

Green Space March 25, 2024 Meeting

The first Green Space committee meeting of 2024 was held March 25. New members Andre Daugavietis, Sharon Carnes and Jay Fahn were welcomed by Tom Dodd and Ausra Zarins (Joan Solbeck was absent).

First order of business was to elect a chairperson and secretary. Tom Dodd is Chairperson and Ausra Zarins is Secretary. Secondly, it was decided that meetings would remain on the same schedule as before – 9 am on the last Monday of the month at the Administration Building.

The new members of the group were given an overview of Green Space previous activities. We talked about the 40+ Green Space lots, how we work at acquiring more of them and what's involved, how we have worked with ERG on work days and other community outreach goals. We were all in agreement that continuing our cooperative work with ERG is a good idea. Tom will reach out to ERG.

Questions that came up during our discussion:

Green Space has a \$1000.00 budget from the Town. Are there restrictions on how that money is used?

Who is our Town Council representative? They should be able to answer our budget questions.

We have brochures but where are they?

There is a map of Beverly Shores with Green Space lots marked. We need to find this and update it.

Besides working on acquiring more Green Space lots, our biggest goal is to keep Green Space in the community's eyes with continued outreach efforts. What these efforts might be will be discussed at future meetings.

The next Green Space meeting will be April 29.

Respectfully submitted,

Ausra Zarins

Green Space April 29, 2024 Meeting

The April meeting of Green Space was called to order at 9 am by Tom Dodd. Present: Sharon Carnes, Andre Daugavietis, Ausra Zarins and Town Liaison Candice Peterson-Smith. Absent: Jay Fahn and Joan Solbeck.

Candice informed us that our March meeting was not official due to a lack of posted notice. Therefore, our first order of business was to vote in Tom Dodd as Chairman and Ausra Zarins as Secretary. We also voted to keep our meeting at 9 am on the last Monday of the month at the Administration Building. On that note, we also changed the May meeting to Monday May 20th since there is a conflict with Memorial Day Monday on the 27th.

Answers to questions that we had last month:

Tom confirmed that we do have a \$1000.00 budget and did not know of any restrictions on it. Brochures are located in the Town Clerk's office. We will probably have to order some more soon. The map of Beverly Shores with Green Space lots has been located and Tom took on the job of marking last year's acquisitions on it.

We discussed possible workdays in collaboration with ERG. We liked Sept. 28 and Oct. 4. Tom will check with ERG to see if those dates will work.

On the topic of keeping Green Space in the community's awareness several ideas were discussed:

How do local Realtors feel about Green Space (if anything at all)? Would they consider directing possible clients with unbuildable lots towards Green Space? Tom will ask a few local Realtors.

Is there a possibility of Green Space purchasing properties through county tax sales? Sharon will look into that.

How is Green Space represented on the Town website? Or on the ABSR website? Ausra will check into that.

Can we have a presence at Summerfest? What could we do?

We discussed the ideas of placards on Green Space properties but decided to table that for a later time.

Lastly, we discussed Stewardship: How does our stewardship differ from newly formed Park & Recreation Committee? Andre will bring a copy of our ordinance to next month's meeting for discussion. Candice suggested exploring the possibility of working together with ERG, and Park & Recreation, on stewardship projects.

Meeting adjourned at 10am.

Respectfully submitted,

Ausra Zarins

Green Space meeting May 20, 2024

Meeting was called to order by Tom Dodd at 9am. Members present: Sharon Carnes, Andre Daugavietis, Jay Fahn, Joan Solbeck and Ausra Zarins and Town Liaison Candice Peterson-Smith.

Last month's minutes were approved.

The new email address was discussed; we all plan on installing it before our next meeting. The new virtual meeting link is not yet functioning. Town Clerk Ellen Hundt will inform us when it is.

Tom was contacted with a possible donation of a parcel of land. Unfortunately, it is located in the Town of Pines, so we had to decline.

Old business:

Tom approached ERG with our proposed workday collaboration. ERG has not yet had their meeting, so we do not have a confirmation.

Tom also spoke with several realtors regarding directing clients with unbuildable lots to GS. They were amiable to the idea. Next, we need to format a letter to realtors active in BS with GS information.

Sharon reported that the next county tax sale will be on Oct. 15 with a listing of properties posted 30 days prior. We will follow up on this closer to the sale date.

Ausra reported on our web presence: ABSR has a tab linking us to the Town website where we have a substantial presence which includes tabs for: the GS brochure, GS presentation to the Town Council from April 2019, property listing, FAQ, site visitation reports, meeting minutes & committee member list. We discussed having a larger presence on ABSR & possible articles in Sandtracks. Joan volunteered to put a reminder about GS onto the BS Facebook page.

Andre examined the GS ordinance which he felt had some unclear wordage but was workable. A question from Jay prompted a discussion on the differences between GS and the newly formed Parks & Recreation committee.

New business:

How to attract new donations? Sharon wondered if the accessor could generate a report of unbuildable lots in BS. She will investigate. Ausra will search for the Committee's old lists of possible lots – this may be a good starting point to a new list.

