

Highlands Civic Association (HCA)

- To strengthen the sense of community, responsibility, and livability in the Highlands
- To protect, preserve, and further the residential quality of the Highlands
- To maintain an open line of communication among the Highlands neighborhood, the Borough of State College, the University community, and other Borough neighborhoods and agencies
- To facilitate the exchange of information among HCA residents

AGENDA

Tuesday, March 5, 2019

7:15pm

State College Municipal Building, Room 241

Meeting convened at 7:15 pm.

1. **Introductions:** Susan Venegoni, Margaret Sebastianelli, Eric White, Dave Stone
2. **Treasurer's Report and Dues Collection:** Current balance is \$932.95; additional deposit from t-shirts sales and withdrawal for additional t-shirt order to be reconciled in April report.
3. **Approval of Dec. 4, 2018 and Jan. 8, 2019 Meeting Minutes:** Tabled until April meeting.
4. **E. Fairmount Park Improvements Update:** Landscape architect is working well with committee and open to park improvement suggestions such as equipment, pavilion and signage; the creative concept may be presented to Borough Council for approval in April; a name change from E. Fairmount Park to Highlands Park was suggested in a recent meeting.
5. **Neighborhood Coalition & Borough Council/Staff Jan. 21 Meeting:** HCA board members Mark Huncik, Eric White, and Susan Venegoni attended the project update and strategic plan meeting. Updates are:
 - a. **Two-day Borough Council retreat:** plans will be finalized in the spring (web site offers more information).

- b. **Campus Parking Garage:** A traffic impact study is forth coming; the plan for review and approval by Council is expected in April; previously proposed Buckhout Street egress point appears to have been abandoned in favor of existing Atherton Street signaled egress.
 - c. **Airbnb:** A licensing operation requirement is being discussed; an ordinance is under development. A recent report cited State College #1 in Airbnb bookings and revenue generation compared to other Big Ten school communities. Questions to be addressed: Will the County collect and enforce hotel tax? Will parking and occupancy be addressed?
 - d. **Highlands Parking Pilot:** The 18-month parking pilot will be in full force for the spring Penn State Blue and White game; new No Parking signage has been observed in the Highlands neighborhood.
 - e. **Zoning Rewrite Committee:** There has been no recent meeting to report; changes to zoning, if recommended and approved, may be 1-2 years out; current push for fraternity re-zoning (other than R-2) may be reconsidered due to recent closings and sale of fraternity property. Borough actions on citations and sanctions will be of great interest to HCA; currently some have no rental permits so nuisance property points cannot be issued. Students on property deeds are owner occupied properties. Number of unrelated tenant limitations, student home regulations, and rental permits still are needed if leasing to non-owners.
 - f. **Alcohol tax:** Proposal has received considerable opposition. Question to be addressed: Who will lobby for it and sponsor it on the floor in Harrisburg?
 - g. **Property Maintenance Code:** may be addressed summer 2019
6. **International Town & Gown Association (ITGA) Conference on May 19-22, 2019:** State College Borough agreed to sponsor the \$395 registration fee for a member from each neighborhood adjacent to the Penn State University Park campus; Osher Lifelong Learning Institute (OLLI)/Highlands Historical Home tour will not be on the conference schedule.
7. **Annual Meeting and Elections Pre-planning Discussion:** Potluck meal and election of HCA board members will be held in the fall (September meeting?)
8. **Other Items for Discussion:**
- a. **A general discussion about the upcoming election for vacant Borough Council seats.**

- b. A discussion about how HCA might stimulate greater interest in its efforts to support a vibrant and healthy community through service and events: multiple ideas were expressed; consensus achieved for the creation of a Highlands flyer highlighting engagement opportunities and encouraging membership and participation; distribution of flyers may be by residents and fraternity/sorority members (community service project?) as one initiative to garner membership and support .**

Meeting adjourned at 8:00 pm.

Minutes submitted by Margaret Sebastianelli, March 2019