

**MILLER CITIZENS CORPORATION
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING
July 10, 2011**

ATTENDANCE

PRESENT: Barnes, Collins, Cundiff, Daniel, Darby, Eaton, Grimes, Hansen, Johnston, Krusas, Massimino, Nowacki, Pruim, Reaves, Rodriguez, Roman, Rouse, Stewart, Winfrey
EXCUSED: Friel, Millard, Prettyman, Roby, Rogers, Rogge, Smith, Walker
ABSENT: Botsford, Collie, Gholson

The meeting began with a moment of silence in honor of US troops in Afghanistan and Iraq.

MINUTES Barb Hansen and Ed Johnston seconded, that the minutes of the June board meeting be accepted as presented. The motion passed.

Jim Nowacki attempted to make a motion to reconsider the vote at the June meeting, which stated that the MCC does support any further appeals of Judge Webber's decision on the validity of the Garbage Collection Fee. However, it was established that Nowacki had voted on the losing side on that issue, and only persons voting on the winning side may call for reconsideration. The motion to reconsider was therefore not valid.

TREASURY Treasurer Wendy Prettyman forwarded the MCC financial report for June, 2011, which showed:

Beginning balance	06/01/2011	\$ 9,617.83
Income		165.07
Expenditures		140.21
Ending balance	06/30/2011	9,642.69

Income was from dues. Expenses were for the retreat \$95.21 and the newsletter \$45.00.

Rich Barnes moved and Barb Hansen seconded, that the treasurer's report be accepted as presented. The motion passed.

GUEST SPEAKER

John Halkitis, a retired letter carrier and former president of the Gary postal workers union, discussed the history of labor relations in the post office. He opposed the transfer of outbound mail sorting functions to South Bend, and asked the MCC to support the retention of Saturday mail delivery.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

MARQUETTE PARK RENOVATION PROJECT

Eric Reaves noted that the RDA subcommittee is still working on an agreement with the City of Gary for a support system for the park, once the renovation is complete; however, they have decided not to call this a “conservancy”, to avoid confusion with the Calumet River drainage project. They are also not revealing what the group **will** be called, until the title is finalized, so that outside parties cannot reserve all the associated internet names and addresses.

Work on the park reconstruction is continuing apace, and is keeping up with the revised schedule, which projects completion of the project in November 2011, in time for the traditional MCC Valentine’s Day Dance in February.

Bids for the Aquatorium, totaling \$1 million, will be let out in October. Workers on the project exceed the required number of Gary residents.

The future of the former armory site, at the Lake Street beach, is unknown. Irene King’s lease for the property will have to be worked out with the City.

COMMITTEE PARTICIPATION

Reaves emphasized, once again, that all board members are to be active in at least one MCC committee.

MCC EVENTS

The events committee is pondering whether to hold an MCC Halloween party in a tent. They are hopeful that the Pavilion will be reopened in time for the MCC dance in February. Doretha Rouse wondered if that could be the first event in the upgraded facility, but it is too early to tell.

Tickets for Miller Night at the Railcats, scheduled for July 22, are available at the Marquette Perk, Ayers Realtors, and the Lake Street Gallery.

Jim Nowacki attempted to make a motion, supporting access by the Miller Historical Society to the old Miller Town Hall, to make the building more presentable. The motion was not recognized at this point in the agenda.

PROPERTY TAX ISSUE

Tom Eaton discussed the latest problem with property tax assessments, in which land values for parcels north of Oak Avenue were dramatically increased over last year. One category of properties were reassigned to a new neighborhood code, with a much higher value per front foot. This was recognized as an error by the Calumet Township Assessor, and it is being corrected. Several hundred other properties previously had adjustment factors which reduced the land values from the rate of \$3,531 which applied to beachfront properties to a lesser value which reflected market values away from the beach. These adjustment factors were arbitrarily removed, and the township assessor has not agreed to reinstate them without individual appeals by each property owner. The MCC “Core Group” is working with local and county officials to resolve the situation.

MILLER TOWN HALL

Eric Reaves reported that he has received critical comments about an MCC board member, eventually identified as Jim Nowacki, who broke up and removed concrete paving around the entrance to the Miller Town Hall, without the permission of the city of Gary which owns the building.

Some members contended that this was a flagrant disregard of property rights which reflected poorly on the MCC since it involved one of its board members.

Others thought the end result was positive and the member was acting on his own, without any association with the MCC. He might receive a citation from the city, which would be an issue between Nowacki and the courts.

Cullen Daniel emphasized that the Miller Historical Society had no prior knowledge of this action. Councilwoman Krusas noted that Daniel always sought permission before holding events on city property.

Eventually, Barb Hansen moved and Carmen Collins seconded, that Jim Nowacki be removed from the MCC board of directors. Doug Grimes inquired what procedure existed for removing members, and Eric Reaves cited the MCC by-laws to show that the board could vote to expel a member.

A vote was taken and the motion to remove Nowacki from the board was defeated.

PUBLIC SAFETY

Barb Hansen reminded everyone that the Gary-South Shore Air Show is coming up. Parking will be available at Marquette Park for \$20 per car, or at the West Beach for \$6, with a shuttle bus from there to the park. She emphasized that calls to the police for parking violations must go to the non-emergency number, 881-1260, and NOT to 911.

SHORELINE COMMITTEE

The July meeting of the Shoreline Committee has been rescheduled for Thursday, July 28.

Reaves notes that he has received complaints about drinking and fighting at Wells Street, mostly involving visitors from outside the community. Krusas noted the difficulties of excluding alcoholic drinks from the area, even though the Wells Street parking lot checks for alcohol being carried to the beach from the lot. Discussion followed on having more continual police presence at Wells Street, as opposed to spreading the police over the whole length of the beach.

EDUCATION COMMITTEE

Doretha Rouse noted that a public meeting was taking place at this time concerning the future of Roosevelt High School, which is entering its sixth year of probation. The large audience at the meeting strongly favored keeping the school open, and many offered help in improving the students' performance. Options presented included merger with another school; appointing a management team from the state Department of Education; formulating a new local plan for improvement; or simply closing the school. The state's decision will be announced later.

GENERAL SHARING

Reaves announced that MCC board members will be asked to canvass their immediate neighborhood as part of the membership drive coming up in September. Membership packets would be provided to support this action. A motion was made by Doug Grimes and seconded, that MCC board members

contribute to the membership drive by canvassing the block or two around their homes. The motion passed.

Robert Massimino suggested that the Miller Message contain more information about MCC membership. Russ Cundiff wanted the MCC to recognize multi-year memberships.

NEW BUSINESS

Rich Barnes moved and Robert Massimino seconded, that the MCC go on record in opposition to moving the outgoing mail processing from Gary to South Bend. The motion passed.

Rich Barnes moved and Barb Hansen seconded, that the meeting be adjourned. The motion passed.

Respectfully submitted,

Thomas Eaton
Secretary, Miller Citizens Corp.