Ellen stopped by to give us an update on the new town email & virtual meeting set-up.

Our next meeting will be Monday, June 24th at 9am

Meeting adjourned at 10am.

Respectfully submitted,

Ausra Zarins

Green Space meeting June 24, 2024

Meeting was called to order by Tom Dodd at 9am. Members present: Sharon Carnes, Andre Daugavietis, Jay Fahn, Joan Solbeck & Ausra Zarins; also present: Town Liaison Candice Peterson-Smith.

Last month minutes were accepted.

Everyone has installed the new email. There are a few glitches but we believe they will be resolved shortly. Tom will do a "test email" in a few days to make sure that everyone is getting GS communications.

Old Business:

Tom has found our Beverly Shores map of GS properties and has added last years acquisitions.

ERG has confirmed "Digging in the Dunes" workdays for GS lots. They will be Saturday, September 28 and Friday, October 4. Tom will co-ordinate details with ERG president Neal Mulconrey closer to the dates and will make the announcements.

Joan volunteered to reach out by phone to local realtors re: directing clients with unbuildable lots towards GS.

Sharon obtained a list of unoccupied lots from the Porter County Assessor's office -- there are 874 such properties in Beverly Shores. Of course, not all of these are possible GS donations. Sharon is working on identifying potential donations. Ausra had a list from Town Clerk Ellen Hundt of Town owned (not GS) lots which might help Sharon eliminate a portion from that list.

Stewardship:

We continued to discuss how best to approach the huge task of stewarding our lots. Jay asked how we choose which lots to work on? Should we pick the worst lots? Previously we have chosen lots that are in "visible" areas of town where our work may be noticed. We all thought this was a good idea and that we should keep up these lots and add more as we can.

"Digging in the Dunes" attracts a small group of interested residents. How do we reach more? Could we entice more people by offering a post-workday volunteer's party?

Candice suggested that we contact other Town groups that also do stewardship: BS Parks & Recreation, ABSR Environmental Committee, ABSR Beautification Committee and, of course, ERG to see if we have common goals which we could work on together. Tom will contact these groups.

Our next meeting will be Monday July 29 at 9am.

Meeting adjourned at 10am.

Respectfully submitted,

Ausra Zarins

Green Space meeting July 29, 2024

Meeting was called to order at 9:20am after a few delays. Members present: Sharon Carnes, Andre Daugavietis, Jay Fahn, & Ausra Zarins; Tom Dodd attended by phone. Also present: Town Liaison Candice Peterson-Smith. Joan Solbeck was absent. Last month's minutes were accepted.

Since Tom could not attend personally, the committee felt it prudent to select a vice-chair to run the meeting if needed. Sharon was elected to this position.

Andre asked that we add to the agenda a discussion on changing our meeting start time.

Old Business:

Sharon continues to investigate the vacant unbuildable lots in Beverly Shores. She brought up 2 points:

1. There are 6 properties that she cannot find on the Beverly Shores Green Space website that she thinks should be there. She will chat with former GS member Margaret Willford to see if she can clarify and confirm.
2. It is difficult to look at the whole of Beverly Shores vacant lots at one time. It was suggested that we concentrate on one area at a time. After some discussion it was decided that to look at properties in the Lituania Park area. Sharon will investigate and report next month.

New Business:

Tom informed the group that Town budget requests are due on July 30. Discussion followed. It was decided that we would ask for \$5,500. This would allow us to hire a professional company to help clean up 1 or 2 new sites. Volunteers could then work on the upkeep of previous sites and in this way, we could expand our stewardship duties. We will also look into hiring a company to start cleanup on one of our lots to utilize this years' budgeted amount. Candice suggested, and then volunteered, to check with Erdelac Land Management LLC to see if they would be interested. Andre will research other companies as well. Questions that arose: Will there be a budget hearing? Will our current years \$1000 budget revert back to the General Fund or does it roll over?

Stewardship:

We continue to discuss how to work with the other BS groups towards stewardship. We thought it would be prudent to attend an ERG meeting to this end. We hope that Tom would do this (He had left the meeting by this time).

We asked Ellen Hundt, Town Clerk, to step into our meeting to answer our budget questions. She informed us that we have \$1,564.85 in a non-reverting fund and that if we do not use our \$1000 budgeted amount it will revert to the General fund.

Lastly, we discussed changing our meeting time to 10am since that is the time that Ellen opens her office and she is the one that can help us with our technical issues, unlock the doors if needed and answer questions. All voted to approve.

Our next meeting will be Monday August 26 at 10am. Meeting adjourned at 10:50am.

Respectfully submitted,

Ausra Zarins

Green Space meeting August 26, 2024

Meeting was called to order at 10:05 by Chairman Tom Dodd. Present were Joan Solbeck, Sharon Carnes, Jay Fahn, Ausra Zarins, Town Liaison Candice Peterson-Smith and Town Clerk Ellen Hundt. Andre Daugavietis was absent. Last month's minutes were accepted.

