

MINUTES OF THE AUGUST 29, 2016
SEWANEE COMMUNITY COUNCIL MEETING

Members present: John McCardell, John Swallow, Barbara Schlichting, Mike Gardner, Pam Byerly, David Coe, Annie Armour Morgret, James Kelley, Andrew Sampson, John Flynn, Dennis Meeks, Kate Reed, Phil White, Shirley Taylor, Pixie Dozier, Abbey Shockley, and Jeremy Carlson

Members not present: Louise Irwin and Theresa Shackelford

Minutes taken by Peggy Alsup

John McCardell welcomed everyone to the first Community Council meeting for 2016-2017 which began at 7:10 p.m. He welcomed our new student representatives; Abbey Shockley, from the college and Jeremy Carlson, from the School of Theology.

Approval of the May 2016 Minutes

The June minutes were approved.

Discussion of Future of Community Council Project Funding – Swallow

John gave a brief overview of the past two-year Community Council Project Fund pilot. He asked the committee if they would like to continue with the same format for the project or if there were suggestions for changes.

Questions/Comments

- Barbara Schlichting was asked if the Lease Office received complaints regarding the additional amount added to lease fees. She had one complaint from a leaseholder that thought the leaseholders should decide where the money should go.
- It was suggested that the sub-committee be entirely Community Council Members.
- This project may encourage people to run for election in November.
- Could the amount be increased?

Motion was made to continue the program at \$10,000 per year until the council decides to discontinue it or change the amount. Motion approved.

A second motion was made that any increase in the amount that people are asked to pay for this fund be considered on a two-month basis; proposed for a month to allow people to comment on the proposal before being voted on in month two. Motion approved.

A third motion was made to defer the discussion regarding the sub-committee members until after the November 2016 election. Motion approved.

Update on Discussion about Lease Fees – Swallow

John gave the committee an update from the subcommittee study regarding the municipal services fees. A more recent question has been raised as to whether the ground rent and transfer fee could be reviewed. He has had preliminary discussions with Drew Sampson and Doug Williams regarding these fees. Objective is to review the transfer fee as well as ground rent; how it is determined, how could it be raised in other ways, or, if there is a different formula that should be considered.

Question/Comments

- Is there an objective to reduce the transfer fee?
- Where does the revenue go? Does it go back to the community for things that are interest to the community, or just to the general fund?
- All revenue, derived from leaseholders through the lease, is to meet the ordinance that the Regents passed which says the University should receive a fair rental value for the use of the land.
- Is this a fee or a tax?
- Discussion revolves around the origin of the lease transfer fee which was implemented when the ground rent was frozen.
- We still have some leases with frozen ground rent as it ceased in 2011. Any new lease after September 2011 would be at the 4% unfixed rate.
- No one argues the University's right to gain income from its land.
- Everyone seemed pleased with the decision when the ground rent was frozen and the transfer fee started back in 1989. They were concerned about lease fees going up and they were looking at ways to stop that. The transfer fee helped to offset money that was being lost with the frozen ground rent.
- The argument is not to do away with the transfer fee, but to decide if the percentage should be changed.

Election Announcements – Dozier

Pixie said Election Day is November 8. Election will be for 12 council members; District One has 3, District Two has 4, District Three has 2, District Four has 3. Everyone's term is up this year. She said everyone would have a two-year term, but the committee corrected this to say that the person with the most votes in each district will serve a four-year term. The person with the next amount of votes will serve a two-year term. There will be four at-large seats. Candidates will need to decide before being placed on the ballot whether they are running for a district seat or an at-large seat.

Note: Pixie later corrected her statement to say that there will be 2 council members in each district plus four at-large seats.

All candidates will need to submit a petition to qualify and to be placed on the ballot. The petition must have at least ten signatures of residents in that district. The four at-large seats can obtain signatures from any area. Petitions are available at the Office of Leases and Community Relations and must be turned in to Pixie by October 15. Petitions will be available at the Office of Leases and Community Relations.

The district map will be run in the Messenger.

Absentee and early voting will take place at the Office of Leases and Community Relations between October 25 and November 7. This will be noted in the Messenger.

Announcements and/or Questions

Pam Byerly commented on the clean-up job at Hat Rock. William Shealy's crew did a nice job.

The Green's View project was mentioned. There was a lengthy article in the Messenger in May explaining what was going to be done and why it was going to be done; a combination of safety and environmental issues. Mike Gardner said the project is a part of the Office of Environmental Stewardship and Sustainability's plan to improve the portals. These are the main entry points or access points to the Domain. There is a new parking lot at the entrance on 41-A, which is another

piece of this project. John McCardell said there is also a safety element to protect visitors and residents of the community. John Swallow said there was also an issue with water run-off. The design at Green's View was meant to be safer to prevent accidents from happening and to reflect the same sort of design that is around the Memorial Cross. John McCardell said there will be some sort of article in the Messenger. Mike Gardner said the overall premise behind this program is to enhance and improve the overall safety and security of the public access points which is still indeed 13,000 acres of private property. We are trying to educate the outside general public that there are some responsibilities that go along with accessing the property that you are on. Chief Eldridge agreed it is a safety issue and added that they have found people abusing the gravel areas (donuts in the gravel) at Green's View as well as the gravel area at Lake Cheston.

Drew Sampson said some community members were upset that the lease transfer fee was imposed on Folks at Home, a nonprofit entity. He was asked to express their disappointment.

Ed Hawkins announced they are having Angel Fest is Friday, September 23. The children's activities are from 4:30 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. The band, Act of Congress, will perform.

Ed Hawkins said the new university signage is beautiful and it is nice to see directions in different places; would like to see more signs pointing to the village. John McCardell said this is phase 1 and there will be more signage to come.

John Flynn asked if we have the information from Joe David McBee regarding the traffic count (usage numbers) for the downtown crosswalks. Barbara Schlichting said he has the numbers. Joe David will be invited to the next meeting.

Phil White said he wanted to commend road commissioner, Joe David McBee, for responding to their requests to re-pave Tennessee Avenue. They did a wonderful job.

Meeting adjourned at 8:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Peggy Alsup