



MEDFORD NEIGHBORHOOD SERVICES ADVISORY COUNCIL

OFFICIAL MEETING MINUTES - FEBRUARY 4, 2015 MEETING

Presented for Approval Wednesday, April 1, 2015

(The March 2015 Meeting was cancelled due to snow closure of the township facilities)

The February NSAC meeting was called to order at 7:11 pm with a quorum and the following 13 members and 4 guests present: Chairman Thomas Corbi, Vice-Chairman James Geiger, Executive Secretary Wendy McBair, Medford Township Liaison Beth Portocalis, Paul Celia, Steven Conger, EDC ex-officio Lauren Kochan,, Heidi Krihak, Chief of Police Richard Meder, Reverend Joseph Monahan, Colleen Stover, Robert Wagner, and Tom Wright. Present members absent were Mayor Charles Watson, Peter Cohen, James Juliano, William Mead, and Bridget O’Hanlon. Guests in attendance were Tom Juliano and Marty Dunleavy - MYAA, Lora Kline - Chairperson for Senior Citizens Group, and business owner Larry MacDonald - Hartford Crossing Bike Shop.

MINUTES

The agenda and minutes from the January 2015 meeting were distributed, reviewed and approved as submitted with no corrections or revisions.

OFFICIAL ACTIONS

Chairman Corbi announced that Township Liaison Beth Portocalis would be leading the swearing in ceremony for all members of NSAC. The Oath of Office was read and members pledged this intent to perform all of the duties designated as a member of this council. Each Oath of Office was signed, sealed, and officially submitted to the Township.

WELCOMES & INTRODUCTIONS

Guests attending the meeting were afforded the opportunity to introduce themselves.

Lora Kline is the newly appointed Chair for the Coordinating Council for the Senior Citizens. She thanked NSAC for their support noting the WiFi at Cranberry Hall and the new senior program booklet. Larry McDonald, the owner of the Hartford Crossing Bike Store, has been assisting with the Hartford Crossing mountain bike trail, cross county pedestrian and biking trails in Burlington County, and in Freedom Park. Beth Portocalis noted that a grant from the State may be available to build off road trails to Medford Village, however this would need Pinelands clearance. She also noted that Engineer Michelle Taylor, who is helping with the Route 70 corridor plan, is also working on a plan to see what areas and trails can best be connected, how and where. Funds may be greatly reduced by the State due to recently identified needs for bridge and road repair. MYASA representatives Marty Dunleavy and Tom Juliano arrived following introductions.

Mr. Corbi stated that most of the old business items will be covered in the New Business Section, and this will also allow all attendees and members to discuss ideas for the 2015 NSAC plans during a “Round Robin” session. The purpose for tonight’s discussion is to begin the mobilizing the ideas and suggestions from last month’s meeting.

NEW BUSINESS— SCCC INITIATIVE ACTIVITIES & VISIONS

Vice Chairman James Geiger asked all to present their response to the question, “*What would you like to see accomplished by the NSAC in this coming calendar year?*”

In addition to leading the discussion, Mr. Geiger would like to see the following accomplished;

- Make sure that some visibility is provided to NSAC projects already completed
- Discuss and develop avenues to help with projects presently underway, and in the future, in order to encourage participation/cooperation from others. This would apply to the Safe and Clean Communities Initiative, the bicycle trails, and MYAA clean up.

Larry MacDonald (guest) stated that he would like to work on projects that would help with:

- Connecting various neighborhoods with bicycle trails. He is aware that there are grants available, such as ones to fix bathrooms, that might be needed along the way of any trail.
- Continue with the Hartford Bike Trail Initiative

Colleen Stover recommended the following:

- Invite a member of the Medford Board of Education which might encourage more senior events with the schools. *(Mr Corbi announced that he and Mr. Geiger already have a scheduled a meeting with Dr. Joseph DelRossi, Superintendent of the Medford BOE, in two days)*
- Bring back the Medford Messenger, a publication that was sent to all homes in Medford.
- Meet with the editors of the newspapers, such as the Central Record. *(Mr. Corbi announced that he, Mr. Geiger, Ms. McBair already have scheduled a meeting with Susan Miller, editor of the Central Record, on Feb. 9th. Similar communications are also planned with the Medford Sun, Burlington County Times, and possibly the Courier Post.)*
- When Medford is financially more solvent, begin to again finance groups, such as the Art Center.

Tom Wright suggested the following:

- Form sub-committees to work on the many areas of the initiative
- Develop a senior newsletter to help them know the dates of upcoming activities and programs to help plan better. The new Senior brochure, presently in production, describes programs available to seniors. The inserts list the dates, times and locations

Beth Portocalis discussed the following:

- Continue to refine and better use both the new Medford Township website and NIXLE
- Support programs that would help high school students and citizens to obtain their needed community service hours. Establishing a subcommittee would be helpful.
- Re-instate the Medford Messenger, possibly financing the hard copy by selling ads; utilizing Bulk Mail rates for community wide mailing; and posting it on the Township website.

