

MINUTES: OSW Community Meeting September 21, 2023

Submitted by: Mary Anne Mather, OSW Secretary

Meeting facilitated by Terry McGuire (OSW Board V-P)

Board Attendance: Terry McGuire V-P, Mary Anne Mather (Sec), David Jeavons (Treas), Elaine Fleck, Cara Becker

Absent: Julie Mugford, Lynn Speno, Anne Marie Drake (just to set up computer), Simon Wolf, Richard Normand

Plus 12 Neighbors (several new or returning after a long hiatus)

Others: Molly Hunter, Neighborhood Service Coordinator & Mark Kary, former OSW resident and current member of Roanoke Neighborhood Advocates (RNA) – volunteer group that advocates for neighborhood needs with City

6-6:30 Social

6:30 WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS

Introduced new Neighborhood Service Coordinator, Molly.Hunter@roanokeva.com. She mentioned Nov. 18 deadline Neighborhood Appreciation Awards. Application coming online. She will attend future meetings, perhaps as a presenter.

Thank you Shirley & Rick Poss for hosting tonight’s refreshments.

Volunteers for 10/19/2023: Elizabeth & Michael Shasberger. Each month we encourage a different OSW neighbor to volunteer as a host. It’s a great way to support the neighborhood and get to know one another better.

• Roanoke Arts Commission Call for Artists: Apply to be listed in the "Arts Connect Neighbors" catalog. Applications due by end of Sept. Info at: roanokearts.org/neighbors/

• **UPCOMING OSW EVENTS:** Online Calendar is live at oldsouthwest.org/events
--10/7 **POCKET PARK WORKSHOP** Native Perennials Workshop, 9-noon, 653 Day Ave & 8th St. Contact stephen.terry.mcguire@gmail.com

--10/7 **OSW Fall Block Party**, 12:30-4:30. BYOB & dish to share. PLEASE! help distribute mini flyers. Location: 500 Block Day Ave. SW

--OSW Parlor Tour: Dec 2, 5-9pm & Dec 3, 1-5pm (online ticket sales coming Oct. 1)

--10/26 Wed. 6PM Spooktacular Pub Plawk in OSW: FINAL Meet-up of the year!
Plawking=Picking up litter while walking and talking. 45-minute group trash pickup. Meet at Golden Cactus or On the Edge Salon (609 5th St. SW). Route: head up Marshall toward 8th St. & loop back down Day Ave. to Golden Cactus Brewing for music & refreshments.

COSTUMES ENCOURAGED (but not required)

6:40-7:05 GUEST SPEAKERS

OSW Neighbors: Cara Becker & Tim Taylor

All About Old Southwest Parlor Tour

Everything you need to know about a magical annual holiday tradition, its purpose, what it supports & how you can enjoy the experience – supporting just one more thing that makes OSW the best neighborhood in which to live, work & play. This is Parlor Tour #42! All proceeds support the ongoing restoration & maintenance of the historic Alexander-Gish House AND special OSW community-improvement projects and events.

7:05-7:15 Q & A

NOTES:

- “Always the first weekend in December”: Sat., Dec. 2nd 5-9pm & Sun., Dec. 3rd 1-5pm
- 6 residences, plus The Historic Alexander Gish House
- Refreshments provided at the Gish House
- Other attractions at Gish: Art show provided by LinDor Arts, costumed Nutcracker characters from Southwest VA Ballet
- Tickets on sale October 1
- Advance purchase online or at Sunnyside Market - **\$20**
- Visit <https://oldsouthwest.org/parlor-tour-of-homes> for more information and link to purchase tickets. Day-of tickets on sale at entrance to Highland Park - **\$25**
- Proceeds support: Gish House Maintenance & neighborhood events, projects, improvements.
- Volunteers Needed Saturday/Sunday: Docents, Ticket Sales, Set-up/Take-down at Gish House.
- Contact Cara Becker to volunteer or if interested in having your home on next year’s tour!
cara.laiolo@gmail.com 615-400-4231

This is the 42nd year for Parlor Tour. OSW largest fundraiser of the year. Believes that Parlor Tour was the precursor of Dickens of a Christmas. Tim encouraged people to learn about the rich history of OSW Inc. Mentioned early Founders: Polly Earys Bixler, Doug Tuthill, Bonnie Ferrell, Joel Richert. At the time OSW was considered the poorest neighborhood in the city. Neighbors went to look at the historic Petersburg neighborhood in another part of VA and were inspired to organize OSW Inc. (originally called The OSW Neighborhood Alliance) and turn the neighborhood around. Tim reminded us that they organized Highland Fling in Highland Park (10,000 participants) to raise funds. Highland Park is the oldest and largest Roanoke City Park. OSW still has high-density of renters and wants to embrace these neighbors, as well as home owners. Over the years, renters also have participated in Parlor Tour. OSW, Inc. was responsible for bringing the dog park to Highland Park, which improved crime issues in that area.

