



Monument Manor Neighborhood Association

PO Box 892 • Joshua Tree, CA 92252

www.monumentmanorneighborhood.com

MMNA Board Meeting

Tuesday, May 10, 2022 @ 5 pm (Terry Stone's home)

Dan provided a Zoom link

Minutes approved by the Board on July 12, 2022

The meeting was led by Mark Wheeler.

1. Call to Order at 5:06pm; Roll Call

Attendance: Terry Stone, Geary Hund, Mark Wheeler, Linda Doyle, Daniel Brenner (zoom), Dan Stork, Bill Gilman (zoom).

2. President's Comments

- Let's stay on task, on subject.

3. Review and approval of March 29 and April 24 minutes

- Minutes for both meetings were sent to the Board prior to this meeting. Mark asked if there were any questions/discussion for the two different meeting minutes. None were made. Terry Stone made a motion to accept March 29, 2022 and April 24, 2022 minutes. Geary Hund seconded motion. No objections were noted. All in attendance were in favor. **Minutes were adopted.**

4. Reports

a. Treasurer's report, to include updates on MMNA state and incorporation status (Dan).

Comments below by Dan:

Incorporation

1. After the board meeting at my house on April 24, a conversation with Yvonne LeGrice of the Joshua Tree Highlands Association on April 25, a meeting with John Babrowski of Rarick Financial on April 27, and my report to the board following that meeting, I filed:

- a. Withdrawal via fax of form 1024A applying for 501(c)4 status with the IRS.
- b. California form FTB 3500 via USPS, applying for California exempt status as a social organization, in lieu of FTB 3500A that would have referred to IRS approval.
- c. California FTB online informational return 199N for 2021. (Technically, this requires prior approval of FTB 3500, but it covers MMNA for 2021 state income tax. John advised that if the FTB questions us, we can explain our actions at that time.)

2. It appears that I should have filed with the IRS under section 501(c)7, which is the IRS category for a social organization. Yvonne told me that JTHA filed IRS informational returns under that section, without prior application for it. John said this was incorrect on their part; maybe JTHA will get questioned about this some day, but they haven't yet.

3. With regard to section 501(c)7:

- a. Why didn't MMNA file under that section? My error, compounded by the failure of tax professionals consulted before John to tell me otherwise.
 - b. Should MMNA re-file under that section now? As explained earlier, even as a non-exempt non-profit in Federal terms, we have no tax liability, nor are we likely to in the future. It would cost at least another \$600 to pursue that (forms 8718 and 1024, instead of 8976 and 1024A that I used); I would like to leave that decision to a future board.
4. In filing FTB 3500 as described above, I prepared a financial statement back to 1/1/2019. I've used it as a basis for this meeting's Treasurer's report, below.

Mark said that Dan has done a great job. Terry thanked Dan, as well.

Finances

Year	2019	2020	2021	2022
Accounting period	1/1-12/31	1/1-12/31	1/1-12/31	1/1 to now
Revenue				
Cash Contributions ⁵	10,472.11	11,780.00	27,810.00 ⁵	18,845.00 ⁵
Bank account interest	5.33	2.68	1.12	0.36
Highway mailbox key deposits	100.00	300.00		
Direct payment of expenses by board members	335.78	111.15	190.99	217.25
Total Revenues	\$10,913.22	\$12,193.83	\$28,002.11	\$19,062.61
Expenses				
Tractor services ¹	4,160.00	4,655.00	6,740.00	3,680.00 ¹
Fill dirt ¹	2,500.00	8,800.00	5,250.00	0 ¹
Liability insurance ²	1,528.18	1,733.26	1,696.60	0 ²
Signs and sign equipment	53.34			2,618.91
PO box rental	106.00	118.00	149.00	182.00
Mailings	123.54	111.15	81.09	217.25
Website	168.00		47.90	
PayPal fees	36.65	223.07	522.37	304.88
Highway mailbox lock replacement		275.00		
Zoom subscription		29.98	197.29	
Incorporation fees			1,652.65	
Tax consulting			200.00	250.00
Printing			119.36	
Total Expenses	\$8,675.71	\$15,945.46	\$16,656.26	\$7,253.04³
Assets				
Ending Checking Account balance	\$11,657.04	\$7,912.97	\$19,506.82	\$31,196.39^{3,4}
<no property or other physical assets>				
Number of contributors	92	107	107	79 ⁷
Participation	43%	48%	48%	36%

Notes

1. Approved road maintenance expenditure of \$8250 pending; work in progress, not paid for yet
2. Insurance invoice expected early July, estimated \$1700
3. Total expenses are expected to increase, and balance to decrease by about \$10,000 by mid-July, 2022
4. Checking account balance is at an all-time high.

