



Oak Grove Community Council

Regular Council Business Meeting July 22, 2020 Minutes

What: Regular Council Business Meeting - Oak Grove Community Council
When: Wednesday, July 22nd, 2020 - 7:00 p.m. to 8:20 p.m.
Where: Zoom online meeting / phone in

VOTING MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Valerie Chapman, Joseph Edge, Jan Lindstrom, Thelma Haggemiller, Greg Wenneson, Jane Civiletti, Jim Meyer, Nate Orton, Linda Newbloom, Sue Conachan, Dave Dobak, Jan Dobak, Eleanore Hunter, Gwion Miller, James Troy Kerth, John McCormick, Ken Humberston, Marilyn Gottschall, Mark Knudson, Pam Horan, Paul Savas, Rich Nepon, Susan Cassuto

NON-VOTING MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE:

John McCormick, Rita Smith Kingen

VISITORS / GUESTS: 0

7:00 pm Welcome, Introductions, and Officer reports

- May 27th meeting minutes and membership update:
Secretary Jan Lindstrom announced she will send out the April and May meeting minutes together in an email. She had file-saving issues between two computer systems that caused an issue with the files.
- Treasurer's update:
Treasurer Jane Civiletti announced our checking account balance remains the same as our last meeting, which was May 27, since there was no June meeting, we did not have any expenses and did not receive any donations. Those wishing to make a donation may do so at the OnPoint Credit Union by asking to deposit funds into the Oak

Grove Community Council account. That being said, our balance remains a healthy \$2032.38.

7:10 pm

Program:

A Conversation Regarding privilege/racism, inclusion/exclusion as it relates to the Oak Grove Community - *Valerie Chapman, Vice Chair, OGCC*

- Introduction and background about Robin DiAngelo, PhD
- Short video talk by Dr. Robin DiAngelo (played in two parts)
link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DwIx3KQer54>

VIDEO – part 1 / Discussion:

- **Question: Which part of Dr. Angelo's talk resonated with you?**

Eleanore Hunter thanked the OGCC board for having this presentation. She found the metaphor of the dock a really helpful visual showing how we're being propped up by piers of institutional racism. The only way for us to change that is for us to talk about it, like we're doing now. It has to be at an individual and at a community level.

- **Question: How have your views about racial injustice shifted in the last few days?**

Rita Smith Kingen said she really likes Robin DiAngelo. In the last few days, there have been some criticism of her work, which she has not read. Rita related to the good/bad person thing (that we can't be racists if we're "good people," because racism is bad and we're not bad people). That's a false premise to begin with. During the month of June, she read a whole Google doc about this issue, which she'd be happy to share. She said she's trying to spend at least some portion of every day reading about these issues so her consciousness is being raised. She has also participated in Zoom groups addressing racism, mostly around politics and the next election. She thanked Jane Civiletti for inviting her to this meeting.

Susan Cassuto said she was stunned by how much our outlooks are led by the media. Currently, we're highly aware of racial injustice because the media is bringing it to our attention. Institutionally, it's been so far in the background, and because she's gotten lax, she's finding if she just keeps watching the news, her attitudes are formed by

the news, so it behooves us to really get into the topics more deeply ourselves - read a book, look at google docs. Our own sense of racism sits inside of us and how do we get thorough it to the next phase?

VIDEO - PT. II / discussion

- **Question:** The Oak Grove community is majority white, but also includes 10.15% Latinos, 1.35% Blacks, 2.65% Asians, 0.29% Pacific Islanders, 1% Native Americans and Alaskan Natives, 4.3% people who identify as multiracial, along with 87% who identify as white. The Oak Grove Community Council is majority white. Why do you think that is the case?

Gene Fifield: One of the reasons OGCC is mostly white is because it's full of older people. I'm not sure older people of color are moving into the community.

Jeannine Defyler suggested they may not feel comfortable.

Valerie added that the leadership of a group needs to reflect what you would like to have, not what you currently have.

Nate Orton said he has been living in Oak Grove since November. He lived in Portland for 20 years and was never drawn to any community meetings, mostly because he wasn't a homeowner. Now that he owns a home, he wanted to be active in the community.

Marilyn Gottschall said it's important to remember that West Linn prevented Black people from buying property there not so far in the distant past.

Jim Meyer said he and his wife were very upset when they bought their house in Oak Grove and saw that the old restrictive covenants were still listed in the deed, even though they've been outlawed by the state. They're still visible to whoever buys the home. Their covenant stated that the homeowner is not allowed to sell the house to any "Negro, Chinese person, Japanese person..." and so on. It upsets them that it's still in there at all.

Valerie said we do have a history of excluding people of color from our neighborhoods.

