

# *The* GINTER PARK

## RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION

**Post Office Box 25374  
Richmond, Virginia 23260  
(804)389-2821**

Ginter Park Annual Membership and Board Meeting Minutes  
November 11, 2022, 6:30 p.m.  
Ginter Park Presbyterian Church Fellowship Hall and via Zoom

### Board Members In Attendance:

Susan Rebillot, President  
Julie O’Kelly – Treasurer  
Robyn Bridges – Secretary  
Norma Murdoch-Kitt, Past President  
Stephen Weisensale, Planning and Zoning Chair  
Prudence Justice, District Representatives Chair

### Guests:

District 2 Councilwoman Katherine Jordan  
District 3 Councilwoman Ann-Frances Lambert  
Kiya Stokes – Lambert Liaison  
4<sup>th</sup> Precinct Police Lt. Claude Picard

#### I. Welcome and Introductions - Susan

- A. Susan introduced 2022 Board members and guests in attendance.
- B. Susan recognized Carrie Vuori, candidate for Membership Chair; Matt Benson, E2 District Representative; and Steve Welton and Daniel Lawrence, Co-Chairs of the Beautification Committee.
- C. Susan recognized cooks participating in the chili cook-off: Steven Batsche, Julie O’Kelly, Susan Rebillot, Paul Justis, and Stephen Weisensale.

#### II. Guest Speakers’ Reports

- A. Councilwomen Ann-Frances Lambert and Katherine Jordan jointly reported on issues within the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> City Council Districts. The following are highlights of their reports:
  1. The AP Hill statue is coming down following a November 28 court date. Remains will be relocated to Fairview Cemetery in Culpepper County.
  2. Individuals who vandalized the Arthur Ashe mural in Battery Park have been caught.
  3. Virginia Rep will move its children’s theatre to northside’s Scottish Rite Temple.
  4. Reminder that the portion of Ginter Park that falls in the 2<sup>nd</sup> City Council District will remain in the 2<sup>nd</sup> District until the new election in 2024, when it will be folded into the 3<sup>rd</sup> District.

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5. The City is moving to a more distributive model in addressing homelessness and providing homeless shelters. The shelter provided by Commonwealth Catholic Charities did not work out, so multiple shelters will be located throughout the City, exact locations to be announced in upcoming newsletters. Prudence asked about addressing mental health issues among the homeless population. Councilwoman Jordan acknowledged the issue, and reported that it is very difficult to help the homeless who are entrenched in homelessness and have no family to fall back on, especially when this population declines services offered. RPD has a Hope Unit to address homelessness.
6. RPD has a new acting Chief (Rick Edwards) after Chief Smith stepped down. Councilwoman Jordan reported that the new Chief is actively trying to fix public safety and staff morale issues.
7. Enhanced speeding signs are now present in Districts 2 and 3
8. A police citizen review board is now in place.
9. The Diamond District, a \$2.1 billion project, is moving forward and will include affordable housing, an office park, a dog park, a hotel, and more.
10. Homeowners and commercial property owners will receive a property tax rebate in 2023. The City is going to freeze property reassessments for one year in order to create a better reassessment schedule, but previous reassessments can still be challenged.
11. A new urban forester and master tree plan is coming to the City.
12. Reminder to sign up for both the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> District Newsletters, and to attend upcoming District meetings – District 2: December 7, 6pm via Zoom; District 3: December 9
13. Twenty-three people in the 3<sup>rd</sup> district are 100+ years old in 2022.
14. Issues raised from the floor: Limited availability of small single-family residences within the City; working relationships among City Council members.

### III. Board Meeting/General Membership Meeting

A. A quorum was established.

#### B. Committee Reports

1. Treasurer Julie O'Kelly reported that GPRA had an increase in membership, partially due to the progressive appetizer event. We are now at 300 member households.
2. Public Safety – Susan and Lt. Picard
  - a. Lt. Picard reported that Acting Chief Edwards is a hard-working officer who has experience with investigations. The city is now seeing former officers return to work for the RPD.
  - b. Lt. Picard reported that homelessness, mental health, and drug addiction are big issues in the City. Having multiple emergency shelters within the city should help, but it is very challenging to convince the homeless to enter a shelter because they don't want to be confined.
  - c. Catalytic converter thefts continue, and all should be reported. Susan reported that Midas is offering to paint catalytic converters at no charge.
  - d. Motor vehicle thefts are up. RPD is seeing more theft by window breaking vs. finding extra set of keys.
  - e. RPD officers are now being issued business phones, so they can return non-emergency calls.

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- f. Susan reminded everyone to call 911 if you see or hear a crime in progress. This drives the allocation of police resources.
3. Planning and Zoning - Stephen Weisensale
  - a. There have been many complaints from residents on Moss Side about a convenience store on North Ave. Residents are trying to get Moss Side closed off at the North Avenue end.
  - b. There are currently no active SUPs
  - c. Three ordinances will soon go before City Council, and public hearings are the first week of December. The ordinances involve revising requirements for ADUs, changes in parking requirements for all types of structures, and changes in regulations for short term rentals.
4. Beautification – Steve Welton
  - a. The Beautification Committee is reclaiming beds the City is no longer able to maintain. The team is small and always in need of more volunteers. A recent workday involved planting 500+ bulbs in medians along Brook Rd. Median beds are available for adoption. Susan recognized that residents of East and West Seminary had recently worked together to redesign the traffic diverter bed.
5. Communications Committee Chair Susan Rebillot reported that the weekly gazette and monthly newsletter continue to serve as tools for robust communication. Everyone is encouraged to sign up to receive these in their inbox.
6. District Representatives Chair Prudence Justis reported that GPRA districts are going to be redefined in 2023 so that they are more equal in size. Many new district reps have agreed to serve in 2023, but we are still looking for reps in districts N2 and N3.
7. Social Committee Co-Chair Prudence Justis reminded everyone of the fun parties and events that are in the works for December and the coming year. A cookie exchange will take place December 4 at Ginter Place, and this date also kicks off the Selfie Scavenger Hunt. The holiday party is December 10, complete with cocktails and a DJ.

#### IV. Board Slate- Robyn read the 2023 Board Slate

##### Officers

President – open

Vice President – open

Treasurer - Julie O’Kelly

Secretary – Robyn Houser Bridges

Immediate Past President – Susan Rebillot

##### Other Board Positions

Newsletter Editor – Anne Thorn

Member at Large - Shawn Smith

Member at Large - Candace Blydenburgh

##### Standing Committee Chairs

Communications – Susan Rebillot

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District Representatives – Prudence Justis  
Events/Social – Prudence Justis and Melissa Oefelein, Co-Chairs  
Membership – Carrie Vuori  
Planning and Zoning – Stephen Weisensale  
Public Safety – open

Nominations from the floor: Norma nominated Melody Imberg for President. Susan nominated Norma Murdoch-Kitt for Vice President.

The board slate was unanimously adopted.

V. Chili Cookoff Winner – Julie O’Kelly

VI. Adjourn