

GPA Meeting Minutes

Meeting #: G-03 Date: 1/19/25 Time: 4 p.m.
Location: Eastman School of Music, Room 209

Type of Meeting: General Scheduled

Participants: (see attached)

Approval of Minutes:

Mark Petersen moved to approve the Minutes of the November 17, 2024 General Meeting and Dennis Kuo seconded. Acceptance was unanimous.

Treasurer's Report: Rick McGrath

The current balance in the treasury is eleven thousand five hundred and one dollar and fourteen cents (\$11,501.14). Of that, two thousand four hundred and six dollars (\$2,406.00) is in the Art fund; and one thousand two hundred and sixty dollars (1,260.00) is in the legal fund. The Holiday Party, which was a great success, had forty-two (42) people in attendance, raising one thousand fifty dollars (\$1,050.00), with expenses at nine hundred twenty-nine dollars and ninety-six cents, giving us a surplus of one hundred twenty dollars (\$120.00).

A question was raised by Jack Eisenberg about whether the legal fund was established by the Grove Place Action Committee (GPAC) in anticipation of legal expenses that might be incurred when neighbors joined together to oppose the amplified noise from the anti-abortion protesters in front of Planned Parenthood. This was affirmed. Mr. Eisenberg asked if that money could be liquidated. When individuals donated, they were given a letter stating that the amount was donated to a not-for-profit organization and therefore tax deductible. If one, in fact, declared it on their tax return, it may not be reimbursable. Mr. McGrath was not sure how to go about reimbursing people. A portion of the money was, in fact, expended for legal services. Mr. Eisenberg offered to find out from a not-for-profit lawyer whether reimbursement is possible. He does not feel the money should just sit there. Bob DiPaola suggested that we could divide the balance among the donators and reimburse those who want to be reimbursed. This contact with a not-for-profit attorney about the legality of reimbursing people becomes an item on the Open Issues log, #03-01 and is "Open".

Committee Reports:

Beautification: No report

Historical: Sally Millick, Chair, would like to schedule a neighborhood tour in May for us. Details to follow.

Membership: Roz Goldman, Chair, informed the group that the GPA Executive Committee has decided to revive our former practice of honoring our deceased neighbors by planting a tree in their memory. The company that does this is "A Living Tribute". We would make a donation in a neighbor's name and the company, under the supervision of the US Forest Service, will plant a tree in an area where there are reforestation efforts. We can request that the tree be planted in the Finger Lakes region. A personalized commemorative card will be sent to the family of the deceased. This will be a standard

practice of our organization to commemorate our neighbors who have passed away. At this time the persons to be commemorated by the GPA are: Vern Hanson, John Lovenheim, Marilyn Klass, Suzanne Gouvernet, Donald Stedman, and Betty Strassenberg. This expenditure does not need to come up for a vote as it is well within the allowable expenditures that Executive Committee can approve.

Roz announced that the Membership Committee will prepare and deliver a gift basket to welcome a new neighbor. Roz requested help with soliciting area businesses for donations. Bob DiPaola mentioned that in his meeting with the new dean of the music school, she volunteered Eastman swag for this effort. James Tabbi mentioned that Java's has agreed to provide a pound of coffee and the OP Shop has agreed to provide a discount. He also clarified that a GPA membership form will be in every basket and new neighbors will be encouraged to join. There was discussion amongst members around whether the gift baskets should be for renters as well as homeowners, with diverse opinions. Executive Committee needs to discuss this. It continues as #02-05 and as "Open".

Public Safety & Code Compliance: Bob DiPaola attended the PCIC (Police Citizens Interaction Committee) and reported that the information presented focused on the effects of job stress on police officers. The average life expectancy of a police officer is 57 years, compared with 72 years in the general population. Divorce rates are very high. In a police officer's workday, they may go to a call, the adrenaline in their body spikes, they leave that call and go to another and get another adrenaline spike, etc. It takes twenty-four (24) hours for an adrenaline rush to dissipate through the body. This rush negatively affects sleep. So, it's not only the job stress but the physiological stresses that contribute to a shortened life span. The police force is putting more services in place to help officers cope. There is less stigma today, especially with the younger police officers, to seek help than there was in the past. The police chief reported that serious crime (bullets to bodies & thefts) is down in Rochester and, in fact, the RPD's measures are being used as an example across the State and even nationally for the methods our police are using to bring crime under control.

