

Old Orchard Neighborhoods Association (OONA) General Meeting
Jera's Heavenly Sweet
December 18, 2023

Attendance/Signed In: 40

Judith Hibbard	Kay Bennett	Gail Black
Rosemary Boezi	Debbie Longenecker	Eric Martin
Eileen Eddy	Alana Eddy	Jon Chavez
Sandy Chavez	Gabrielle Mancy	Amy Wilt
Shawn Wilt	Melanie Quicker	Rick Baum
Jim Cope	Becky Koskinen	Kelly Termin
Kyle Grefe	Hugh Grefe	Sheila DeBrock
Therese Hernandez	Larry Hernandez	Kathy Wersell
Kyle McCormick	J. Smith	Ryan Walter
Nikki Culkawski	Carol W	Dan W
Lynn Szaroleta	Kevin Casper	Lynn Jensen
Billy Mann	Craig Jablonski	Mark Valdez-daPena
Kory Meinhart	Matt Reny	Brent Lohmann
Greg Hibbard		

The meeting was called to order by Billy Mann, President, at 6:07 pm.

Billy gave a brief description of the OONA mission/purpose, and introduced OONA board members.

Year in Review

- District Improvement Grant (DIP) - One of our accomplishments in 2023 year has been strategizing with city officials, including city councilman, Sam Melden, and Mayor Wade as we navigated several initiatives. One of the longest running projects, which was approved was the procurement of a district improvement project or DIP Grant. Big thanks to Brent Lohmann for taking the lead on behalf of OONA. This project includes landscaping improvements along Kenwood Blvd and pillars along Goddard Field.
- At the beginning of this year we worked with City council as well as other city officers as there was potential changes being brought to city code, which would change the distinction between businesses and individual owners who have property in the neighborhood. Essentially making it easier for owners of group living facilities to procure homes in neighborhoods, such as ours with large homes. These homes would often be rented or used for business purposes. Thanks to negotiation with the City and sharing our voice through neighborhood conversations, the overwhelming response from neighbors drove the decision by City Council to not approve such legislation.
- Neighborhood safety. Our board and neighborhood were certainly very saddened to learn of the passing of one of our very own as a result of a traffic crash incident. Any one incident is too many. As we work with the City, we have been made aware of our own councilman's vision zero plan for the city to eliminate traffic crashes. This effort, combined with continued conversation with the association both before, and after the incident this summer led to action. The board mobilized a survey, indicating that most neighborhood residents are in favor of as many precautionary measures towards safety as possible. Given the option, nearly all survey respondents indicated that they had observed unsafe driving practices in the neighborhood. The

safety improvements to Kenwood ended up being more than we had hoped for. In addition to the bump outs there will be high visibility crosswalks installed, and we've already seen the speed monitoring, traffic signals and reduced speed limit.

- OONA is pleased to have maintained positive relationships with our largest neighbor, the University of Toledo. Thanks to Valerie Simmons Walston, who oversees community relations and special projects for the University, our relationship has never been stronger. Continued use of Goddard field for our neighborhood events, and group usage has been a huge blessing. We also have maintained communication with the University as it pertains to student housing issues and concerns. The board is pleased to report that those have been minimized this year.
- Gather on Goddard - It has been the site of the association's newest event, a way to give back to the neighborhood and enjoy each other's company; Gather on Goddard, celebrated its second year this fall. Each year we've been pleased to see this event grow. Feedback from neighbors remains positive confirming that a time and space was needed for folks to celebrate in a block party style event. We hope to continue this for years to come.
- Increased communications - Another key to the success of 2023 was increased communications from the association. Big thanks to Matt Reny, who has taken on the building of our new E-blasts program. As our world continues to find new ways to stay connected both email Facebook and traditional mail have been conduits for us to get out messages. Our rate continues to be well over 10% which is an industry standard for emails. Keep an eye on those inboxes as we enter into 2024 as that will continue to be a way that we can pass along important news and updates.
- Facebook - Thanks to our administrators, Heather Ballmer and Aaron Grizaniuk for their work, and balancing so many needs of so many individuals in a kind and positive manner. Some may note that our Facebook rules include surrounding neighborhoods, including Westgate. The board will continue to build relationships with business interests in Westgate, Ottawa Hills, and of course the University Hills areas and neighbors to keep all informed of news as soon as we are aware of it.
- Garden Tour – Brent Lohmann reported that 2023 was the best year to date with 678 tickets sold. Twenty-eight sponsors were a huge part of the success. Proceeds from Garden Tour will be used for beautification efforts in Old Orchard.
- Memberships – We have a total of 146 household memberships which is a 9% return. There are 1,581 households in Old Orchard.

Election of officers

Slate of officers was presented:

President: Billy Mann
Vice-president: Lynn Jensen
Treasurer: Craig Jablonski
Secretary: Kay Bennett

Motion to approve slate as presented was made by Hugh Grefe; seconded by Gail Black. Motion passed.

Looking Ahead

- Kenwood Blvd landscaping improvements will happen. If residents have placed plants in the end caps please remove them as the end caps will have uniform plants starting spring 2024. End caps will be maintained by the City.
 - Maintain and improve communications with OO neighbors and businesses.
 - Sponsorship of a Spring forum

Holiday Decorating Awards

Kory Meinhart, Chair, Old Orchard Spirit Committee, thanked Gabrielle Mancy of Stubborn Brother for graciously sponsoring the 14 gift cards awarded to Holiday Decorating award recipients.

Award categories:

My Favorite Things: 2403 Goddard, 2624 Drummond, 2644 Densmore

Ding Dong Merrily: 2941 Darlington, 2348 Barrington, 2210 Pemberton

People's Choice (online): First Place: 2521 Aldringham. Runner up 3153 Kenwood, 3018 Goddard; Honorable Mention: 2658 Drummond.

Holly Jolly Christmas: 2315 Densmore, 2220 Middlesex

Deck the Halls: 2730 Densmore; Runner Up: 2617 Middlesex

OONA is very grateful to all the who supported our events in 2023:

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|-----------------------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| B Creative Graphic Design | RedBox Dumpsters |
| Bartz Viviano (flowers, events, gift & decor) | Sam Melden |
| Bensell Greenhouse | Schneider Landscaping |
| Black Diamond Nursery | Schramm's Flowers and Gifts |
| Creque's Greenhouse | Signature Bank |
| Hoen's Garden Center & Landscaping | SIP Coffeee |
| JupMode Custom Screen Printing | Target |
| Key Realty (Patrick and Lydia Miller) | The Optical Shop |
| Lakewood Flower Market | The Stubborn Brother |
| Land Art | The University of Toledo |
| Park Terrace Nursing & Rehabilitation | Venture Visionary Partners |
| Parran's Greenhouse & Farm | Wersell's Bike & Ski Shop |
| Patron Saints Brewery | Westgate Family Pharmacy |
| Payette Business Forms | |
| Rally's | |

Meeting was adjourned at 6:35 pm

Respectfully submitted by Kay Bennett, Secretary