



MRTNA GENERAL MEETING MINUTES  
Sunday, March 9, 2014

**Middle River Terrace  
Neighborhood Association**

The March 9, 2014 general meeting of the MRT Neighborhood Association was called to order by President Domingo Cid at 4:02pm at the Middle River Terrace Park pavilion.

The President asked for a motion to approve the meeting agenda. Tony made the motion and Laura seconded; all voted in the affirmative.

The President also asked for a motion to approve the minutes of the February 9<sup>th</sup> meeting. Charlie made the motion to approve and Debbie seconded; all voted in the affirmative.

Officer Tom Gestal from the FLPD was present and gave a report on crime in the neighborhood. He reported that there has been a concentrated effort by police in our neighborhood and it has led to an overall drop in crime. Of particular concern has been residential burglaries and he reported there had been a 50% decrease from the previous months report.

**TREASURER'S REPORT:**

Tony Fiori presented the current treasurer's report that showed the following:

Beginning balance    01/31/14                    \$3,192.14

Income:

|                      |              |
|----------------------|--------------|
| New memberships      | 1660.00      |
| <u>50/50 drawing</u> | <u>11.00</u> |
| TOTAL INCOME         | \$1671.00    |

Expenses:

|   |              |
|---|--------------|
| Florida Power and Light                   | 10.06        |
| <u>Council of Civic Assoc. Membership</u> | <u>50.00</u> |
| TOTAL EXPENSES                            | \$ 60.06     |

Final Balance 2/28/14                    \$4,778.08

The treasurer's report also noted that the association had received a \$25 donation via a check that was missing the signature. The check was returned to the sender, requesting his signature.

## **OLD BUSINESS:**

### **Code Enforcement:**

The President reported on the meeting that he and Tony had with Code Supervisor Jeri Pryor and another representative from the City of Fort Lauderdale Department of Sustainable Development Code Enforcement Division. He reported that they were informed that the City has instituted a policy to begin foreclosure proceedings against properties. Properties such as those in our neighborhood that are boarded would be prime candidates for foreclosure. This would not include any home that is homesteaded as it is protected by state law from foreclosure.

### **Juvenile Offenders:**

Domingo reported that Commissioner Trantalis and others had met with the juvenile justices in regards to our concerns of repeat offenders being released so quickly back into our neighborhoods. He stated that the Commissioner hopes to have a report to the association within the month.

### **South Parcel / Park Contamination:**

Domingo reported that the issue had been raised by Laura about her concern that the contamination of the south parcel could have also affected the MRT Park. Domingo reported that he had inquired of the City manager if there were any plans to test the park property and he was told there are no current plans. Tim stated that when the property for the park was purchased back in 1998, the City did do a test and found no contamination. Domingo will consult with Commissioner Trantalis to see what can be done to pursue having the test done to make sure none of the contamination has seeped into the park property. Laura reported that the levels of contamination are higher than initially thought and she had contacted Broward County officials about her concerns. She is expecting a reply from them early next week. Steve reported that he had called the EPA (Environmental Protection Agency) about the contaminated land and his concern that it was not being addressed. He spoke with a Mr. Lwierzicki and was assured that the EPA will open a case and investigate the lot as well as the park property.

### **Webpage:**

Domingo reported that he has a meeting this week with Jeff, the web designer of our webpage. He is projecting it should be up and running very soon. All of the information requested had been submitted and all that remained was some final details. The association cost to host the website will be \$13.00 a month.

### **St. Patrick's Day Parade:**

Domingo reported that the association had a good representation at the Fort Lauderdale St Patrick's Day parade. Our association marched with the Council of Civic Association and we led the procession with our new MRTNA banner. Steve reported the total cost for the shirts, supplies, and hats came to \$66.00. That cost was divided between the members who participated. The board had previously approved the association expenditure for the banner which came to a total of \$155.66.