5. Explanations of large 2021-22 contribution totals: In each of the 4 years shown, the median and modal individual contribution has been \$100. In each of 2019 and 2020, the mean was slightly higher than the median by about 10%. But in 2021, the mean was 160% higher, and is higher by 135% so far in 2022. Here's why: A small number of very large amounts. Namely, 2021 contributions included \$5000 from a film production company, \$3250 from a single property owner, and about \$8000 from 33 individuals who had donated more than once, mostly in response to the post-monsoon appeal. 2022 contributions include another \$5000 from the same film production company, and \$3000 from the same single property owner.
6. In the March 29 meeting, the core board interpreted the bylaws use of "up to date in dues" to mean
 - a. "made contribution since January 1st of previous year" in order to vote at General Meeting, and
 - b. paid in the current year, in order for a director to vote at board meetings.
7. 37 current property owners or residents who contributed in 2021 have not contributed in 2022; of these, 10 made multiple contributions in 2021. One director has not made a contribution in 2022.

Geary suggested we send out a F/U letter to the 37 property owners who have contributed in 2021 but have not contributed in 2022. Terry suggested that we incorporate this response request in the upcoming "Poll" that Geary is developing. A letter sent out is a good idea, says Mark.

We discussed sending the funding F/U email to everyone. We discussed having it "signed" by Mark Wheeler as the president of MMNA. Dan suggested that Linda should send it to everyone with an email in our distribution list. We discussed if we should send anything to people without email?

TO DO: Linda will send Terry last year's FU letter/email. **Done✓**

TO DO: Terry will draft a 2022 FU letter/email. **Done✓**

TO DO: Dan will create the list of people who need to have the letter/email sent out. **Done✓**

TO DO: Linda will email Fundraising Letter. **Done✓**

TO DO: Mark, Geary & Terry snail mailed Fundraising Letter to those without emails. **Done✓**

b. Roads/Signs (Geary)

Two successful sign installation work parties on April 12 and April 30. Two signs were stolen. We have to put some thought to how to keep signs from getting stolen. Geary will contact Sheriff's office about the sign theft. Geary would like to talk with Sheriff about putting up a wildlife-type camera near the signs. We could ask Sheriff for their advice. New signs and replacement signs are up except for 4. The whole neighborhood has good coverage with the signs.

Road repair- Sean's schedule is May 9-13, 2022 to start doing repairs in the Manor. He is putting in two side rock swales on Uphill that should help dissipate the energy of the water during the next storm. This is a pilot project. Mark said he is available to help with any road repairs. Additional repairs on ...

TO DO: Geary will send the list of repairs to Linda. **Done✓**

TO DO: Geary to contact sheriff's office about sign theft. **Done✓**

c. At-Large board member reports (Bill, Daniel)

1. Bill reported on his idea for a "walk the streets event". We would encourage everyone to meet and then walk along the road and stop at homes along the way. At the end of the event, we would go back to where we started and have some refreshments. For about one hour.

TO DO: Bill suggested June 25 and will send a draft email to the board.

2. Online File Storage Options (Daniel): At our previous board meeting Geary indicated that currently files are stored on individual board members personal computers. He suggested we should have “cloud” storage for our files and keep backups there. Geary is looking at Google Workspace and Basic plan would be \$6/month. Dan indicated that our ownership database is on Google docs. Daniel will look at the tool. # of users, what we are storing. He will look into this and bring it back to the board.

At today’s meeting Daniel has added this background information.

What’s being stored currently that we believe needs to be stored in the cloud?

- Of those items being stored, what has the largest file size?
 - Assumption: photos/videos

What’s the expected outcome of the files being stored in the cloud?

