



Ghent Neighborhood League

Wednesday, March 17th 6:30PM
Zoom Virtual Meeting

I. Call to order and introductions at 6:30 PM

II. Guest Speakers

- **Safety Report** – Community Resource Officer Samantha Fentress
- **Mowbray Arch Utility Improvement Update**
 - Tiba Salim, Civil Engineer II, The City of Norfolk
- **Multimodal Transportation Plan Presentation**
 - Anna Dewey, City Planner 1, The City of Norfolk

III. Committee Reports

- Nominating Committee [Draft Ballot](#)
- Bylaw Committee (Click links to review DRAFT [Bylaws](#) and [Standing Rules](#))
- [Feb Cleanup Event Report](#)
- May 1 Cleanup Event
- Membership Renewals

IV. President's Updates

V. Approval of Minutes

VI. New Business/Announcements

Next Meeting: Next meeting is April 21st at 6:30PM.

News You Can Use

- [Downtown Norfolk Council's Fast Facts for March 15, 2021](#)
- Virginia Beach Master Gardeners are sponsoring a series of talks about urban gardening. [Click here for more info.](#)
- Puddles got you down? Let it all out by participating in the [GNL Flooding Survey](#).
- The City of Norfolk has launched a [new flood risk tool](#).
- Elections are coming up! [Click here to Join or Renew your GNL Membership.](#)
- Any issue with trash, neighborhood nuisances, or any city service should be reported to Norfolk Cares using one of the below channels.
 - [Request a Service using MyNorfolk website \(mynorfolk.org\) or app](#)
 - Call 757-664-6510

Ghent Neighborhood League Minutes

February 17, 2021

Next Meeting: March 17, 2021, 6:30 PM, Zoom

Special Guests:

Norfolk Emergency Shelter Team – Jordan R. N. Brown, FPC Nest and Urban Renewal Center Director

HRSD and City of Norfolk Water Billing, Edward G. Henifin, General Manager, HRSD

I. Call to order and introductions

President Jeremy McGee called the meeting to order at 6:31 pm. In addition to the guest speakers, he recognized Ghent Square Civic Association representatives.

Board members present: Catherine Kilduff, Nat McCormick, Paige Rose, Bob Kelly, Jean Webster, George Kello, Julie Findlay, Larry Brett, JR Montalvo

Absent: Karen Reynes

II. Safety Report – Community Resources Officer (CRO) Samantha Fentress

- The past month has been the coldest, and with that the highest number of stolen vehicles. The targets are businesses and fast-food drivers. Be mindful not to leave your valuables in sight.
- Still towing a lot of vehicles around Ghent in general. Please make sure your registrations are up-to-date.
- Bossevain and Colonial ongoing noise complaints; Officer Fentress alerted and asked to do additional patrols.

Guest Speakers:

III. Norfolk Emergency Shelter Team

Jordan R. N. Brown, FPC Nest and Urban Renewal Center Director

- Mr. Brown showed us the shelter using his camera. There is social distancing, no congregating, and bipolar ionization in the air filter system (hospital grade) to prevent COVID.
- He is the chief facilitator for the NEST shelter.
- On average, they are holding 45 people – the capacity for COVID. On extremely cold nights, can extend it to 55.
- There is donated food, letters, snacks to make folks feel welcome and loved.
- Concerns include inventory of things they need (hand sanitizer, masks, gloves). They need masks all the time.
- They need volunteers from Feb. 24 to March 16. They have been extending the dates because FPC can hold the most people. Partner organizations could only hold about 25.

- Volunteers can do check-in in evenings, overnight positions, or morning cleaning and check-out.
- Email: jordan@theurcnorfolk.com

