



Website: <http://www.oakwoodheightshoa.org>
 FaceBook: Oakwood Heights Homeowners Association
 NextDoor: Oakwood Heights

MEETING AGENDA AND MINUTES – 11/3/19

Meeting Information			
Start Time:	4:00 PM		Facilitator(s):
End Time:	5:30 PM		Axel Ebermann
Minutes Taker:			
Lyndia Hayden			
Meeting Attendees			
Dan Aronson	Axel Ebermann	Melanie Martin	Guests: Mount Vernon Board of Ethics
Wendy Attipoe	Lyndia Hayden	Hysa Moultrie	Nicole Lucia, Chairperson
Jacqueline Brathwaite	Randall Hayden	Hector Pascal	John Caruso, Vice-Chair
Andre Butler	Hazel Hunt	Jenny Toomey	Greg Cannata, Secretary
Yvonne Butler	Joyce Lin	Marlene Wertheim	
Marvin Church	Jean-Benoit Le Luduec	Zaman (Roy) Wilson	
		Steve Young	
Topics	Discussion highlights		
Special Guest, Mount Vernon Board of Ethics (BOE)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Below is a summary of the discussions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Website: https://mvnyboardofethics.org/ ○ Independent (non-bias and non-political) group appointed by the City Council (2-year cycles) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Nicole Lucio – Chairperson (3rd year); background in money laundering investigations ▪ John Caruso – Vice Chair (3rd year); digital entrepreneur ▪ Greg Cannata – Secretary (3rd year); attorney ▪ Pamela Gordon – Treasurer (3rd year) ○ Required to sign non-disclosure agreements (NDA) due to the confidential nature of the cases. Some investigations can take months. ○ Meetings held on Mondays at 7pm; if matters are confidential, the public cannot attend ○ Differs from Inspector General’s broad authority ○ Do not need permission from City Council, nor does the BOE have to keep the City Council informed during the investigative process. They are, however, obligated to give a report and recommendations to the City Council. BOE does not have control whether the report is accessible to the public. ○ Limited donations of \$250 to candidates; BOE must recuse themselves if conflicts of interest arises ○ Can levy fines for violations (up to \$5k) 		



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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Solicit information, give testimony, produce documents <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Request Financial Disclosure Statements from ~45 City Officials, which is required by NYS, regarding conflicts of interest, source of income, gifts, debts, etc. ▪ Filed and won a suit against former Mayor Thomas to pay \$5k for failure to cure reported discrepancies; Supreme Court’s decision sided with BOE ▪ Recently submitted revised form to City Council to change the penalty for false statements from a misdemeanor to a felony (additional penalties could be set when sworn under oath to a licensed Notary Public) ▪ Significant progress in last few months with Mayor Wallace as a strong supporter ○ Recently given subpoena power (expires in August 2020). Other municipalities have this power without an expiration, but City Council wanted to limit it due to previous abuse of power with former BOE members. If this power is not extended, community support will be requested at public hearings. ○ Board was dormant for many years, but has been active for the last 3 years ○ There are 3 open positions. Interested parties can apply on the website listed below or submit a Letter of Interest to the City Council. There are also opening for ad-hoc temporary positions available. Interview required and NDA must be signed. ○ Goals and policies in the City Charter are vague - rules and guidelines are being developed ○ BOE is currently working on a budget (~\$10k). Currently, John’s firm absorbs some of the expenses. <p>If you have questions or would like to report an issue, you can direct a letter to the Board and leave it with the City Clerk or you can send an email to Contact@MVNYBoardofEthics.org. If the case is selected for investigation, a formal acknowledgment will be delivered.</p>
<p>Membership Fees</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual membership fee of \$25 per family is due. Reminded everyone that there are several methods for payment: cash is accepted at the meetings, payment can be given to Lyndia or Axel, or you can mail a check to the following: Oakwood Heights Homeowners Association Attention: Dan Aronson, Treasurer 490 East Prospect Avenue Mount Vernon, NY 10553 • Fees are collected for planned events that may require insurance (block party with Fire Dept truck and bouncy house), to purchase a welcome sign or other activities that assist in building the Oakwood Heights brand
<p>Financial Accounting</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • See attached for the expenses and balance



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Officer Vote	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Axel was re-elected as President • Jane Curtis was elected as Vice President • Dan Aronson was re-elected as Treasurer • Lyndia Hayden was re-elected as Secretary
Meetings with Mayor Wallace	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All acknowledged that Tues/Thurs meetings with the Community was a step in the right direction, but more work is required on a consistent basis. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Trees were trimmed in the neighborhood ○ Parking during the day at the corner of Columbus and Lorraine has improved, but it is inconsistent; a safety hazard still exists at night ○ Access road behind Esplanade is still neglected and needs TLC – request is to resurface with gravel before winter and add lighting (must be negotiated with State Senators and NYS Power Authority (NYPA)) ○ Increase police presence at stop signs that are ignored • Negotiating program with Ring Security cameras and working with the community to share info
Zoning Violations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A realtor disclosed that 321 East Sidney Avenue (on corner near Board of Ed) is under construction to become a 20-room homeless shelter. A stop order was issued because the zoning has not changed and a Cert of Occupancy was not provided by Fire Dept. Wendy and Roy will contact Darryl Selsey, who heads the Planning Board. • There are many violations in Oakwood Heights due to the appointment of only one (1) Building Inspector. This will be a topic of discussion with City Hall.
Tree Care/ Maintenance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Marlene will elaborate on this topic at the next meeting. She is attending a conference this Friday at Pace University to discuss environmental issues (see attached flyer). One of the topics will be Citizen Tree Ordinance. The panel discussion will include an educational component on how to maintain our beautiful trees. • It was noted that special care is required to replant trees on Esplanade around the pipeline
Proposed topics or guest speakers for future meetings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mount Vernon Hospital – continued efforts to stop closure • Invite Police Department to discuss the following topics <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Recent burglaries and car thefts ○ Parking Permits/Residential Stickers to eliminate usage of homeowner parking spaces by co-ops ○ Safety issues with speeding cars
Next Meeting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TBD