

MINUTES OF THE JANUARY 24, 2022
SEWANEE COMMUNITY COUNCIL MEETING

Community Council Meeting was held in person in January with an option to participate online via Zoom.

Members present: Nancy Berner, Kate Reed, Eric Keen, John Solomon, Karen Singer, Spike Hosch, Pam Byerly, Lynn Stubblefield, Sarah Hess, and June Weber

Members via Zoom: Scott Wilson, Phil White, Bruce Manuel, Sallie Green, and Bill Harper

Absent: Anna Palmer, Shirley Taylor, and Grace Storelli

Minutes taken by: Carey Fulmer

Meeting called to order at 7:12 p.m. (delay due to unlocking center doors)

(1) Approval of the October Minutes

October minutes were approved as circulated.

(2) Vice Chancellor Transition and Work of the Council – Nancy Berner

Nancy introduced and welcomed Scott Wilson to the Community Council as Acting Provost and explained her new role as Acting Vice Chancellor. Nancy expressed her appreciation to the Council and her desire to continue healthy working relationships with the Council in her new role.

(3) Safety Concerns Regarding the 41A/University Avenue Intersection – Lynn Stubblefield

Lynn opened the discussion of community concerns in relation to the safety of the construction project of the narrowing of the 41A and the 41A/University Avenue intersection. Concerns were brought to the Council from downtown business owners and local residents and these concerns are summarized as:

- Dangers to motorists due to speeding on 41A and in the downtown area
- Loss of business due to the construction
- Visibility
- Concerns of the necessity of this project
- Issues with deliveries to local business and the delivery trucks blocking access on Reed's Lane
- Lack of police presence to deter violations of traffic laws
- Negligence from contractors for the project halting progress and leaving construction site in a unsafe standing with no oversight of safety concerns
- Dangers to pedestrians through the intersection

Karen Singer with Facilities Management explained that Sewanee is not a municipality and does not have taxpayer funding in order to have more of a presence to maintain parking lots and/or oversee the construction project and there is currently no funding for Facilities to maintain the downtown area.

David Shipps, Vice President, Economic Development & Community Relations, addressed the audience r the concerns presented regarding the active worksite and confirmed that he along with the whole

community was ready for this project to be completed. The date of completion for this project is May 2022 and even though there have been idle time by the contractors on this site, he reminded the Council that this project extends to Monteagle, and as long as the contractors complete the project by the agreed time, there was little that could be done to rush the project in order to minimize the disruption to the downtown area. A few specific observation in response to the concerns presented are:

- TDOT has a specific involvement in the project that may not align with our views
- Speeding is 100% a law enforcement issue
- County and state policy have been notified regarding the speeding issue and have been onsite to monitor
- The rationale of the project is to create a more hospitable environment to allow for development on either side of 41A and to create more of a presence commercially and residentially on either side
- End result of this project will be 10 feet of sidewalks and 10 feet of grass on both sides for the length of the project
- Studies have been completed by TDOT on the intersection of 41A and University Avenue and results are that the intersection does not warrant more than a blinking caution light. It's possible that this study can be revisited and confirmed that this is still accurate.

Discussions were presented regarding the reasoning for why the roundabout in this intersection was tabled by TDOT.

David invited any concerns to be presented either individually or by collaboration with David and he will combine the concerns and present them to TDOT. Contact information for TDOT Rae Anne Bradley is:

Rae Anne Bradley
TDOT Region 2 Community Relations Officer (media)
Phone: 423.510.1164
Email: Rae-Anne.Bradley@tn.gov

(4) Lease Office Update – Sallie Green

Sallie Green gave an annual update from the Lease Office on sales and new construction for 2021. In 2021, 34 leaseholds were sold. The breakdown of these sales are:

32 residential
2 commercial
18 residential leaseholds were sold to employees
14 to non-employees
27 of the 32 residential leaseholds were full time community members
5 of 32 were non-primary residents
3 new constructions

Sallie also advised the Council that April 2 is the proposed date for Community Cleanup. Any questions should be sent to Mary Priestley or Phil White.

(5) Grants Update – Kate Reed

Kate provided an update on moving forward from COVID-19 emergency grants process. The current balance for the Sewanee Community Funding project is 11,643. A new form to request funding will be available on the Lease Office's website on the Community Council tab. The committee will meet prior to the next Community Council meeting to present proposals to the Council for approval.

Kate introduced council member, Eric Keen to advise the Council of an emergency request for funding received to bring before the Council for approval. The request is from Trae Moore, President of the Sewanee Community Center to replace the center's HVAC which recently failed. The Sewanee Community Center has been affected by Covid-19 due to being shut down, so their funding is down from the recent closures and lack of incoming revenue. The Community Center is allocating \$2,500 and \$3,000 has been raised by the center's supporters to cover a portion of the cost of the replacement, and Trae requested the Council to consider covering the remaining amount of \$4,000 to replace the gas HVAC and install new duct work.

Nancy Berner explained the normal process of requesting funding for the Sewanee Community Funding Project and allowed the Council to move that this request be expedited due to the necessity of the replacement and the availability of funds from the Sewanee Community Funding Project. The Council voted to approve to allow this emergency funding process request for the Community Center and the proposal was approved by the Community Council in the amount of \$4,000 to pay for the replacement of the HVAC system for the Sewanee Community Center.

(6) Second Reading of Revised Constitution Related to Expanded Voting Districts and Vote on Changes – Nancy Berner

The revised constitution to allow the expansion of voting districts to include all of 37375 was circulated in the agenda prior to the meeting was passed on the second reading.

(7) Special Election Update – Lynn Stubblefield

Lynn Stubblefield spoke regarding the recent open seat on the Community Council vacated by Mary Priestley in District 4 and the process to elect a candidate to fill this seat. The petition form will be available in the Lease Office and should be completed and returned to Tabatha Whitsett in the Provost's Office by noon on Thursday, February 3. Ten signatures of registered voters will be required on the petition form of residents within District 4 confirming support of the candidate for Community Council in this area.

If only one candidate expresses interest by completing a petition to serve in District 4, they will be brought to the Council for approval to serve in this capacity. If more than one candidate wishes to serve on the Community Council for District 4, a special election will be held and votes can be cast at the Lease Office during a specified time.

(8) Request Volunteer for Agenda Committee – Nancy Berner

Nancy requested a volunteer to serve on the agenda committee. This commitment is for a 3 year term with a member cycling off once every year. Current members include John Solomon and Eric Keen. Shirley Taylor is cycling off this year so a new volunteer is requested. There were no volunteers offered at the

meeting, but Tabatha Whitsett will circulate an email requesting volunteers for the Agenda Committee following the meeting.

Tabatha announced via email following the meeting that Bill Harper had volunteered to serve on the agenda committee.

(9) Announcements and/or Questions

Nancy Berner provided an update to the cell tower that the tower is now complete and Verizon is ready to install equipment once it arrives and the expected date is early February.

Nancy opened the floor for any announcements or questions.

Meeting adjourned at 8:23 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Carey Fulmer