IV. HRSD and City of Norfolk Water Billing

Edward G. Henifin, General Manager, HRSD

- Mr. Henifin is not with the City, but with Hampton Roads Sanitation District, which is the City's third party biller.
- HRSD treats the sewage for the region. Several decades ago, the City realized that HRSD was billing the same people as the City, so now contracts out the billing.
- The City reads the water meter and sends information to HRSD.
- HRSD was attacked by ransomware, which took all of the systems down. HRSD was able to restore the systems from backup, without having to pay the ransom.
- The final forensic investigation indicates no personal information was taken. HRSD doesn't maintain personal information, it is contained all in a third-party billing account.
- It took about three weeks to recover, with no bills in between. December 17 was the first bill, which included higher charges. HRSD set up a call center for additional call volume.
- Another piece of delay is the post office, which struggled in December and early January. This caused some delay in getting payments processed.
- The City might send HRSD with a bad meter read. Numbers can be transposed, for example.
- Other times there may be a major leak or a running toilet. That can cause a big water bill. At that time, look around the house, find a leak, and then let the City know. If you have the plumber verify that there was a repair, the City will adjust the consumption and HRSD follows that as well.
- Has the price of water changed in the past year or so? Not sure, would have to ask the City. HRSD waived the annual sewage fee increase in July due to COVID.
- The City of Norfolk sets the stormwater fee based on impervious area. Residential fee is set by the City based on the average residential property. If you have a commercial property, you have a fee based on area and any credits based on on-site treatment. It may be prorated based on days in the month or billing cycle.
- Meter upgrades are likely in the works to allow remotely reading the meters and automated reading. Eventually you would be able to log in to watch your water usage in real-time.

V. President's Report:

- Membership renewals: Please look for emails for renewal, that will link back to the GNL website for payment.
- Upcoming Officer Elections: We have a nominating committee of Karen, JR, Paige, Bob, and Julie. All officer positions are up for a vote, and two general board positions.
- By-Law Updates: Expect to see a draft at the March meeting. There will be a process to provide input and vote.

VI. Committee Updates

- Community Improvement, Paige Rose: We have the February cleanup this weekend, Sunday from 1 to 3 pm. Meet in front of Blair Middle School, Sunday, 1 pm. The area between Colley and Hampton Blvd, 21st St and Maury. There will be five to six teams. All participants will get a trash bag, gloves, and some tools to pick up trash and clean out storm drains. Sign up on the GNL website.
- Flood Mitigation: Please participate in the survey to prioritize mitigation actions. The link is in the meeting agenda, in the February newsletter, and can be found on the GNL website.
- Communications: Newsletter was sent to members this month. GNL is maintaining its website and posting on Facebook regularly.
- Project review: Please act proactively and touch base with GNL to get help through the process of approval in the historic district.
- Membership: If for some reason you don't get an email, please look for the renewal on the website.
- Trees committee: (1) Norfolk Master Gardeners has been conducting master classes, virtually. Most recently, best perennials and plans for this area were covered. The City of Norfolk has a video on "How to Plant a Tree." It was filmed during GNL's tree planting event in October. (2) George Kello reported that the 700 block of Colonial Ave was barren of trees and suggested getting together with the City to prioritize planting some trees there. Also, he reported that a newly planted tree (on the 700 block of 20th Street) had been struck by a car and needed replacing.

VII. Approval of Minutes

- The January 20, 2021 membership meeting and Board meeting minutes (1/24 and 2/15) were approved by voice vote.

VIII. New Business

- In response to an inquiry about the by-laws, Tim Dorsey said that GNL is registered with the state as a non-stock corporation rather than a non-profit, which does not matter for tax

purposes because the GNL has little income. It is registered with the IRS as a 501(c)(4) for purposes of outreach and education. These designations will not change.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:15 pm.

GHENT NEIGHBORHOOD LEAGUE DRAFT BALLOT FOR 2021/22

OFFICERS

PRESIDENT: **Jeremy McGee**
FIRST VICE PRESIDENT: **Jean Webster**
SECOND VICE PRESIDENT: **JR Montalvo**
TREASURER: **Larry Brett**
SECRETARY: **Tim Dorsey**

GENERAL BOARD MEMBERS*

Stan Howard

Tommy Leeman

Nat McCormick

* These are two year terms

February 21, 2021 Cleanup Event Report

Event Date: Sunday, 2-21-21

Participants: 52 total (40 adults/ 12 Children under 18 yrs of age)

of white trash bags collected: 52

KNB "estimated weight" of trash removed: 780 lbs (52 x 15 lbs per bag)

Quadrant cleaned: Colley Ave./ 21st Street / Hampton Blvd./ Maury Avenue

Seven Teams worked 1.5 hours:

Robert Roman Team: 12 bags collected (Hampton Blvd/ Woodrow /Azalea and 21st st),

Tom Cannones / Jennifer McDoald Team: 10 bags collected (21st Street / Colley Ave)

All other teams worked hard and collected between 4 - 8 bags each

-- CONGRATS TO ALL TEAMS!

Great job to ALL participants who invested their time to make Ghent a much cleaner (approx 780 lbs worth) place for all!