

General Community Meeting via Zoom

Date: July 31, 2022

Called to order 4:42 by Devon Thawe, President

Opening prayer Jesanya Scale Menzies, Assistant PRO

Members in attendance: 44

AGENDA

DUES COLLECTION AND FINANCIAL REPORT

Treasurer, Peter Hutchinson, informed that only 50 persons contribute to dues while only 31 persons (of the same 50) contributed to the Wall Project. As of June 2022 the association had \$661, 877.89 however this figure would be significantly reduced due to July's expenditure. July's financial statement will be released shortly.

How can we improve dues collection?

Donald Tomlinson suggested that we do not raise the dues because there are other ways to improve collection. He suggested online payment using NCB or Scotiabank because there is no cost to transfer from NCB to NCB.

He also suggested that the association utilize the services of a bicycle collector who goes from door to door. Presently, we only reach persons who enter and exit the community between certain hours on a Saturday.

Finally, he said, publish the lot numbers of those who pay as a means of encouraging other persons to pay.

Marcia (First Vice President) raised a concern about privacy about publishing lot numbers of those who paid. People are not coming out to the gate to pay dues and the VIP option is utilized by very few people. Persons are still choosing not to give because it is optional (cannot force persons to pay can only encourage those who pay).

Dillion McLaughlin said that he was supportive of the door-to-door collections and agreed with publishing lot numbers of those who are compliant.

President Thawe stated that there was an initiative by the association that road monitors would get 10% commission from door to door collections over a 3 hours period but persons were reluctant to volunteer.

Deniese Sealey asked whether there was a charge to keep an inactive account with NCB? She also asked, who is volunteering to walk and collect? Volunteers are needed to maintain the dues at the current rate, she concluded.

FUNDRAISING

Marcia presented on the upcoming Cake Sale Fundraiser. She advised the residents that the next meeting at the end of August would be a hybrid with persons meeting at the park as well as online. The zoom credentials will benefit persons living overseas and others who cannot attend face to face while face to face will benefit senior citizens, those without zoom access and everyone else.

The cake Sale would be distributed during the hybrid meeting and the association is targeting every household. The plan is to take orders, issue tickets and collect prior to the event. The cost of a slice of cake will be \$1,000. The association is also seeking sponsorship to make the event more meaningful by hosting a back to school treat simultaneously.

President Thawe highlighted that volunteers are needed to buy cakes, slice the cakes, package and serve cakes. He also mentioned the need for a secretary as the association was referred by SDC to an organization which could provide sponsorship but requested evidence of organization such as copies of minutes. We have not had any minutes for the past three meetings.

NSWMA ADDRESS BY MISS RACHAEL REID

NSWMA is a regulatory body but the actual collection and disposal of community waste in this region is managed by MPM that serves St. Thomas, St. Catherine and Kingston and St. Andrew. Miss Rachael Reid introduced herself as a representative of MPM which collects, transports and dispose of solid waste safely. The purpose of her address was to remind residents of their responsibility in generation, containment and proper disposal of solid waste while answering any questions related to the operations of the MPM.

She implored residents to generate less waste by: buying in bulk which leads to less packaging to dispose of, reuse/ re-purpose old items, for example, donate clothing instead of throwing away, encourage communities to recycle (reduce, reuse and recycle), make compost, and use organic waste in the yard at the root of fruit trees. She also encouraged residents to properly bag, tie the garbage bags and containerize garbage properly. Do not put waste on the street on the main roads as this affects the environment, she cautioned.

Call the MPM when there has been a lag in garbage collection. She explained that there are resource constraints but hopes that with the promise of 50 trucks to serve island-wide that MPM (being the largest region) will get 15 of the 50 trucks. Addition of trucks to fleet will increase the efficiency of garbage collection in the area.

The MPM has sought to improve collection by introducing night collection, trucks must collect a full load for each trip, the trucks are paid per trip and the truck should be full before leaving the community.

Bulky waste (for example: tree cuttings, construction debris, and old appliances) are not collected by the domestic garbage trucks but residents can be referred to commercial waste department that dispose of these at a cost to the resident. The commercial waste collector is issued a ticket purchased from NSWMA to dispose of bulky waste at a proper disposal site (at a minimal cost of between \$1500 and \$2000). Failure to dispose of solid waste at the correct place can result in a fine of between \$10,000 and a million dollars.

To contact the Customer Relations Department residents may use the following numbers: ((876) 4483220, 876-849-6179, and Rachael Reid (876) 4483301.

Karim Sewell (PRO) thanked Miss Reid for her informative presentation.

PARISH COUNCIL ADDRESS

CEO of the St. Catherine Municipal Corporation, Mr. Andre Griffiths, addressed the residents.

He informed that the Corporation is responsible for residents from the womb to the tomb. They deal with burials, building approvals, advertisement, places of amusement, street lights, and property taxes. St. Catherine is divided into Parish Council Divisions and our councilor is Authrum Thompson but Jennifer Hull also responds to requests from our division.

There is a bi-annual allocation of 1.8 million dollars from parochial revenue to fund patching, cleaning, bushing and draining to road ways in the division. Some councilors save up the allocations until it is enough to do some substantial work.

