

## Tara-Leeway Heights Civic Association Meeting Minutes

November 13, 2024

- 1) The Tara-Leeway Heights Civic Association (TLHCA) held a virtual meeting by Zoom at 7:00 PM Wednesday, November 13, that included special leadership votes as well as updating of association documents.
- 2) Attendees: CA officers present were John Ford (President), Laura Stout (Vice-President), John Richardson (Secretary), and Irene Szopo (Treasurer). CA directors present were Bill Braswell, Dave McGowan, Eric Massant, Alyssa Cowden, and Sima Nasr. Others present were Jon and Oxana Ware, John Vihstadt, Tish Jenkins, Michael Flahive and wife, Judy Wall, Mary Ann (LNU), Kathy Mirro, and Stephanie Reed.
- 3) President's Remarks: John Ford provided an update on recent activities involving TLHCA:
  - a) Westover Day: The second annual Westover Day, held the afternoon of September 21 on the grounds of Cardinal School, was a great success. By some estimates, some 1,000 people showed up and took advantage of a variety of games, ice-cream, a musical group, and other entertainment, including a tour of Cardinal School. Other local civic associations (CAs) contributed to the planning, which is already underway for 2025. The CAs had more local business support than last year, which reduced CA financial contributions.
  - b) Virginia Hospital Center (VHC): VHC's substantial campus expansion over the past few years has generated tension with CAs (especially Tara Towne) that abut VHC and have suffered from noise and light issues in particular. After a number of meetings

among affected CAs and VHC staff, ground rules have been established for handling future issues via forums.

- c) Plan Langston Boulevard: The County has approved the Langston Blvd. Area Plan, a significant achievement. The Langston Blvd. Alliance has expressed interest in maintaining ties to area CAs. TLHCA will continue to monitor the issue.
  - d) Shopping Centers: If the planned merger of the Albertson and Kroger supermarket giants is approved, the Lee-Harrison Harris-Teeter will be replaced by a Piggly-Wiggly. The Westover Walgreen's drug store is expected to remain despite corporate turmoil. No other nearby developments were noted.
- 4) Elections: The President called for a resolution to approve an amendment to the TLHCA Constitution allowing for a special election for CA officers and directors. The resolution had been noticed to the Members in advance, per TLHCA requirements. The Members present approved the resolution unanimously with one abstention, and CA Secretary John Richardson oversaw a special election for CA officers and directors to bring the CA up-to-date before the May 2025 annual meeting. Criteria for election were being present at this meeting, being current with annual dues (\$10.00), and expressing a wish to be nominated. After nominations closed, the following individuals were elected unanimously as CA officers:
- Jon Ware, President
  - Laura Stout, Vice-President
  - John Richardson, Secretary
  - Irene Szopo, Treasurer

After nominations closed, the following individuals were elected unanimously as CA directors:

- Bill Braswell,
- Eric Massant

Alyssa Cowden

Sima Nasr

John Vihstadt

John Ford

The newly-elected president, Jon Ware, moved to approve a resolution (circulated in advance per CA requirements) to adopt changes in the TLHCA constitution and bylaws proposed by the constitution sub-committee. The motion was seconded and the resolution was approved unanimously, and the changes updating the TLHCA documents were adopted. Prior to adoption, Mr. Ware moved, was seconded, and was unanimously approved to amend the proposed documents, as follows:

- a) TLHCA lifetime dues are decreased from \$200 to \$150.
  - b) The number of officers/directors required to constitute a quorum at a board meeting is decreased from eight to six.
  - c) Each household has one Member vote, although additional Member status is available through payment of additional dues.
- 5) President's Remarks: Jon Ware expressed appreciation for having been elected President of TLHCA and briefly described his objectives:
- a) Build on TLHCA's successes through events like Westover Day
  - b) Continue to modernize TLHCA administration through improvements, e.g., the website, communications, and governing documents.
  - c) Grow THLCA through increased memberships and publicity.
- 6) General Discussion:
- a) Civic Federation Delegates: John Ford confirmed that TLHCA is entitled to four "Civ Fed" delegates and three alternate delegates. The newly adopted Constitution allocates one delegate position

to the CA president. After discussion, the Board unanimously voted the TLHCA Civ Fed delegates will be John Vihstadt, Bill Braswell, and John Ford; and alternate delegates will be Laura Stout, Eric Massant, and Dave McGowan.

- b) Dogs: Alyssa Cowden reported that despite regulations to the contrary, some let their dogs run free on Cardinal School grounds, which adjoin county property. It was agreed that better signage and discussion with other local CAs is the best starting-point for achieving better conduct with the dog-owners, before taking the issue to the county. The President authorized Alyssa Cowden to speak on behalf of the TLHCA Board in meetings with local CAs as well as school and county officials to those ends.
- c) “Dot Com” issue: It was reported that confusion has arisen over ownership of “tlhca.com,” since the official TLHCA address is tlhca.org. It was agreed that TLHCA will approach the owner of tlhca.com (a local realtor) to seek an agreeable solution to avoid public confusion.
- d) Tree Canopy: There was general discussion about the Arlington tree canopy, a source of concern to many residents. It was reported that the TLHCA neighborhood, however, is about the only area in Arlington that has not suffered loss of tree canopy since the last survey. It was reported that while the county requires replenishment of trees taken down, it also provides free replacement trees.
- e) New resident package: Michael Flahive agreed to take up the task of updating materials to provide to new residents who move to within the TLHCA.
- f) Next Meeting: Jon Ware expressed a desire to shift to more in person meetings; John Vihstadt noted other CAs have moved to a hybrid approach post-pandemic (some virtual, some in-person). This was generally favored by the Members.

- g) Newsletter: John Ford reported that the standard practice has been to send out a digital newsletter at Christmas to our mailing list and a hard-copy version delivered to every household before the annual meeting in May. Copy subjects were raised and discussed. Mr. Ford said that a series on local businesses by John Richardson had been well received. John Vihstadt suggested an article about part or all of the new county auditor, as well as transit issues for seniors and Arlington County housing grants for seniors. It was suggested to add a link for the Civic Federation to the TLHCA website, as well as to solicit newsletter articles written by school-age residents. It was agreed that the newsletter needs an editor, but there were no takers.
  - h) Street Lighting: Eric Massant raised the issue of weak street lighting near Patrick Henry Dr. and N. Illinois St. It was agreed that gaining additional resident support would be the best way to start a dialogue with the county.
  - i) The President expressed appreciation on behalf of TLHCA to John Ford for his leadership over six years with TLHCA.
- 7) Next Meeting: The next meeting will at 7:00 PM Wednesday, January 8, 2025. Place and type of meeting will be announced.
- 8) There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

John P. Richardson, Secretary