Lora Kline (guest) suggested the following:

- Institute a welcome committee to support new seniors attending programs. This might include a buddy system, a hospitality committee and brochure
- Re instate the Medford Messenger
- Develop a Senior Day with Business Association which might include a senior day, one day a month providing discounts at all Medford businesses
- Work with the Medford Women's Club to develop an orientation package for seniors and magnet

Lauren Kochan discussed the following:

- Increase the use of technology for improved communication
- Make sure technology is a comprehensive part of all projects

Rev. Joe Monahan

- Grow the minister's group meeting participants. Members now include the minister of the Lord of Life Lutheran Church, and St. Mary's of the Lake Catholic Church, and the Medford Methodist Church.
- Support communications from NSAC to the congregations and other congregations
- Partner with schools – Looking for conceptual directions
- Continue to work on communication related to emergency preparedness of churches for community issues

Chief Meder's concerns included:

- Enhancing communication about the police department to the public about the department's many activities
- Publication and communication about police department's programs, such as the following;
 - *Operation Santa*
 - *Coffee with the Cops*
 - *Ice Cream with the Cops*
 - *National Night Out*
 - *Turn in Your Medication Programs* – Legally this must be organized & sponsored by NJ Police Departments
- Engaging the homeowners in a co-op, utilizing existing private video surveillance equipment to aid in safety
- Support for the SCCC Initiative as needed
- Domestic, Drug, Substance, & other forms of Abuse *(formerly the dissolved Drug Alliance Committee)*

Robert Wagner stated the following:

- Students at Shawnee help with projects such as a Butterfly Garden
- Encourage NSAC to identify ideas for Shawnee and Boy Scout groups. Individual boy scouts need projects to earn their Eagle Scout and there are also County sponsored Boy Scout projects that many scout groups can work to accomplish

Heidi Krihak recommended the following:

- Continue the twice a year Student in Government Day (Date for Fall 2015 to be decided by Aug 1st)
- Continue to work on partnership/communication between NSAC and high school leadership
- Reminded senior group that they get a complimentary tickets to all high school plays
- Identify possible support for issues related to Domestic Violence, Physical & Mental Abuse, Sexual Assault, Substance Abuse. This were previously addressed by the discontinued Drug Alliance Committee which partnered with Medford Township, Police, and the Schools. She envisions help from churches, MHAA, MYAA, and other groups within the township.

Beth Portocalis stated that the former Drug Alliance Committee now officially be recognized as a component part of the NSAC. Wendy McBrair suggested that Chief Meder and Heidi plan part of a future meeting to help us learn more about the specific areas of concern and involvement in order to identify appropriate strategies.

Steve Conger stated that he want to learn more about the issues, ideas, and areas of concern, and to assist in whatever way he can.

Paul Celia listed the following priorities:

- Cleanliness of Township
- Create awareness of issues within Township including issues of integrity
- Beautification of Medford
- Help with Hartford Trails project
- Communication with Township including website expansion

Wendy McBrair stated her vision for MHAA in support of NSAC:

- Further identify HOA leaders and interested citizens that want to develop their homeowners' association. About 48 groups are represented in Medford Homeowners Associations Alliance.
- Provide a workshop in April 2015 on how to establish, organize, and operate a successful HOA
- Ask each HOA to choose at least one safe and/or clean project for their neighborhood/area to adopt

Marty Dunleavy and Tom Juliano were unable to contribute as they left to attend a second meeting.

James Juliano (*by email*) expressed the following suggestions;

- Present a "Value Based Directive" - not another environmental clean-up focus that has been worn out by communities over the last decade.
- Continue the concept of "Branding". Perhaps expanding the idea proposed of a caring community.
- Integrity First. Maybe *MEDFORD: Safe - Clean - Caring*
- Why not make Medford known for the quality of its residents? Why not make Medford stand for a community that lives with Integrity?

Virtually all in attendance contributed to this very well thought out and comprehensive outline for 2015 and the visions moving forward.

Vice Chair Geiger suggested that most of the recommendations fell into the following categories:

- Comprehensive Communication of all areas (*including branding and networking*)
- Understanding Police/Safety Issues and our Government's involvement
- Abuse Issues (Substance, Domestic Violence, Verbal and Sexual)
- Safe/Clean/Committed Community. One that cares for its people, its beauty, & its environment

At our next meeting we will establish sub committees and coordinate work in those groups. Members should come prepared to identify which area they would like to be assigned.

Chairman Corbi stated that this Council as a whole should begin now to work to change the methodology/ideology of Medford. Let everyone know we care. Remember that all change begins with a small group of thoughtful and committed individuals and that idea can change the course of history. We should expect to see the Township improving because of everyone's interest, integrity, and committed work. All these visions will require involvement by the citizens of Medford and support and enforcement by our local government.

The next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, March 4, 2015, 7 pm at Cranberry Hall.

After a very fruitful meeting, Vice Chairman James Geiger made a motion to adjourn and Steve Conger seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned by Chairman Thomas Corbi at 9:15P.

Respectfully submitted,

Wendy McBair, *NSAC Executive Secretary*

Special Note from the Chairman:

Every effort is made to hold our NSAC meetings to 2 hours, however this is simply a guide line rather than a hard and fast code. Serious issues require serious commitment and we do appreciate all schedule impacts as well as other areas of official and personal responsibilities. Making a difference and making each day count requires some latitude, and I appreciate all the efforts of those of you that do. Your presence should always be felt and known. — *TGC*