Tim has documents about the history of OSW, and we will be receiving these (about the history of the Gish House, OSW logo).

It was mentioned that OSW, Inc. would like to encourage a Block Party in the part of our neighborhood on the other side of Franklin Road (a busy thoroughfare that divides the neighborhood). Thought: Perhaps this could be supported by OSW and led by Tim Taylor and Bob Clement who live in that area. Challenge: that part of the neighborhood is higher density of renters and businesses. TBD

Trevor Shannon, Roanoke Battalion Chief for Emergency Management will share:

- Safety info during local emergencies & Roanoke's Emergency Response plans/protocols
- How to access...Star City Alerts, the City's official emergency notification system to communicate with residents during emergencies
- More about ready.gov for disaster preparedness guides/information

Other OSW BUSINESS

Approval of minutes from 8/17/2023

Announce: Interested in what OSW has been doing on behalf of our neighborhood? All Community Meeting minutes are available at: <https://oldsouthwest.org/osw-minutes>

1. Committee Updates

A. Environmental Protection, Parks, Greenspace-Green Committee) (MA Mather/Terry McGuire)

- Signed MOUs for 2 City grants hand-delivered to City Manager's Office. PURPOSE: Support Pocket Park development • **Neighborhood Development Grant** (\$4750): water/plant installations • **SparkPlug Grant** (\$1000): 5/23 occultation workshop. Funds received 9/21/23.
- OSW neighbor Rick Poss volunteered to prepare & install donated Pocket Park sign base prior to Oct 7 planting party. Installation: Sunday, 9/24.
- Water line installation in process. Goal: by Oct. 7 planting day.
- Tree Stewards/Project Redbud Update:

OSW actively supports **Project Redbud** (coordinated with Roanoke Tree Stewards)

48 total trees planted, 28 residences "greenified." QR codes and links provided in social media and at future meetings:

--Access tree location map

<https://lookerstudio.google.com/reporting/f7e934e5-3a4f-4fe9-82e7-1bf5156d3775>

--Access Google form to request a tree be in your curb strip or on your property

<https://forms.gle/y2uNHb8wUpuT4suy8>

--Next tree planting 11/11, 9-12 (focus on Mountain and Elm).

--Mark Kary suggested seeking future funding from Neighborhood Advocacy Board for trees/environmental projects.

B. Community Outreach (Cara Becker)

- Roanoke Arts Commission Call for Artists:

Apply to be listed in the "Arts Connect Neighbors" catalog. City Lead: Doug Jackson for Roanoke "Year of the Artist." Applications due by Sept 30. Info online roanokearts.org/neighbors/

- OSW hopes to benefit in these ways:

--Live music at a 2024 OSW spring fundraiser. Details TBD. (Proposed by neighbor Michael Shasberger/Roanoke Baroque)

--Possible mural on Rescue Building at Day/ 4th St. (Proposed by neighbor Julie Mugford)

--OSW historic homes coloring book (for adult or child). Possible fundraising opportunity. (Proposed by neighbor Lynn Hunt/artist)

--Lynn Hunt: Shared about an artist "It's Here" initiative to honor people who are making it happen in Roanoke. Resulting art show is in Municipal Center downstairs. 40 artists. With artist reflections/statements. Open for 1 year. Every third Monday an artist will be on hand at the

exhibit. Neighbors encouraged to visit the exhibit. Lynn is donating her \$500 honorarium to support 3rd St. Coffee House.

C. Gish House (Mary Anne Mather)

- Neighbor assistance needed to promote rental events to support property maintenance. GOAL: 12 annual rentals. PLEASE: “share” promo on social media. Info cards in foyer. (OSW relies on three fundraising initiatives to support maintenance of the Gish House & grounds, and many neighborhood improvement/beautification/safety/social projects & programs. They are: Parlor Tour, rental of the upstairs apartment at the Gish, event rentals at the Gish.)
- In process: Gish House Maintenance Sub-Committee. More info coming via OSW email.

D. Historic Preservation (no report)

E. Safety

Any safety concerns/news to elevate to Officer Underwood, OSW Resource Officer? There is a house with a lot of drug activity on Mountain, 400 block of Mountain. Two neighbors have reported this to police and are conferring about best approach to resolve the issue.

2. Other business: NONE

ADJOURN 7:50PM