Action Items/Decisions:

- Update on code violations: Steve Smith has been following up on this. He is unable to attend today's meeting but sent an email update. Regarding 57 Gibbs St., there is a Barber Shop currently operating illegally and there should at this point have fines assessed against it but the city has not yet levied fines. Steve is working on why that is but is getting little response. The question of ownership of the building was raised. Mr. Mark Cohen owns the building that the barber shop is in. Tom Fink asked if anyone has contacted the owner directly to discuss the problem. Sandy Mayer stated that he and Ed Saphar had contacted the owner directly to let him know that the business operating there was in violation of code but met with indifference. Suzanne Mayer suggested that we contact Daisy Algarin, City of Rochester. Bob DiPaola stated that we are following the process that the city told us to pursue. Regarding 135 University Avenue, the Preservation Board held a hearing in December to possibly allow the signage "Free Pregnancy Tests" to continue to be placed in the window. Many of our members wrote comments to the Board and the result was resoundingly in our favor. There is to be no additional signage. This item remains "In Process".
- Zelle has been set up for electronic fund transfers. This item is "Closed".
- Sandy Mayer reported on the ROC Vision Zero initiative. This initiative is actually a chapter of a national organization. In the most recent issue of Atlantic Magazine there is an article about this program. Our local chapter is having a meeting on Tuesday, January 21st where they will discuss

enforcement. Sandy gave the history that we had red light cameras in the city in the past. They worked; they reduced the number of fatalities. Sandy reported the statistic of Rochester having 300 traffic fatalities per year over the past ten years! The ROC Vision Zero task force is looking at red light cameras, but making them mobile so no one will know where they are. Recently a police officer in the Traffic division reported to Sandy that the officers are not allowed to enforce speed limits. Sandy will report again next month. This item remains “In Process”.

- Our neighborhood benches need refurbishment. Bob DiPaola contacted the city to ask if they would consider refurbishing the benches while they are in storage and the response was an unequivocal ‘no’ for reasons that the city doesn’t have the resources and they are privately owned benches. We will seek volunteers from GPA to work on refurbishment in the Spring when the benches are returned from storage. We may put this item under the umbrella of our Beautification Committee. James Tabbi will get the information on the materials. Roz Goldman suggested contacting RIT students to do the work considering they might want to make some money. Bob DiPaola feels we could do this as a weekend project in the Spring and only need to pay for materials. This item remains on our log as “Open” with a target date of Spring 2025.
- The Welcome Gift basket information is contained above in the Membership Committee report. This item is “Open” and has no target date.
- Bob DiPaola was able to reserve our meeting room at 3:45, avoiding conflict with use of the room by music students. A key to the AV cabinet will not be allowed but there is now a sign and a directive from the school’s authorities to keep the AV cabinet open. This item is “Closed”.

New Business:

- Sandy Mayer brought up that our neighborhood benches have become a magnet for Eastman students with the only problem being that they smoke weed and he has seen strangers who he thinks are actually selling the pot to the students. Rick McGrath brought up the placement of the benches and perhaps rethinking where they are placed. The one located in front of 20 Windsor St. often has litter and cigarette butts surrounding it. Perhaps if it were relocated it could be better maintained. This will be taken under advisement by the Executive Committee. This becomes item #03-02 on the Open Issues Log, to be discussed further in the Spring, and is “Open”.
- James Tabbi reported feedback he received from the city responding to suggestions we made to them regarding traffic calming measures on Gibbs St., Selden St. and Windsor St. They denied our request for speed humps on Windsor and Selden. On Gibbs St., they plan to do a traffic study in the Spring to see if speeds are high enough to warrant speed humps. On Selden St., the Monroe County Dept. of Transportation approved a stop sign on Selden St. at the corner of Windsor St. It was approved this past October and should be mounted any time now. We are monitoring it. The feedback James received included a reference to the ROC Vision Zero initiative and that the traffic department will be considering lowering the speed limit to 25 mph as well as automatic traffic enforcement.
- The Executive Committee is working on revisions to the Bylaws in the Membership section. Bob DiPaola announced that those proposed revisions will be sent to the membership via email and that we will then vote on them at the next meeting. This becomes item #03-03 on the Open Issues Log and is “Open”.

