditure is fully reimbursable from the State of Virginia once the trees and shrubs are in the ground.
- GNL has a certificate of deposit valued at approximately \$8,700. These funds were set aside in the past for use when a major program became available.
- The membership approved cashing in the CD to jumpstart the beautification work.
- GNL is looking for volunteers for Saturday, December 16, 2023 (8am – 11am EST) to help get the plants in the ground. The GNL website has details for volunteering.

4. Grow with Google: Shantoya R. Ward

- On November 28, 2023 (6pm-8pm EST) the Norfolk Alumnae Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc will present a free workshop at the Jordan-Newby Library 1425 Norchester Ave, Norfolk, Va to learn about Google's productivity tools.
- Among the many key growth fields are data analytics, business intelligence, digital marketing, IT support and automation, UX design, project management and cybersecurity.
- Additional details and the QR code to register are available on the GNL website. Also visit norfolkalumnae1929gwg@gmail.com.

5. Guest Speaker: MHS Fund Raising Effort: Anne Wynne

- This is a very worthwhile initiative by the Maury High School Booster Club. Donations and sales event proceeds go directly to support students and teachers.
- The annual Fruit Sale is underway and will conclude on November 26, 2023. A variety of options and price points are available. These include grapefruits, navel oranges, clementines, fresh vegetables boxes, New York style and double chocolate cheesecakes. See www.mauryboosters.org.

6. Guest Speaker: Hague Bulkhead Repairs: Tammy Halstead, Structural Engineer

- Outlined were upcoming 2024 and 2025 steps to proceed with the design and partial repairs of the Hague retaining wall. Approximately \$2.75 million has been allocated to this Hague rehabilitation project.
- Partial repairs are scheduled to begin in Fall 2024. Additionally, there is early planning for a knee wall around portions of the Hague.
- Coordination is occurring between the City of Norfolk, the State of Virginia, and the Army Corps of Engineers to address larger Norfolk flood mitigation plans.

7. Membership Committees: Updates

- Dr. Julie Findlay has stepped down as the GNL Secretary to concentrate on family and her very important role in the Neonatology Department of CHKD. Tom Feguson will assume the GNL Secretary position.

8. Branding & Promotion: See website for selection of items.

9. Member Spotlight:

- Beginning January 2024, we will feature key members of the GNL. We will highlight personal history and careers, achievements and awards, hobbies, family etc. The Member Spotlights will be presented on the GNL website.

10. Upcoming Events:

- **GNL Holiday Decorations Contest.** The GNL will look for and award the best and most innovative holiday decorations in Ghent. The contest winners will be announced December 22, 2023.
- **GNL Holiday Party.** This member only party will be held at the Fred Heutte Center Sunday, December 17, 2023, 3pm to 5pm EST. We will have light refreshments, drinks, and entertainment. Let's close the year celebrating success, progress, and good health.