

**Foggy Bottom Association
Minutes of Meeting of Board of Directors
June 1, 2021 at 7 PM via Zoom**

President John George called the Online meeting to order at 7:08 PM.

Attendance:

Present Board Members: John George, Christina Farnsworth, Julia Gustafson (left at 8:58 pm, returned at 9:19 pm), Peter Maye, Jennifer Schaus, Mary Ellen Signorille, Denise Vogt

Absent Board Members: Eileen Carey

Approval of May BOD Minutes

There was a discussion of the May 4, 2021 minutes. Peter Maye moved to accept the May 2021 meeting minutes, and Julia Gustafson seconded the motion. The Board approved the motion unanimously.

President's Report – JPG

President George welcomed the FBA's new Board member Jennifer Schaus.

Top community topics in May:

- Homeless Encampments – This has been a significant source of discussion from community members. The Board spent a significant amount of time discussing possible next steps. All Board members agreed that there were no quick answers. President George wants to work with Councilwoman Pinto's office on this issue.
Christina Farnsworth noted the increase in the number of tents and the expansion of placement. Julia Gustafson suggested working with the owners of hotels with low occupancy rates, especially on New York Avenue. She suggested working with other local associations and then come up with recommendations for the DC Council. President George suggested it would be helpful to know where and how the allocated budget money is being used. President George wants to understand what is happening in our neighborhood and how the city is addressing these issues.
- GWU Off-Campus Student Population/exemptions. President George stated that he spoke to GWU officials about the increase in exemptions and the impact on the neighborhood.
- GWU Student Off-Campus behavior. Peter Maye suggested a neighborhood task force; one idea would be to include students on the task force. Julia Gustafson suggested that we ask Brooke Pinto about the possibility of amending the legislative code so that if there are a set number of complaints, then a landlord cannot obtain a business license. President George stated that if a

student is living off campus s/he must take a training course. GWU, students and community must work together to resolve this problem.

- Non-Permitted Construction to renovate homes in historic district. What happens if a house is not up to code and rented to students? The onus is on the community versus the students. Two houses on Queen Anne's Lane were having work done without any permit and DCRA issued a stop work order. Peter Maye asked what happens if there is a permit, but then the work is not within the scope of the permit; what are the consequences and is the permit still viable.

FBA Newsletter– President George that there has been tremendous support on the revised newsletter. Donations to the Garden Committee have increased substantially.

Arts in Foggy Bottom Exhibit Launch on Saturday, June 5, 2021.

GWU President LeBlanc Status. He will leave at the end of school year 2022.

Vacant/Blighted Houses. 2505 I Street had significant back real estate taxes but these have been paid; 2507 I Street is being renovated with an elevator and theatre room. FBA has contacts at DCRA if there are other vacated/blighted houses.

26th and I Streets water source has been delayed. A project usually takes 8 to 9 weeks after no-parking signs go up; such signs have been posted recently. However, DC Water is reexamining the plans.

26th Street Dog Park renovation is at a standstill. The person who was going to work on it is no longer responding to emails. The purpose of the renovation is to fix drainage and then put down rubber chips.

Kids Park. Parents and others are doing work on the park to maintain it. Peter Maye made a pitch for additional volunteers.

Policy/Procedure for Charitable Giving (Tabled)

Board Agenda Items

Julia – L Street Construction between 20th and 21st Street NW. ANC Commissioner Jeri Epstein said it was not on anyone's agenda

Denise – Checking Permit Violations with DCRA. President George contacted DCRA to understand the permitting process and changes in use from original permit. The Board discussed construction encroaching on alleyways and the safety issues that this raises.

Jennifer – City Trash Containers. Jennifer Schaus stated that many trash cans are overflowing and suggested a different type of trash can. President George suggested making a complaint and also notifying the FBA contact.

Treasurer's Report –

President George stated that he would forward the May financial reports to the Board.

Mary Ellen Signorille will be checking PO Box from June until September while President George is out of the city.

Membership Report

- Mary Ellen Signorille reported on membership status. As of May 31, 2021, there are 217 current members (slight increase from last month) and 166 inactive members (deceased because of death or moved from Foggy Bottom.
- She reconfirmed the COVID extension until June 30, 2021 and she will send out another email to inactive members.
- MailChimp Special Guest List updated
- Membership list reconciliation (JPG/Mary Ellen) – Distribution list vs. Membership list
 - o All members are on the Distribution List
 - o Should only members receive Newsletter / Announcements? Over 150 people are receiving emails who are not members.