- A repository for all MMNA board members to be able to access?
 - Consider, how often will board members need access to the stored files?
- Suggest limiting complete/full access to some board members
 - consider read only access other board members (if this is an option)
 - this setup limits the possibility of accidental deletions etc

Storage options:

Dropbox:

<https://www.dropbox.com/>

- Basic plan:
 - Cost: FREE
 - Includes: 2GB of storage
- “Extra plan”:
 - Cost: \$9.99 per month
 - Includes: 2TB of storage

Google Drive:

<https://www.google.com/drive/>

As long as one has a Google account, one gets 15GB of storage for free

- Basic plan:
 - Cost: FREE
 - Includes: 15GB of storage
- Other plans:
 - Cost: \$19.99 per year
 - Includes: 100GB of storage
- Other plans:
 - Cost: \$99.99 per year
 - Includes: 2TB of storage

Microsoft OneDrive:

https://www.microsoft.com/en-us/microsoft-365/onedrive/online-cloud-storage?ranMID=24542&ranEAID=EHFxW6yx8Uo&ranSiteID=EHFxW6yx8Uo-T0GuLhLY5ucmWicPv8y7xA&epi=EHFxW6yx8Uo-T0GuLhLY5ucmWicPv8y7xA&irgwc=1&OCID=AID2200057_aff_7593_1243925&tuid=%28ir__esufw1h0b0kf6mcc1aulhv0fbf2xv03np6p32iqk00%29%287593%29%281243925%29%28EHFxW6yx8Uo-T0GuLhLY5ucmWicPv8y7xA%29%28%29&irclickid=__esufw1h0b0kf6mcc1aulhv0fbf2xv03np6p32iqk00

- OneDriveBasic plan:
 - Cost: FREE
 - Includes: 5GB of storage

How much data can 10GB hold? 10GB gives you the option of storing roughly:

- 2,000 photos
- 50,000 docs+

The group discussed why we would want this type of storage system. The group would prefer to not use Dropbox. Instead, they were interested in Google Drive. Linda suggested that we may look at \$19.99 per year plan because it may provide more “bells and whistles” than the free plan. Dan is currently the administrator of the google account. Admin rights to documents and Admin rights to the whole set-up.

TO DO: Daniel will look into FREE plan versus \$19.99 per year plan and report back to board. **Done✓**

TO DO: Mark suggests this as agenda item for July board meeting & Daniel can provide update. **Done✓**

5. Discussion

a. Mailbox (Linda)

1. Mailbox rental: it was brought up and we talked about the pros/cons of this issue. In theory we could charge new people an annual fee but would this make people think that they have already donated. Maybe we could vote on increasing the fee for when someone new gets a mailbox. This could be a board policy decision. Increase one-time fee versus increase annual fee. Currently, the fee is non-refundable and \$100. Should we have a key deposit.

TO DO: put mailbox fee on July board meeting agenda. Questions: who will administrate and will we raise mailbox fee (for one-time non-refundable or annual non-refundable fee)?

b. New meeting time. Suggestion for changing time from 5pm to 4:30pm is open for discussion.

Daniel suggested 4:45pm. All in favor.

TO DO: Linda will send board members email with scheduled meeting dates/time. **Done✓**

c. At-large board members. Review application process. Review any current applications. Vote on applications if appropriate.

Dan indicated that we don't have a process (or board succession plan) written down on how we recruit and elect new board members. He listed the roles identified for at-large board members in the bylaws: additional voices on MMNA matters, succession path, special assignments. We have stated in our bylaws, up to 4 At-Large board members.

Group discussed how we recruit, inform potential candidates, what is expected of candidates seeking a position and the election process.

TO DO: If any board member has a neighbor interested in learning more about MMNA and an elected position, that they should invite them to a board meeting. Anyone acquiring about an elected At-Large board position via email should be directed to Mark Wheeler for more information.

d. Vision Statement, Mission Statement, Goals: This item will discuss how three subject terms are either necessarily applicable to MMNA and, therefore, should be accordingly defined, or whether they, or certain of them, “might” be necessarily applicable to MMNA and should be accordingly defined. Further discussion would, among other relevant details, consider language for any or all subject terms deemed application, and whether or not any by-laws adjustment(s) or amendment(s) might be necessary.

Geary stated that everything comes from the vision, mission and goals and would appreciate everyone's feedback on this document, as well as the Poll Questionnaire document he created.

Geary submitted this information for discussion:

Monument Manor Neighborhood Association
Strategic Plan

Mission

To Maintain and Improve Neighborhood Roads, Quality of Life, and Community

Vision

Monument Manor is a safe neighborhood with well-maintained roads, dark night skies, beautiful desert and neighborhood views, native vegetation, and a place where wildlife can co-exist with human residents. It is a place where residents and property owners collaborate, communicate, cooperate, and socialize. It has a true sense of community.

