

Minutes of the Mesquite Ranch Neighborhood Association

Special Meeting – September 2, 2008 – Call to Order

The Annual Meeting of the MRNA was called to order at 6:42 pm. The following board members were present:

Randall Pierce
Gordon Robinson
Lorraine Faoro
Sylvia Katvala
Chip Ellis

A Quorum was noted for the record.

Preface to Special Meeting

Randy Pierce explained that the meeting would be dedicated to discussing and voting on the community position regarding the Marquette Street entrance to Senita Elementary. The request to make the September meeting a special meeting for this purpose was made, voted on, and approved at the Annual Meeting in August. Randy stated that, as a special meeting, discussion would be limited to the Marquette Street issue and the usual call to audience would not occur. A resident expressed concern that no call to audience would be made due to the fact that no call to audience had occurred at the August meeting. Randy explained that the August meeting was the Annual Meeting, requiring that the agenda be geared toward election of new board members. He also indicated that, as with the Annual Meeting, resident concerns could be discussed once the main agenda items were taken care of, if time allowed.

Randy announced that the annual Ward 4 Back to School Bash was held on August 9th, and thanked volunteers from the community that had participated.

Randy announced that the Fall Community BBQ would be held on September 13th and invited all residents to attend.

Randy stated for the record that two board votes occurring via email had occurred during the previous month. These votes included funding for the erection of fencing at the Marquette Street access to restrict foot traffic in the 5-foot strip between the east perimeter wall and barbed-wire fence (approved 4-1 with 1 abstention), and reimbursement procedures for expenses incurred by volunteers in preparing for community events (approved 5-1).

Nomination of New Board Members due to Resignation

Randy Pierce announced that due to the resignation of Jon Aitken from the board, the floor would be opened to nominations for new board members. Resident Cindy Copley had previously expressed interest in serving on the board, and was nominated by Randy Pierce. The floor was opened for other nominations. No other nominations were raised.

Cindy Copley was asked to introduce herself and explain her background and interest in serving on the board. During her discussion, a resident objected and asked her whether she had been one of the residents observed taking pictures of children walking to school via Marquette Street. Ms. Copley explained that she had taken pictures not of individual children, but of groups of children and adults, in an attempt to show the congested nature of Marquette Street during morning hours and the potential for an accident were the street to be opened to vehicular access to Senita Valley Elementary.

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A lengthy discussion regarding the photographs ensued, including input from several concerned residents, Sgt Bill Plummer of TPD, and Andy Squire of Ward 4. During the discussion, it was determined that, while no laws had been broken in photographing persons in a public area, the decision to do so was perhaps not in the best interest of the community due to the failure to obtain permission to take the pictures and the resulting misinterpretation by residents as to the reason for the photographs. Ms. Copely apologized for any misunderstanding and explained that her intentions were to reinforce earlier decisions to prohibit vehicular access to the school and not to invade the privacy of residents or make them feel unwelcome in using Marquette for pedestrian access.

Marquette Street Discussion and Vote

The floor was opened to discussion of the Marquette Street access to Senita Valley Elementary, and the previous MRNA vote to restrict access from Marquette Street to pedestrian (including bikes and scooters) only. Andy Squire spoke regarding the original plans for Marquette Street during the development of Mesquite Ranch, indicating that the street was engineered for eventual extension into the adjacent land for access to a new school. Mr. Squire also offered that Marquette Street, and most streets in Mesquite Ranch, were narrower than is currently allowed for new development. A resident asked whether opening the street would allow 24 hour access to school grounds via Marquette. Mr. Squire indicated that this would not be the case. A resident asked whether, as a public roadway, the community has any say in whether vehicular access can be restricted. Mr. Squire stated that although a city street, the access was intended for Mesquite Ranch residents and Vail School District wished to abide by the wishes of the community in how it was used. A resident expressed concern about parents stopping their cars along Marquette to let children out to walk to school. Mr. Squire indicated that existing signage prohibited this activity. A resident asked whether a letter to parents could be sent which would explain that this activity was not allowed. Randy Pierce agreed to enlist the principal of Senita Valley to draft a letter to this effect. A resident asked whether the road extending from Marquette to the school would eventually have walking paths on both sides. Mr. Squire explained that only a path would only be built on one side. Randy Pierce stated that he felt the previous MRNA position on access to the school had been misunderstood, in that several residents had expressed concern that MRNA intended that Marquette Street be closed to all access, which had never been the case. Other misinformation included residents' belief that MRNA had blocked the building of a sidewalk to the school on the south side of Bilby, which was not the case. Randy followed that the vote to restrict pedestrian access to the 5-foot strip between the east perimeter wall and the barbed wire fence was not an effort to restrict access to the school, but to stem a safety hazard and possible vandalism in an area that was not designed for foot traffic.

A resident whether the current vote for pedestrian-only access from Marquette could be allowed to stand and be re-addressed once the middle school is opened in July 2009, since this could impact residents' decision. A motion to postpone the vote and revisit it in August 2009 was raised by Jon Aitken and seconded by Amy Jo McCarty.

Randy Pierce instructed residents to revise their ballots to indicate a choice of:

- 1) Revisit the Marquette Street access decision in August 2009 or
- 2) Not revisit the decision.

Ballots were collected and counted by Sylvia Katvala, Gordon Robinson, and a resident. The results were as follows:

31 votes in favor of revisiting the decision in August 2009

22 votes against revisiting the decision

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6 votes indeterminate

The indeterminate votes did not affect the outcome and the vote passed in favor of revisiting the decision in August 2009.

Cindy Copley received 48 votes and was elected to the board.

Additional Discussion

A motion to hold a special meeting to discuss revising the current voting process in the MRNA bylaws was raised by Brenda Aitken and seconded by Nicole Aitken. An agreement to a vote by show of hands was made. Of 59 members present, 14 residents voted in favor of the special meeting. The motion did not pass.

Adjournment

Motion to adjourn was made by Lorraine Faoro and seconded by Chip Ellis. The meeting adjourned at 8:10pm.

Executive Session

The board met in executive session to appoint new officers, due to the resignation of Jon Aitken the previous month. Randy Pierce moved to appoint Cindy Copley to the position of Vice President. The motion was seconded by Gordon Robinson and the motion carried by unanimous vote.

A motion to approve the minutes of the Annual Meeting held in August was made by Gordon Robinson and seconded by Lorraine Faoro. The minutes were approved by unanimous vote.

Motion to adjourn the executive session was made by Randy Pierce and seconded by Sylvia Katvala. The session was adjourned by unanimous vote at 8:33 p.m.