Greg Wenneson noted we're a mostly white membership because we're a mostly white community. To get more diversity, we have to

reach out in different places. Also, to attract more people, including people of color, our meetings need to be more interesting and cover other things besides land use issues.

- **Question:** Dr. DiAngelo underscores that being a racist is not about being a bad person, and that people are capable of becoming anti-racists. What do you think of this?

Eleanore: As Greg was saying, part of it is, how is it we are of interest to more people in the community? Thelma has been instrumental in boosting participation. How is OGCC relevant to those community members and how can we be effective? We're an unrecognized entity of the county. We have respect, but no authority. How can we advocate? That's a long issue and a fascinating one. There are more renters now, people of different age groups. We could reach out to schools, PTAs, asking how the CPO can be relevant to already engaged groups within the community?

- **Question:** Is there anything, no matter how small, that any one of you might be willing to commit to doing to make Oak Grove a more inclusive community?

Greg said the vehicle we have right now is the OGCC. We can put signs in new places, use social media to promote meetings, reach out to folks that aren't on our mailing list.

- **Gwion Miller** asked in what way do the standards we're participating in perpetuate the system?
- **Eleanore** suggested we could add a message on the agendas we send out and put language on the website stating that we seek to be inclusive and provide a safe place for people to come and participate in our meetings -- be overt about the invitation. It's tricky to be the one person of color who comes in and tries to feel comfortable.
- **Marilyn** added that it's highly unlikely that just by putting the word out and inviting people of color to join an all-white council, that would happen; but rather becoming allies with others who are working on issues out on McLoughlin, who are doing something specific in support of people of color.

- **Pam Horan** noted that meetings on Zoom are less threatening. It could be a good time to reach out
- **Rich Nepon** shared his experiences in Pennsylvania, when he was on the school board of the third-largest city. They had a very large Latino population. We need as a group to go to other groups, not expect people to come to us. That's the only way it's going to work, from his experience. Lots of people who have not been in that power role or majority role, it doesn't even occur to them culturally that they should do it. It would be like going to the pastor of a church and telling him how to run the church. But when we would outreach to organizations and groups, attend parties and things like that, we found that people began to understand us and could become a part with us in doing things for the community. It's not just being inclusive, not just extending the invitation.
- **Valerie** said in some of the work she has done, one perspective is that some cultures are volunteers and some cultures wait to be asked. An institution is set up to replicate itself. Also, when you have to come five times to Council meetings to become a voting member and three times to maintain it, that could be a deterrent to participation.

7:55 pm

Land Use Application Review Team (LUART):

- A few applications have come through, but we'll mostly want to discuss the public hearings coming up for VDO-276, a package of ordinance revisions that will allow for bakeries and brewpubs in our area. It was recommended by the Planning Commission on July 13, which unanimously agreed to support it. So it's very exciting news. We will let everyone know the date for the BCC hearing, so we have an opportunity to submit comments.

8:05 pm

Committee updates

- **Concord Task Force – Jan**
The task force has been evaluating seven potential designs for the new Oak Lodge Library on the Concord property site. After meeting weekly for a month to review the proposals, they selected three designs to put out to the public for feedback. Task Force members wanted the OGCC to know that they prefer Option 2, which is a new

library addition to the north of the existing Concord building. It best accomplishes the goals for the site, including a new gym, shared meeting rooms and entrance, efficient design (since we have to pay for the maintenance), plenty of parking, easy access from the street, excellent site lines and other features. There's a survey going online next week, either Monday or Tuesday. We will email out a notice with the link once we get word that it's live.

- **Park Ave Community Project - Valerie**

The Park Avenue Community Advisory Committee (PACAC) held an online workshop on June 30th. It was recorded, so if you want to watch it, you can go online to the County's website and find the link. We will include the information in our follow-up email. The survey will be open through first week of August. The idea is to get feedback from people who live, work, or regularly pass through the area. It's not as glamorous or sexy as a new library, but it does give us a chance to have input into long-term planning, bike and pedestrian connections, more housing, more job opportunities. It's a framework plan, very interactive. It doesn't take much time to fill out. She really encourages everyone to participate.

There's another workshop coming up sometime in September about design and zoning. The PACAC meeting will be Aug. 12th from 6-8 p.m. If you don't have the link info, let us know and we can make sure you do.

8:15 pm **Schedule review:**

Future OGCC Meetings - 7 pm at Zoom:

- Aug 26, Sep 23, Oct 28, Dec 2

Future OGCC Board Meetings - 6:45 pm at Zoom:

- Aug 3, Sep 7, Oct 5, Nov 2

8:27 pm **Adjourn**