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January Meeting Minutes January 18, 2018

Mark Deshon called the meeting to order at WILMAPCO at 4:00 p.m.

Member attendees: Mark Deshon (Chair), Bob McBride (Treasurer), Tom Price, Caitlyn Strong, Karl Hassler, Barb Hughes, and Ian Peters

Partner liaison attendees:

Bike Delaware: John Bare

DelDOT: Paul Moser

City of Newark: Joe Spadafino (Parks & Rec), Mike Fortner (Planning & Development)

WILMAPCO and Newark Bike Project: Heather Dunigan

University of Delaware: Ban Phommachanh (Parking), Ofc. Michelle Haney (Police)

Guests: none

Adoption of meeting minutes from December 20, 2017

Lester Stein's draft of the minutes, which had been circulated to all members and partner liaisons was adopted unanimously. Lester has recently announced that he can no longer serve as Secretary. During BikeNewark's December partnership meeting, Lester was thanked for his nine-month service as Secretary to BikeNewark. Caitlynn Strong reported that a search for a replacement Secretary has begun through our social network connections; Mark Deshon and Bob McBride will share minute-taking duties until a new volunteer is found.

Financial Report as of January 18, 2018

Bob shared the financial report as of the meeting day and thanked contributors from among the membership of BikeNewark, noting that we also received a generous contribution from Steven Hegedus.

Bob said that he recognizes that credit card contributions through PayPal incur a modest fee to our organization. John Bare said that Carol Ireland had told him that if an organization were a 501(c)(3), it would incur a lower fee rate.

We did not discuss the operating results for the calendar year 2017; these were overall Positive, but our major expenses occur during the winter (1st) and spring (2nd) quarters. Overall, results from Dec 31 to Jan 18 were positive.

Expenses this month were \$346.00, mostly for the renewal of our membership in the League of American Bicyclists (LAB) and the liability insurance offered through LAB for BikeNewark activities, such as First Friday rides and other events.

Revenue for the period since our last partnership meeting totaled \$100; the cash balance carried forward is 507.87. Net proceeds from contributions through PayPal of \$241.84 are included in the cash balance. No other financial liabilities were known at this time, leaving BikeNewark with a total fund balance of \$749.71.

Voting members attending then adopted the financial report.

Discussion of movement toward 501(c)(3) status and officers/directors liability insurance through LAB.

Most educational and advocacy organizations like BikeNewark and Bike Delaware seek nonprofit, tax-exempt status as defined in IRS regulations 501(c)(3). In the past, this allowed contributions made to organizations be deducted from individual tax returns. It also forms the basis for eligibility for most charitable giving by other for-profit or nonprofit organizations. An organization must account for all the contributions in an annual nonprofit tax return (IRS form 990), even before the IRS approves 501(c)(3) status. Bob will prepare this report and present it at a future meeting when we can discuss it.

John and Bob noted that application for 501(c)(3) nonprofit status in the past was a slow and onerous task. However, it has recently become a bit easier due to an interactive online process. It costs \$400 to apply with no guarantee that the application will be successful. As of now, no further fees for 501c(3) status once granted are charged.

There was some discussion about legal restrictions in and around “lobbying” practices with regard to becoming a 501(c)(3) organization. Engaging in politics is forbidden, and as long as we concentrate on issue advocacy, as opposed to “direct” lobbying, we'd be OK. John noted that if revenues/contributions to an organization were less than 50,000 annually there are few restrictions on lobbying activities. Heather Dunigan reminded us that, should we do any such lobbying, BikeNewark would no longer be able to meet at WILMAPCO. She also suggested that Bob check with the DANA website (delawarenonprofit.org) for tips.

With respect to LAB liability insurance for officers/directors, a \$500 premium would insure the Executive Board of BikeNewark. Several voiced support for obtaining this insurance. Mark said he supports it too, but he doesn't want BikeNewark to begin to have to focus too heavily on fundraising, just for BikeNewark to exist. We concluded that it would be a good idea to seek a corporate sponsor to help defray some of these costs. Bob was asked to dig into this further and bring details for discussion and decision-making to our February partnership meeting. Heather noted that the Newark Bike Project felt the need to have officers and directors liability insurance.

Status LAB Bicycle Friendly Community application

Heather reported that the application is due on February 13. She is getting the final draft information ready before sharing it with the City and subsequently sending the application to LAB. Members offered help if she needed it, and Heather indicated that she would be sending Mark and others some specific areas in which she needs input.

Initial discussion concerning spring events

- ***Bike Central – safety checkpoint event dates***

Ban Phommachanh reported that the dates for Bike Central safety checkpoint events at UD campus have been set for March 14, April 18, and April 11. The location will be at the Smith Hall bike-racks area, since there is a high concentration of bikes and bicyclist traffic there. We discussed perhaps moving one of the dates to The Green for higher visibility but did not decide to do this. There was some interest in having similar events at dusk (Bike Lights on Demand), because the idea of putting lights on bikes is more important when it is dark. After discussion, we concluded that adding such an event is more important than having a third Bike Central date, so Ban said we'd drop the April 11 date.

- ***Mayor's Fun Ride***

Joe Spadafino reported that the Mayor's Fun Ride is scheduled for Saturday, May 5. BikeNewark may be asked to help in organizing or working on the day of the ride.

- ***Bike to Work Day***

Bike to Work Day is scheduled for May 18. Mike Fortner will again be leading our event efforts. He will organize a committee to help, which will involve members of BikeNewark's Education and Encouragement committee. The consensus was to ask New Castle County Executive Matt Meyer to be the keynote speaker at the event this year.