## CRA Report:

Domingo reported on the recent CRA meeting he attended. He said the main issue of the meeting was the desire to expand the boundaries of the CRA to include NE 16 St to the north, 15th or Federal Hwy to the east and I-95 to the west. He reported that as the representative of the MRTNA he opposed the expansion however it passed on a vote of 5-1. There was discussion and questions about what the expansion of the CRA would mean for our neighborhood. Domingo reported the expansion would actually now include all areas that were originally proposed as part of the CRA. Tim stated that expanding the CRA would bring more tax dollars back into our neighborhood. Steve opposed the expansion claiming it would lead to changes in zoning which would alter the character of our neighborhood. Laura also opposed the expansion, expressing concerns about those controlling the distribution of those funds fairly. Steve made a motion that the association takes a stand against the expansion of the CRA. Laura seconded the motion. Domingo questioned whether that was necessary as he had already voted against the expansion as our representative. Debbie and Dick both raised questions, feeling that the members did not understand the issue well enough to make an informed decision. Dick suggested that before the association takes a stand, we request someone from the City attend our next meeting to explain the expansion and what it would mean for our neighborhood. The President called for a vote on the motion on the floor and it carried by a vote of 6 to 1 with one abstention. Debbie then made a motion that we request someone from the City attend our next meeting to inform us and answer questions. Dick seconded the motion and it carried without dissent.

## Dixie Highway 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary

Steve reported on a meeting that he and Laura attended as MRTNA representatives on 2/25 at the City office of Hal Barnes to discuss the anniversary celebration. Others present included Ryan Henderson, Junia and Shery from Neighborhood Support, Daniel Katz from Fort Lauderdale High School, Leigh Ann Henderson, Wilton Manors Assistant City Manager and David Archacki, Wilton Manors Utilities Director. Steve reported that the City will assist in coordinating the parade. Wilton Manors will be joining with us and will be looking into using Equality Park as the staging area. It was also reported that this year was the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Fort Lauderdale High School and school officials would like to discuss ways we can combine the two events. They would like to have a ribbon cutting event at the school as well for their new campus. Hal Barnes advised that he would work on food trucks as well as food donations for the event. Laura also reported that the principal at the High School is developing a small museum section at the school that will include history on Dixie Highway.

## **NEW BUSINESS:**

Domingo announced that he had been contacted by Bob LaMendola from Community Affairs at the FL Department of Health for Broward County. He would like to speak to our association about public health issues. The members present felt this would be of interest to the residents and Domingo will invite him to speak for 20 minutes at our next general meeting.

Laura raised an issue of concern about a proposed City initiative concerning housing for the chronically homeless. She felt we should look into the issue and how it might affect our neighborhood which already has several such facilities. She stated that there was an article in today's issue of the Sun Sentinel and encouraged everyone to read it.

Debbie raised a concern about people who are bringing their dogs into the park. Dogs are not allowed in the park however it seems it is not enforced and is becoming a problem. Dick suggested she might want to contact Parks and Recreation with her concern and they can alert Park Rangers.

Steve reported that the fence at the high school that kids were climbing over to get access to the neighborhood, has been repaired. He said he was told that when the renovations are complete, there will be one central point of entry to the school grounds which should alleviate some of the problems.

Debbie raised questions about the status of the Neighborhood Stabilization Program. She said a house at 1429 NE 5 Terrace was part of the program however nothing has changed and it remains a problem property. Domingo will check into it and find out the status of the program in regards to this property.

### **Upcoming Meetings:**

Domingo announced the following upcoming meetings:

Next BOD Meeting: April 10, 2014 – Annie Beck House – 5:30pm

Next General Meeting – April 13th - MRT Park – 4:00pm

Dick made a motion to adjourn the meeting, Tony seconded the motion and all voted in the affirmative. The President adjourned the meeting at 5:12pm.

Respectfully submitted,

*Dick Eaton*

Dick Eaton  
Secretary MRTNA