

SMILE Board Meeting Minutes
January 15, 2025
at SMILE Station

Main Website

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Procedural

OFFICERS PRESENT: President David Dugan [*via ZOOM*]; Vice President Elizabeth Milner; Treasurer Pat Hainley; Secretary Eric Norberg
BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT: Grant Huling, Tracy Fisher, Elaine O’Keefe, Jason Sturgill, Jim Friscia [*via ZOOM*], Bob Burkholder, Zack Duffly, Suzanne Kruse
GUESTS: Diana Collins, Principal at Llewellyn Elementary School, and several unidentified SMILE members

President David Dugan called the meeting to order at 7:31 p.m., and observed that a quorum had been attained. The minutes of the December 18, 2024, Board Meeting were then reviewed; Suzanne Kruse made a motion that the minutes be approved as submitted, and Elaine O’Keefe seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

There was a small delegation of neighbors present, including the Principal of Llewellyn Elementary School, Diana Collins, who emerged as a spokesperson concerning the school’s application for a Metro “Nature in the Neighborhood” grant. The school is looking to remove some paved surfaces around the school, thus improving the playground and the environment around the school, and the school is seeking a relationship with SMILE – specifically, seeking our support for their application, “hopefully with a resource commitment”. They also will eventually seek a letter from us to confirm our partnership.

Elaine O’Keefe said SMILE would want much more detailed information about all this before we could determine whether we can support this project – and, if so, just how. The group expects to be back to continue this conversation. However, Elaine made a motion that SMILE become a “potential partner” in this project, pending further information, and Zack Duffly seconded the motion, which carried without objection.

The main matter on the agenda for this meeting came next: A detailed discussion of our planned ByLaws update, and the specific changes contemplated for presentation to the SMILE membership at an upcoming General Meeting for approval. Elaine O’Keefe, who has been coordinating this project, led the discussion. The first matter concerned the change of the President’s term limitations, which at present is “two consecutive one-year terms”. We sought input from our new Coalition, but having received none, we informally consulted Nancy Champlin on the options. She recommended a term limit of three consecutive two-year terms, retaining the current option of returning as President after a hiatus. The Board seemed generally favorable to this suggestion, although Eric Norberg questioned the need for term limitations at all, since the President is not compelled to serve for that whole term, and at any rate would be up for re-election repeatedly until the term limitation would be reached, and could be voted out of the office at any one of them. A straw poll of the Board confirmed preference for the term limits suggested by Nancy Champlin, and the Board will recommend that change in the ByLaws update presentation to the SMILE membership.

The next change was soften the option of the Board to oust a Board Member who misses at least three consecutive Board Meetings – an option which to date SMILE had never chosen. It had been suggested that the three-consecutive-month limit could add, “without dialogue with the President and Board, or ongoing participation in SMILE activities”. There was much discussion; Elaine O’Keefe commented that any requirement should be for Board Meetings only, since Board Members are only encouraged, but not required, to attend General Meetings. President Dugan suggested adding “unexcused” to the phrase “absence at three consecutive Board Meetings”, but he thought we should require notice in advance to the Board Member found to be in jeopardy of removal (which is not now in the ByLaws), and should require a 2/3 vote of the Board (8 votes) for any such removal.

On the matter of SMILE Standing Committees – those that are named and required in our ByLaws – the new suggestion is that they be limited to Land Use, Transportation, Finance, and Election, and omit listing all other committees, which would remain “ad hoc”. Jim Friscia said he strongly believes that Communications should also be a standing committee, since its functions are essential for SMILE to meet its commitments to the community; the Board agreed to add it to the list of Standing Committees to be presented to the SMILE membership.

There followed a discussion of the “communications requirements” of the Communications Committee – the Board agreed to remove the specific avenues of communication stated, and replace them with “SMILE communications channels”, with the only specific requirement being posting communications on the SMILE general website.

Miscellaneous other changes contemplated in the ByLaws revisions were briefly discussed. Among them, changing the quorum at General Meetings from 20 to 15 SMILE members; allowing the President to move General and Board Meetings to other dates than Wednesday evenings as needed, although the Board thought the “usual” dates (first and third Wednesday evenings) for these meetings should remain in the ByLaws, but the start time need not be. Another change would specifically allow remote (online) participation in Board and General Meetings, online Board votes, and online elections. (In the latter case, allowing more than one day for Board Elections – “up to one week”.) An additional change would allow vacant Board Seats to remain vacant if the vacancy occurs within four months of the next Board Election. With the Board consensus in support of those changes, the discussion of the ByLaws updates the Board contemplates recommending to the SMILE membership concluded.

A woman present spoke briefly about her planned children’s play facility. Then Zack Duffly asked David Schoellhamer, Chair of the Land Use Committee, about the current Oaks Park application for a zoning variance from the City of Portland to accommodate a planned new “drop tower” ride at the amusement park; the last day for testimony on the application at City Hall is January 16. No official comments are coming from SMILE due to the short time available for comment, said Schoellhamer. After a brief discussion, President Dugan said that, without enough information available to support taking a position, he did not favor SMILE taking any position on the matter at this time.

With no other matters on the agenda or offered from the floor, Pat Hainley moved the meeting be adjourned; Suzanne Kruse seconded the motion; and the subsequent and apparently unanimous vote in favor adjourned the meeting at 9:02 p.m.