Ghent Neighborhood League

Wednesday, April 20th 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
   • Keeping History Above Water Update – Kayla Halberg, Norfolk Preservation Collective
   • Recycling – Michael Benedetto, President of TFC Recycling
   • Composting – Erin and Jason Edelman

III. Committee Reports
   • Project Review
   • Light the Night Update
   • Nominating Committee

IV. Approval of Minutes

V. New Business/Announcements

Next Meeting:  
Next meeting is May 18th at 6:30PM

News You Can Use

- Webinar on enhancing stormwater management through tree selection on Tuesday April 19, 2022 at 1PM ET. Pre registration is required.
- Crepe Myrtle pruning tips from the City Arborist can be seen here.
- 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
Board Members Present: Jeremy McGee, Tim Dorsey, Bob Kelly, Larry Brett, Julie Findlay, Jean Webster, Nat McCormick, Paige Rose, Stan Howard
Absent: JR Montalvo

I. Call to order

The meeting was called to order by Jeremy McGee at 6:31 p.m.

II. Guest Speakers

- **Safety Report** – Community Resource Officer Samantha Fentress

  Improvement in Ghent generally. 14 incidents in last 15 days. Very good statistics Jan to Feb, averaged 25 incidents in same period of time.

  Recent incidents:
  - Robbery at 1713 Colley Ave today
  - 1 burglary 600 Redgate Ave in Feb
  - 2 vehicle thefts: 1 vehicle theft (key left inside), recovered 2 days later. 1 motorcycle theft, possibly thrown onto a trailer.

  Biggest issue is people leaving items in vehicles on 21st street, typically while eating.

- **Tree Canopy Preservation** – Steve Patton, Jr., Bureau Manager of Parks and Forestry Operations, City of Norfolk

  Steve Patton provided an overview of the City’s Forestry Services. A few highlights include:
  - City owns/runs a nursery
  - City grows its own trees
  - Maintains over 80,000 street trees
  - Last year:
    - Pruned over 1400 trees
    - Harvested 810 trees in the city nursery
    - 2 free tree give away events
    - 45,000 cubic yards of wood waste processed into mulch for reutilization
    - 7 volunteer events where Norfolk Master Gardeners supported forestry by raining citizens to prune crape myrtles for sprout removal and street clearance
  - City Forester enforces City Forestry Code, to protect trees and encourage best practices.
  - Removal of tree at 902 Colonial Ave: it had more than 30% crown dieback. After inspection, it was determined that the tree could not realistically sustain itself. This was the consensus of 3 ISA certified arborists. This tree had been actively monitored and worked by the City Forestry
team for a number of years. Records date back to 2014, but maintenance pre-date that timeframe.

- Forestry operates on a priority level (e.g., trees that pose an immediate risk to public safety have highest priorities).
- MyNorfolk website can be used to notify the City team regarding tree issues.

Several residents questioned whether the community could be part of the decision-making process concerning tree removal, or at least notified in advance of tree removal. Mr. Patton described some of the administrative burdens that would be implicated with such advance coordination.

III. Committee Reports

- Nominations Committee Update

Officer positions are 1-year term. Here are the nominees recommended by the Nominating Committee:

President – Karen Reynes
1st Vice President – Jean Webster
2nd Vice President – Julie Findlay
Treasurer – Robert Kelly
Secretary – Timothy Dorsey

In addition, there are four Board of Director positions open: three are regular 2-year terms, and one is for an unexpired 1-year term due to a Board vacancy. Here are the nominees recommended by the Nominating Committee:

Will Carruth
Jason Edelman
Paige Rose
Scott Shephard
Ashley Swindell
Willie Ward

Tim Dorsey made the following

MOTION: For the 2022 GNL election cycle, the Board seat for the vacant unexpired 1-year term shall be filled by the candidate for a Board seat with the fourth-most votes. Should there be more than one candidate with the same number of votes in fourth place, then the unexpired 1-year term shall be filled by a drawing administered by the President from among such persons in fourth place.

The motion seconded was passed unanimously.

Jeremy McGee then asked whether there were any additional nominations from the floor for any of the open positions. None were received.

Additional nominations will be accepted until close of business on April 1, 2022. They may be made by email at nominate@ghentneighborhoodleague.org and snail mail at P.O. Box 11431, Norfolk, Virginia 23517.
- **Light the Night Event**

  To identify streetlights that are not working or not working properly, the GNL will host a “Light the Night” event on April 1st starting at 7:30 pm. The GBA will participate. Volunteers will walk down designated streets and record the bad streetlights. Forms will be provided and team captains will gather the forms. All data will be provided to Dominion Power for action/repair.

  The Light the Night event will be followed by a social event at a local establishment.

  April 15th will be the rain date.

- **Ghent Farmer’s Market**

  Returns April 1st from 3-7 PM

- **Historic District Street Signs**

  “Ghent Historic District” and “Freemason Historic District” street signs have been proposed. If approved, funding must be identified.

- **Membership Renewal Update**

  Be on the lookout for GNL Membership Renewal emails going out now. All renewals must be completed by April 1 in order to vote for officers in mid-April.

**IV. Approval of Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting of February 16, 2022, were approved unanimously.

**V. New Business/Announcements**

Engage Norfolk at Scope this weekend. Starts at 11:00 a.m. on Saturday. See EngageNorfolk.com for details.

**Next Membership Meeting:** Wednesday April 20, 2022, 6:30 PM. Location: TBD.

The meeting adjourned at 7:26 p.m.