- ***Bike to School Week***

This event will occur in May; but specifics have not been set. Randi Novacoff of WILMAPCO will probably work on organizing the event with help from BikeNewark.

Quick committee updates

- ***Communications***

The following summarizes the committee meeting that took place on Jan. 12.

The committee discussed ways to enrich BikeNewark's social media outlets and website. We encourage everyone to look at whichever of the social media platforms they use— Facebook, Twitter, Instagram or others. Currently, Sean Watson said we have over 60 followers on Twitter and over 440 friends on Facebook. Caitlynn was asked to advertise for a volunteer social media coordinator, understanding that in the absence of such an individual, Sean will do his best to work with Twitter and Instagram, and he and others will continue to post to Facebook. In particular, we noted that last winter our Facebook "winter bicycling photo" contest was very valuable in terms of engagement and wondered if we should do likewise again this year with another contest of some sort.

Mark will continue to manage the website at this point. We discussed inviting guests to write articles for our website blog. UD professor and dedicated bicycle-commuter Ismat Shah has agreed already to write about bike commuting. We'll be inviting others in the near future.

We briefly discussed sponsorships and thought that Mark and Susan Grasso should pay a visit to Trek and talk with manager Howard Brown to see how Trek might want to help

BikeNewark. Another idea is to initiate a “Giving Tuesday” campaign for after Thanksgiving this year.

We talked about the need for First Friday Rides posters to be distributed widely on Main Street, and Barb Hughes will be working with the committee on this.

- ***Education and Encouragement***

No report this month

- ***Engineering***

The following summarizes the committee meeting that took place on Jan. 5.

The bulk of the meeting centered around working through BikeNewark’s list of infrastructure improvement goals and assigning members of the Engineering committee to take responsibility for initial action on behalf of BikeNewark. We decided it best that a few consolidated letters be sent out rather than one for each item on the goals list. Thus, they have been somewhat grouped by type and time window. Mark offered to create a baseline template that could be used for each communication.

We talked very briefly about the three options DelDOT had proposed for the I-95/SR896 interchange project. The timeline for this project is that construction would begin sometime in 2023. Though we leaned more toward the double-diamond interchange model (rather than either of the more expensive flyover models), we agreed that BikeNewark needs to petition DelDOT to provide detailed designs that meet Complete Streets criteria, which would include provisions for north-south movement through the interchange area by bicycles. Mark will draft a letter to DelDOT.

- ***Safety and Enforcement***

Tom Price reported that, whereas there has not been a committee meeting since November, he’s working on setting up the next meeting. Ofc. Michelle Haney of UD Police brought a stock of printed safety cards, which were co-designed by BikeNewark and printed by UD Police, for BikeNewark to use during Bike Central and other BikeNewark events.

- ***Evaluation***

Though there has not been recent committee activity, Mark and Paul Moser reported that a summary of the data collected about the contraflow-lane trial at the North College Avenue and East Main Street intersection had been sent to City of Newark.

- ***Membership and Volunteer Coordination***

Caitlynn reported that a request for a Secretary has been sent to our normal BikeNewark volunteer base (about 60 people) without a response yet. She will expand this to the UD classifieds system as well as Craigslist for Delaware volunteer requests. Heather offered to expand requests to the Newark Bike Project volunteer list.

One talking point to suggest to Mayor Sierer for February City Council meeting

The consensus was that Mayor Sierer should mention the City’s Bicycle Friendly Community application to LAB, which WILMAPCO, working in conjunction with BikeNewark, helped draft.

Mark noted that due to upcoming elections in April for three City Council positions, there are likely to be important changes within city government. John noted that it might be a good idea to ask bicycle-specific questions to the candidates before the election so that their thinking is known. He noted that Bike Delaware has done this with candidates in past local and state elections. Karl Hassler thought this was a good strategy. He thought it might be a good idea for Bike Delaware to formulate and ask the questions on behalf of BikeNewark, since they have experience in this.

Old or new business

- ***Choosing one idea/project for grant application to White Clay Bicycle Club***

Although we received a grant last year from White Clay Bicycle Club, we are eligible to apply again this year. The deadline is Jan 19 (tomorrow). Mark shared some ideas that Susan had submitted for discussion for projects that might be funded through such a grant. The following ideas are not in any particular order. Ban contributed idea no. 7 at the meeting.

1. Printed monthly advertising (most likely in the *Newark Post*) that partners BikeNewark with a local business and features a biking message, profiling bike-friendly businesses in Newark, then make a calendar of all that can be distributed
2. Metal signs for bike racks about safety and civility
3. Portable bike rack for BikeNewark and City events (City to store)
4. More pop-up street projects like the Orchard Road mini-circle (“tactical urbanism”)
5. Providing bike racks at businesses completely or as partner
6. Ways to explore connections between East Main Street and Delaware Avenue for bicycles, so that bike riders do not have to go around a very long block
7. Creating two-hour bike safety seminars (online or in person) for people who have been cited for breaking bike rules/laws, participation in which would remove the citation from one’s record

The consensus was decided to have Mark request a \$1,000 grant to cover bike safety activities, specifically for metal signs for popular city bike racks about safety and civility.

- ***Participation in the 2018 Walkable/Bikeable Delaware Summit***

The date has not been set for this year. We should expect to help.

Our next monthly meeting will be Thursday, February 15, at 4:00 at WILMAPCO.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:15 p.m.

Minutes taken by Bob McBride and Mark Deshon