- Rick McGrath told us that we received a nice thank you letter from the Eastman School's Vice-President of Development for our donation to the school.
- Bob DiPaola informed the group of the history of the Grove Place Action Committee (GPAC), which was formed by several neighbors who were advocating for noise reduction/elimination from the protesters at Planned Parenthood. Bob DiPaola is bringing his concern to the membership today as a member of our organization and not as the President. He was one of three members who worked on a committee to reduce/eliminate the noise coming from the protesters in front of Planned Parenthood. Once a month on a Saturday, protesters gather and mount amplification equipment on the North side of the street but have the amplifiers not directed at their participants so they can better hear the speakers, but instead face our homes on University Ave. They play loud music, sing and preach. The City of Rochester's noise ordinance generally prohibits the use of amplification at protests except for two exemptions: for religious protests and for political protests. However, there is no definition of what constitutes either type of protest nor who qualifies to be covered under either exemption. This seems counter to the neighborhood's rights to "quiet enjoyment". Bob is requesting that the Grove Place Association take on the challenge of eliminating excessive noise of all types and particularly, of amplified noise. Sandy Mayer voiced his whole-hearted agreement with Bob's statement. Sandy feels it is important to recognize that the worst day is Saturday and that the protests are run by a priest. Does that constitute a religious protest? Jack Eisenberg stated that from a common-sense perspective, there's probably a religious aspect to the protests. He feels there is definitely a political one. Also, the aspect of trying to persuade the public, which protesters are allowed to do. Jack feels, however, that the amplification on Saturdays and sometimes on other days is ridiculous, especially in a residential area. Jack feels that we might approach the city to ask for an exemption to their exemption to the noise ordinance. Sally Millick stated that when the issue was brought before a city councilman about two years ago, we were told it was religious. John Goldman said that the problem with the statute is that it doesn't define what is religious or political. There is no guidance in the statute. It might not be constitutional to prohibit something but not explain what. John suggested meeting with the city's legal department, corporation counsel's office and stating that we think there is a statute that is being violated and that one answer to that is to refine the statute to make it clear. There are cases that define what is religious or political. James Tabbi questioned what the level of noise is that is permitted. It is stated in the noise ordinance as a certain number of feet from the sound, which the protesters far exceed. Suzanne Mayer proposed that we make this an agenda for the Association and that we should establish an enforcement policy committee. Bob feels it would have more teeth coming from our neighborhood association than from a few concerned citizens. Pam DiPaola stated that this is not an issue solely to do with the protesters and that she would advocate for attention to be paid to all noise in the city, whether it be ATV's, racing on the inner loop, etc. It was suggested that we get legal counsel on this and Tom Fink commented that to do so would cost thousands of dollars. Suzanne Mayer made the suggestion that we ask the candidates for City Council how they stand on this issue. We might also ask the candidates for Mayor. James Tabbi summed up by stating that the members at this meeting agree to have this become a task for our organization. James Tabbi put forth the motion that GPA assume the work of GPAC, seconded by Sandy Mayer. There was a quorum of members at this meeting and the

vote was 15 yeas; 0 nay; and 2 abstentions. Motion passed. This is item #03-04 on the Open Issues Log and is “Open”.

Open Discussion:

- Sally Millick and Roz Goldman suggested getting Spectrum and Berkeley Breaun from Channel 10 to report on the noise level of the protests. This will be discussed further by Executive Committee.
- We invited Commander Mike Desain of the police department to speak to us tonight on community policing but he is unable to attend on a Sunday. The Executive Committee extended an invitation to him as well as Chief David Smith to attend our next Executive Committee meeting. Suzanne Mayer wondered if that meeting could be available to members via Zoom. This will be discussed by Executive Committee. John Goldman pointed out that the police force is understaffed and therefore the concentration is on major crime and not traffic enforcement. Members will be asked to submit concerns by 1/30/25. This is item #03-05 on the Open Issues Log and is “Open”.
- A member asked about the status of 20 Windsor St. (the former Downstairs Cabaret Theatre). The windows have been boarded up and we have been told that work is being done on the inside. We have been told by the owner that it will not be apartments but instead ‘event space’ is planned.
- Tom Fink announced that the primary for choosing our mayoral candidates and city council candidates this year is in June. Currently there are three people running for mayor: Malik Evans, Mary Lupien, and Shashi Sinha. There will be a significant primary for city council positions. Tom feels that since most of what we’ve been talking about in this meeting relates strongly to the city administration and our relationship with that administration, we should consider having a candidate’s night where we can ask candidates about some of the quality-of-life issues we have. Rick McGrath suggested that we might pair up with another neighborhood organization or two in order to have a larger format. It was suggested that such a presentation not be held on a Sunday and that we involve news outlets. The nominating meetings for mayor are coming up in the next few weeks. Executive Committee will explore this possibility. This becomes item #03-06 in the Action Log and is “Open”.
- Feedback concerning the suggestions that were sent to members for hosting after-meeting receptions was sought. There were mixed reactions but, on the whole, people thought having a guiding document was helpful. It is not intended as a ‘must do’ but as a guide and the intent is to have expectations at a level place such that others may be more encouraged to volunteer to host. Members agreed to adopt this as a guidance document.
- A host is needed for the after-meeting reception on 2/16/25. This is #03-07 on our Log and is “Open”.