Old Business

Sharon has corrected the 6-property discrepancy on the Beverly Shores Green Space website that she found last month.

We discussed what area of Beverly Shores we should concentrate our search for possible acquisitions. The area across from Ltuanica Park along Ripplewater seems promising although there are steep slopes there. Sharon will complete further review using the Porter County GIS system.

Candice reported that Erdelac is interested our lot clean-up project. They charge \$1000 for half day (4 hours). Although expensive, they are qualified in invasive species removal. We will have a field trip on September 4, 9:30 am, to determine possible clean-up sites. After our field trip, we can decide on a specific property and have Erdelac's give a more exact estimate. We do want to use our \$1000. budget for this project.

The question arose: How will we determine lot boundary lines for these clean-up projects? Something to ponder during our field trip.

Per our discussion last month, Tom has spoken to ERG, Parks & Rec and ABSR regarding joint stewardship. He felt that ERB was most receptive, ABSR, somewhat receptive and Parks & Rec, least receptive to the idea. All the groups have their own specific projects and lack of volunteers causes them to be cautious of taking on more responsibility.

It was suggested that a Sunday Series talk on invasives could bring forth more volunteers.

Tom has learned that there are invasive species removal grants available. Ausra will chat with Mary Marvel to see if she might be interested in lending her grant writing expertise.

New Business

Tom received an email offering us a parcel at Beverly Dr & Constance. It is in an area where Shirley Heinz LT has several properties. Tom will contact SHLT to see if they are interested in this property. If they are not, we will proceed.

Ausra will coordinate with ERG regarding publicizing the two Digging in the Dunes dates (Sept. 28 and Oct. 4).

Meeting adjourned at 11:15.

Respectfully submitted,

Ausra Zarins

Green Space meeting September 30, 2024

Meeting was called to order at 10 AM by Chairman Tom Dodd at the Community House as the Ad Building windows were being replaced. Present were Andre Daugavietis, Jay Fahn, Ausra Zarins and Candice Peterson-Smith. Absent were Joan Solbeck and Sharon Carnes. August meeting minutes were approved.

Old Business

Since Sharon was not available, discussion on possible land donation candidates was postponed.

Candice reported that Erdelac is able to clean-up invasive species on the Neptune Av. lot for \$1000. (That lot was chosen during our September 4th field trip). All voted to approve. Candice will finalize details with Erdelac. We also discussed placing Green Space signage on the property after the job is done though nothing was decided on at this meeting.

Tom is continuing to explore invasive plant removal grants. We will have to get Town Council approval to proceed once we find an appropriate grant.

The lot at Beverly & Constance that was offered to us is of interest to Shirley Heinz and Tom has passed that information on to them.

Our Digging In The Dunes event that was scheduled for September 28 was cancelled due to wet conditions -- rescheduled for October the 12th. Candice reported that 10 people had signed up. She invited all of them to come to the October 4th or 12th sessions. We will revisit last year's site at Vera and Montana to finish it up and then move onto another chosen by Candice.

Candice reported that Town Council has not yet approved next year's budget.

There was no new business. Meeting adjourned at 10:50.

Our next meeting will be Monday, November 4th (this is a changed date due to scheduling conflicts)

Respectfully submitted,

Ausra Zarins

Green Space meeting November 4, 2024

Meeting was called to order at 10 AM by Chairman Tom Dodd at the Community House as the Ad Building windows were still being worked on. Present were Andre Daugavietis, Sharon Carnes, Jay Fahn, Ausra Zarins and Candice Peterson-Smith. Joan Solbeck was absent. September meeting minutes were approved.

Old Business

Sharon presented a map of possible lot donations located around Lituania Park. Discussion followed. We were most interested in several lots on the west side of Ripplewater as they adjoined lots that GS already owns. There was also a property that Shirley Heinz LT had offered to GS last year that did not have a clean title. Tom will check with Shirley Heinz LT to see if that issue can be resolved.

Candice reported that the contract with Erdelac needs to be signed. They have agreed to get the Neptune property work done prior to the end of the year. Once Tom signs the contract Candice will follow up with Erdelac. She also feels confident that they would be willing to work on other projects with us.

Tom continues to explore invasive plant removal grants.

Candice reported that the October 4th Digging In The Dunes event was well attended. However, the second date (October 12) was cancelled due to low participation. In reviewing this event, we felt that we could do a better job with advertising next year.

Tom and Sharon have been investigating the possibility of purchasing lots through the Porter County tax sale. The results of this year's sale have not yet been published. Sharon volunteered to get results from the County.

Our budget request of \$5500.00 has been approved by the Town Council, subject to final approval.

Tom felt that since our idea of working together with other organizations on stewardship received a lukewarm response, we should table the idea for now. The committee concurred.

New business

Next month we will all bring ideas for next year's agenda including: ways to increase GS exposure (possibly thru a Sunday Series type of meeting), and, how we will utilize our budget.

Meeting adjourned at 11 am. Our next meeting will be Monday, November 25th at 10 am.

Respectfully submitted,

Ausra Zarins