WPNA Monthly Meeting 8/12/2023

Vice President David Butts called the meeting to order at 10:17.

Thanks to Fernando Alvarado and Talisman Coffee for the coffee and to Josh Pitts for the donuts.

Thanks to supporters, sponsors, and newsletter deliverers.

New members were invited to introduce themselves. Robin Bishop, the new pastor at Memorial United Methodist Church introduced herself.

Citizens’ communication: Robin said that the church was broken into last week, and she is open to suggestions to make things more secure. She also invited people to come to service on Sundays at 11. Larry Abraham emailed to say that the community garden at the Austin Mennonite Church has open plots, and that the current coordinator of the garden, Pat Hochstettler, is stepping down. If you want to get a plot, or if you would like to serve the garden and the community as coordinator, email Pat Hochstettler at srh2pjh@pobox.com. Kelly Overton of the Windsor Park Library said that they are having their second annual tape fest on August 19, which will be a celebration of older media. Last weekend, an organization called Brave Books, a religious organization, booked a room on August 5 at the Windsor Park Library. Kelley pushed to be a library for all, spoke with potential protesters, and ended up with a celebration of living joyfully. The event went off smoothly with no conflict, with people gathering in and around the library to provide peaceful visibility and face painting happening outside. She also said that the library is a City cooling center, where people can come. Rick Krivoniak said that tonight is the Austin Pride Parade. It starts at 8 PM at the Capitol. Josh said that Coffee with a Cop will be on Thursday at Hanks at 11AM.

Kim McKnight, Sara Marshall, and Director Kim McNeeley of PARD, and Bob Ward, Chair of the Travis County Historical Commission, came to present information about the Josiah Wilbarger monument at 51st and Berkman. PARD has been examining historic sites in parks facilities, and this monument came to their attention. They are looking for a better place for the monument because the site is not where the incident discussed on the monument happened, and the site is poorly accessible. The monument was erected by Josiah’s granddaughter in 1927. The plaque was made part of the Texas Historical Commission’s monument program in 1936. It was relocated from a poorly maintained location in the mid 1980’s to Bartholomew Park. There are two options proposed. One is to contextualize the monument in place, as an opportunity to tell a fuller story that includes the point of view of indigenous people. The other option is to move the monument to a cemetery in Bastrop where Willbarger’s granddaughter is interred and where Josiah Wilbarger was originally interred. This second option is supported by both the Wilbarger family, the Bastrop County Historical Commission, and the Bastrop County cemetery. PARD currently favors moving the monument to Bastrop., but it would need to be approved by the State Historical Commission. In its place, PARD is proposing putting in a different, more complete marker to put the incident and monument in context. Bob Ward said that they support moving the marker and putting in something that could tell a more complete story. Councilmember Chito Vela thanked PARD and the Wilbarger family working for a respectful solution and that he supports the relocation with new signage to tell the full story. White Snake said that as a Native American she has long found the monument offensive as it continues portrayal of her people as savages, and approves of the relocation solution. Rick Krivoniak said that the monument was temporarily located at 51st and Manor before the current location. Kim McNight encouraged anyone to provide feedback to PARD on relocating or contextualizing the monument. Bob Ward said that the monument opens opportunities to tell the larger story instead of a partial snapshot.

Josh Pitts gave the treasurer’s report. The current undedicated account balance is about $8,000-9,000 to get through the rest of the year. Five scholarship checks have been written, and three have been cashed, out of the 11 scholarships awarded.

Josh said that Knowbility’s Accessibility Internet Rally program has offered to work with WPNA to improve our website accessibility. To participate in this program, WPNA needs to pay a $150 fee. Mark Boyden explained that the program provides design and training for the NA to maintain the improvements. Sue Wiederspahn moved to approve that payment. The motion passed unanimously.

Sara Jane Lee said that Marcelle Friedman of 5400 Wellington won the yard of the month this month. She was given a $50 gift certificate from Shoal Creek Nursery. Marcelle moved into the neighborhood in October 2021. David noted that the City is imposing Stage 2 watering restrictions beginning on August 15.

Approval of the July minutes: the minutes were approved as proposed.

We are looking for people to serve on the Nominating Committee. Megan Dougherty volunteered to take part. The committee will provide nominees for all officer positions at the October meeting.

David Butts encouraged people to pick up plastic when they walk the neighborhood. Mohan Rao said that he picked up a laptop and cell phones and was able to turn them into Best Buy for disposal.

Gloria Neunaber said that ARRA composted 52,000 tons of material in 2022. The Mennonite Church is going to have their pancake breakfast in October to raise money for the scholarship fund.

Josh said that Rodney Ahart, Chair of the Beautification Committee, has secured funding to reinstall the solar powered lighting for the Windsor Park sign at 51st and Berkman.

Kelly Overton said that the City has a grant program to help people to plant trees.

Martin Luecke said that the Climate Committee will have a webcast on Wednesday, August 23 with representatives of the Sierra Club and the University of Texas. The webcast will be available at anytime after the broadcast on their YouTube channel.

The meeting adjourned at 11:32.