FBA VOTE

Mary Ellen Signorille moved that the newsletter should be distributed only to members and other related people within the President's discretion (e.g., ANC Commissioners). Julia Gustafson seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

- Member Benefits – Confirmation of Preferred Merchant Program by June 9th.
 - o Status of each
 - o Jennifer Schaus volunteered to establish an Excel sheet with the merchant's names.
- Tabled to Later - Discuss, confirm by vote the change in memberships due dates – anniversary date or aligned with calendar year – To Be Discussed at a later meeting

Technology

- Technology Roadmap – still under development
- FBA Board emails – Still in progress
- FBA Cloud Storage – Still in progress

Communications

- Discuss FBA Newsletter
 - o Physical Distribution – Eileen
 - o Working on posting newsletter to website but there will be a delay.

- Christina stated that perhaps we should consider a member-only section on the website.
- Data collection on all buildings (apartments and condos) – underway via volunteer
- Considerations for in-person or hybrid meetings in September/October/November? President George will reach out to GWU for space to do hybrid meetings.

Garden Committee Report – Peter / Denise

- Garden Committee Activities
 - May activities. Denise planted the whole historic district. Hoping that the “water fairies” (owners where plantings are newly planted) continue to water the new plantings.
 - Expansion of volunteer team
 - June Planned activities
 - Tree-Box Fencing. Jennifer asked whether there was a matching program or other public/private partnerships for the tree-box fencing. Denise did describe a matching program for DC residents (DOEE – Riversmart) where there is a run-off / water problem. Denise and Jennifer will continue to work on the matching program idea.
 - The Boathouse Cooling Tower. The Boathouse claimed that it met the noise limits. DCRA redid the noise test and the Boathouse was fined for being over the decibel limits. It is working on barriers to reduce the noise. Noise cannot go beyond the property line.

Arts in Foggy Bottom – Peter

- Status of Exhibit – Installation was complete on May 22
- Exhibit Launch is on Saturday June 5

FB/WE Infrastructure – JPG

- Community Dumpster – Sponsored by Pam Brie
 - Timeline for permits did not work. The FBA is planning for May 2022.
 - Another alternative is to have public works do a bulk pick up.

FB History – Denise

- History Project Update – Status of outline and roadmap
- Denise Vogt stated that she is waiting for website to be built out so information can be posted.
Kevin Days of GWU let FBA representatives into the Waggaman building. John Kelly of the Washington Post posted a column about the building and its planned destruction. [https://www.washingtonpost.com/local/gw-foggy-bottom-history/2021/06/01/b39b6bac-c2f2-11eb-93f5-ee9558eef4b_story.html?outputType=amp]

FBA Monthly Community Meetings – JPG

- June – Western Market / Mayor’s Office (to discuss the budget)
 - o Julia Gustafson’s mother is on the NCFPA/Kennedy Center Circles Board and she will ask her if there is a possibility of the Center speaking on its upcoming season.
- July – No Meeting
- August – No Meeting
- September – Trader Joe’s Anniversary. Perhaps discuss history and backstory including neighborhood’s participation in bringing TJ’s to Foggy Bottom. Denise Vogt will contact Ron Cocome about his involvement in the project.

Other Announcements / Upcoming Events

- ANC2A Meeting – Wednesday June 16, 2021
- FBA June Community Meeting – Tuesday June 29, 2021
- FBA July BOD Meeting – Tuesday July 6, 2021

Action Items

- Denise Vogt will examine Georgetown University’s code of conduct including providing a rental certificate and will determine if it can be applied to GWU.
- President George will make an announcement in newsletter that newsletter will be distributed to only members.
- President George will work on a timeline to upload the meeting minutes to the website.
- President George will address the definition of a “nuisance” house, including noise levels.
- Denise Vogt will contact Ron Cocome about his involvement in the project.

The Board agreed to hold its next meeting on **July 6, 2021** at 7pm via ZOOM.

Commented [MES1]: TBD by email

The meeting was adjourned at 9:26 pm.

Submitted by Mary Ellen Signorille, FBA Secretary

Chat

From iPad to Everyone: 07:51 PM

Raj and Anji (landlords of several houses in historic) would be very interested in being part of this discussion. We briefly spoke today about these issues. They have been successful in reeling their renters.