Action Items/Decisions:

<u>What</u>	<u>Who</u>	<u>Deadline</u>	<u>Status</u>
G01-02 Follow-up on code violations	SSmith	ongoing	In Process
G02-02 ROC Vision Zero Update	SMayer	2/16/25	In Process
G02-03 Neighborhood bench refurbishment	BDiPaola	Spring	Open

G02-05 Welcome Gift Baskets	RGoldman	-----	Open
G03-01 Not-for-profit attorney RE: reimbursing	JEisenberg	-----	Open
G03-02 Possible relocation of benches	Exec. Cmte.	Spring	Open
G03-03 Proposed bylaws revisions to members	Exec. Cmte.	2/10/25	Open
G03-04 Set up GPAC Task Force	Exec. Cmte.	2/16/25	Open
G03-05 Seek member input on RPD mtg.	PDiPaola	1/30/25	Open
G03-06 Work on Candidates' Night	Exec. Cmte	2/16/25	Open
G03-07 Host for 2/16after-mtg. reception	Exec. Cmte	2/3/25	Open

Next Meeting: Feb 16, 2025, Room 209, Eastman School of Music, 4 p.m. Our speaker will be Chris Carretta speaking to us as President of the Rochester Preservation Board.

Adjournment: The motion to adjourn was made by Jack Eisenberg and seconded by Roz Goldman. Adjournment was at 5:10 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,
Pam DiPaola
Secretary

Attachment: Member Sign-In Sheet
Suggested Checklist for Post-Meeting Hosting

GROVE PLACE ASSOCIATION

Suggested Checklist for Post-Meeting Hosting

(Note – The “Spread” is not intended to be a substitute for dinner.)

Liquids:

Red & white wine
Beer (include a Lite beer)
Soft drinks and water

Nibbles:

Cheese and Crackers
Hummus and Chips
Salsa
Nuts
Optional - One hors d'oeuvre – some type of finger food

-Paraphernalia
-Plastic glasses are acceptable
-Paper plates are optional
-Cocktail napkins
-Ice for keeping drinks cold

A Plug: COSTCO is a good place for quantity items.

NOTE: This is a suggested menu. Any additional items should not be expected, nor is this list intended to be mandatory. The purpose of a post-meeting gathering is social, not guest feeding.

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| <input type="checkbox"/> Bhattacharya, Tricia | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Kuo, Dennis | <input type="checkbox"/> Staropoli, Tiffany |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Briggs, Farran | <input type="checkbox"/> Kuo, Kat | <input type="checkbox"/> Sudak, Joyce |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Buckpitt, Charles | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Loeb, Judy | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Tabbi, James |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Carretta, Christopher | <input type="checkbox"/> Marvin, Bill | <input type="checkbox"/> VanGrol, Rory |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Carroll, JoAnn | <input type="checkbox"/> Massie, Kate | <input type="checkbox"/> Wager, Barbara |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Chafik, Jake (via virtual) | <input type="checkbox"/> Massie, Rick | <input type="checkbox"/> Weyerts, Gloria Marie |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Chafik, Liz (via virtual) | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Mayer, Sanford | <input type="checkbox"/> Wilson, Mark |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Conquest, Deborah | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Mayer, Suzanne (via virtual) | <input type="checkbox"/> Woodring, Suzanne |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cooney, Diane | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> McGrath, Rick | <input type="checkbox"/> Wright, Dennis |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cooney, Jeremy | <input type="checkbox"/> McLaughlin, Brian | <input type="checkbox"/> Wright, Sandy |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> DiPaola, Bob | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Millick, Sally | |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> DiPaola, Pam | <input type="checkbox"/> Naurocki, Gloria | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Doolittle, Nicki | <input type="checkbox"/> Orbach, Jill | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Doolittle, Tex | <input type="checkbox"/> Papaj, Rick | |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Eisenberg, Jack | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Paris, John | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Eisenberg, Sue | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Petersen, Mark | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Fink, Janet | <input type="checkbox"/> Pond, Chris | |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Fink, Tom | <input type="checkbox"/> Pond, Kim | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Frame, Kathy | <input type="checkbox"/> Porter, Brenda | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Frame, Scott | <input type="checkbox"/> Reilly, Linda | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Frank, Dex | <input type="checkbox"/> Rosen, Margery | |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Goldman, John ✓ | <input type="checkbox"/> Rosen, Richard | |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Goldman, Roz ✓ | <input type="checkbox"/> Saphar, Ed | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Guo, Chunlei | <input type="checkbox"/> Saphar, Gabriel | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Keck, Bob | <input type="checkbox"/> Shapiro, Sandy (+aide) | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Kellogg, Carol | <input type="checkbox"/> Smith, Julie | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Kolbe, Elizabeth | <input type="checkbox"/> Smith, Stephen | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Kolbe, Jim | <input type="checkbox"/> Staropoli, Rick | |