He stated that every street light has a yellow tag with a unique number so for concerns with a street light the planning department of the corporation needs to be contacted and they will take the unique number to follow up. Alternatively, residents can download the 'My JPS App' to report and track the progress of malfunctioning street lights. For installing new street lights the councilor can make a request through Parish Council to the Ministry of Local Government to get new/additional street lights on the basis of safety concerns with evidence from the local police of reports of crime in the area.

The property taxes help to fund many of the operations of the council and it was noted that the compliance rate was poor for Whitewater Meadows.

President Thawe raised a concern that more lights are needed for Hartlands Road however Mr. Griffiths stated that the necessary infrastructure is not present currently for the installation of new street lights, for instance, there are no secondary wires.

A resident wanted to know if building a wall to enclose her property would require parish council approval. Mr. Griffiths said that walls 4 feet 6 inches above the ground or shorter do not require permission to erect.

Wayne expressed a concern about the large potholes on Old Harbour main road between Homestead and Sydenham. Mr. Griffiths could not speak to about it because NWA is responsible for main roads.

Captain Chin wanted to know, what was the status of the CDC with regards to communication with the community and the cooperation? Mr. Griffiths promised feedback soon.

Jesanya Menzies asked how much time it takes on average to get building plans approved by the parish council. The response was that it took eight weeks to get Building Plan approval once everything is place as the team meets once per month.

Peter Hutchinson wanted to know if the parish council was responsible for the road markings at intersection of Hartland Roads and Old Harbour Road and if those could be re-done. Mr. Griffiths committed to get markings done soon.

Dillion McLaughlin asked about the expiration of building plan approval to which Mr. Griffiths responded that two permits are given simultaneously (a planning permit and building approval). Once building approval is received then construction should commence within 6 months. After two years one would have to resubmit the documents altogether but under two years they would just pay a portion of the cost to renew the permit.

Karim Sewell expressed thanks on behalf of the association to Mr. Griffiths for his timely presentation.

WALL PROJECT

Donald Tomlinson presented on the Wall Project. He stated that there were notable achievements: 77% or 220 feet of foundation is complete, all 600 blocks donated by residents have been laid and he expressed commendation to the following persons (Mr. Taylor (for cement), Damion (for contributing labourers), Dixon and Miles.

The next phase, he said, includes constructing columns, filling pockets and laying 1000 blocks. For the next phase, we need: 1000 blocks, persons can donate 100/200 blocks, 50 bags of cement, 5 yards of gravel, 5 bags of sand and steel, 3 cases of bottle water (C. Hylton volunteered a case of water) and cash contributions of \$200,000 to pay work men.

The project began in May 2022 and it has been two months of project work. The pace is slow 42% of project cost has been funded thus far which is commendable in light of the community's history.

Janeen Taylor suggested a walk-a-thon along with the cake sale to improve the fundraising efforts; however, President Thawe rebutted that we would need coordinators, and administrators to make the project work. Miss Taylor volunteered.

Gracelyn Edwards asked if the Parish Council has given approval for the association to block off the throughway. Peter responded that there is no throughway between Sydenham and Whitewater Meadows.

CCTV UPDATE

President Thawe presented on the CCTV. He informed residents that he met with the contractor, and needed JPS approval to put the cameras on their poles. However, approval from JPS was not forthcoming and as such the association will have to purchase poles from TankWell and the cameras will be installed shortly after that. He stressed the need road monitors or street monitors to press trigger to the response team. He also told residents that we could not afford solar camera (there is only \$400,000 in bank for CCTV) and the expressed disappointment that the Project committee is defunct.

NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH

Devon Thawe also presented on the national meeting for the neighbourhood watch. He expressed the need for a volunteer to lead the neighbourhood watch. Squatters are a threat to safety and security and should be reported. If squatters spend 13 years unmolested on a lot they could end up getting the property by paying up taxes. Objects that can be used as weapons should not be left on your property. Put your lot number on your property; this help response teams to find houses in distress efficiently. Engage the youths and break up street corner cliques that matriculate into gangs. Report domestic violence and make use of safety shelters.

THE EXECUTIVE PLANS FOR SECOND YEAR

1. Engage the youths: fix the park by adding a multi-purpose court and set up football team/field.
2. Get donations through the MP and NGO to assist with developing the multi-purpose court. This cannot be done simultaneously with the wall project and CCTV project.

OTHER BUSINESS

Jesanya Menzies mentioned that residents living on Flinchly Avenue have been complaining about the odour from the sewage and queried whether Cancara could address the residents on the matter at the next meeting. At least three persons of the 44 persons in attendance stated that they were badly affected by the stench of the sewage (Pearlina, Petrena and C. Hylton). Pearlina

stated that she was told by a representative of CanCara that manholes needing to be properly covered could be the culprit for the odour. Devon Thawe stated that it would be useful to have a secretary to pen a letter and collect signatures from affected persons. The ministry of Health could also be contacted. Captain Chin told residents that there is a current civil suit against CanCara and that persons can register their complaints which can be used against them.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:45pm by the president.