Goals and Objectives

1. A high level of membership and participation in the MMNA is achieved.
 - Develop new strategies to increase membership and funding and continue to implement existing ones.
2. MMNA roads and other facilities are maintained in good condition and necessary repairs and improvements are completed.
 - Make improvements to manage drainage to reduce erosion and storm damage costs
 - Manage and remove sand build-ups
 - Make storm damage repairs in a timely manner after storms
 - Erect, and maintain needed signage
 - Be able to locate and assess the condition of signs and road improvements
 - Provide, maintain and replace mail box structures as needed
3. The residents of Monument Manor have a knowledge and appreciation of the attributes of our area that increase our quality of life and they actively participate in their maintenance and protection.
 - Inform MMNA members and residents of issues which could affect the quality of life in the neighborhood/community – this could include providing information about public meetings being held in advance of governmental actions such as the light trespass ordinance, the proposed protection of desert vegetation, such as the western Joshua tree, noise, short term rentals, etc.
 - Provide informational emails to members and residents – for example about the impact of rodenticides, the impact of non-native plants and how to identify and control them, about their effects, about ordinances, such as light trespass and how they can comply, and about fencing and other landscaping techniques that preserve desert views, vegetation, and wildlife.
4. A sense of community is fostered through social interaction.
 - Hold annual neighborhood social events, e.g., annual potluck, holiday party.
 - Hold work parties to repair the roads and potentially for other projects such as collecting seeds and/or planting native plants.
 - Invite specialists to provide presentations on issues of concern and benefit to the community – e.g., someone to talk about the use and benefits of native plants in landscaping.
 - Provide updated and engaging information on the website.

5. MMNA is well-managed organization with an effective board and engaged membership.
 - Recruit board members with a wide range of talents matched to the needs of the organization and which provide for succession.
 - Develop processes for efficient operations of the organization.
 - Develop additional processes to manage files so that they are well organized, easily retrievable, and accessible.
 - Establish committees as needed that operate efficiently and effectively with a clear purpose.

Online Poll: Geary also created a draft online Monument Manor Neighborhood Association Poll. He asked each Board member to complete the draft online Poll.

Draft Monument Manor Neighborhood Association Poll

We'd like to know what you as a resident and/or property owner consider to be the most important things for the neighborhood association to focus on.

1. When the neighborhood association sends out informational emails such as the one about the impacts of certain rodent baits on wildlife or about non-native plants, do you find it helpful?

Yes
No
Maybe

2. Should the neighborhood association inform property owners and residents about issues which could affect their quality of life and the quality of the desert around them?

Yes
No
Maybe

3. Should the neighborhood association just focus on infrastructure such as road repair and providing mail boxes or should it also focus on other issues affecting the neighborhood such as short-term rentals, dark night skies, and traffic on Quail Springs Road?

Just focus on infrastructure
Focus on both infrastructure and issues affecting the neighborhood

4. Should the neighborhood association take positions on issues affecting the neighborhood or limit its involvement to informing residents about them so they can express their opinion?

Take positions
Just provide information so residents and owners can express their opinion
It depends on the issue
Other:

5. Check all the issues that are important to you

Dark night skies
Park traffic on Quail Springs Road
Noise
Off-highway vehicle use
Short-term rental ordinance
Other:

6. Would you consider attending a work party to maintain our roads and signs?

- Yes
- No
- Maybe

7. Would you potentially be interested in volunteering to help the neighborhood association?

- Yes
- No
- Maybe

8. Is having periodic neighborhood socials such as potlucks and holiday parties of interest to you?

- Yes
- No
- Maybe

.....

We discussed the timing sequence of the Poll Questionnaire. Geary proposed that Poll Questionnaire would be finalized and sent out via email and the responses received would inform the Vision, Mission, Goals. Everyone agreed.

TO DO: Send Geary your comments on Poll Questionnaire and Vision, Mission, Goals document.

TO DO: Geary to revise document to reflect board comments. **Done✓**

TO DO: Terry will be responsible for finalizing the Poll Questionnaire.

TO DO: Terry will send final Poll Questionnaire to Linda.

TO DO: Linda will email link to Poll Questionnaire to neighbors by June 14, with deadline date to respond to questions by June 21 (& will send email via info.monumentmanorna@gmail.com).

TO DO: Responses to Poll Questionnaire will be analyzed by Geary & reported at July board meeting.

6. Board member comments and suggestions/request for future agenda items.

Dan suggested that our agenda should have time constraints per item. We all agreed that the agenda will be created by and emailed to the board by Mark. We discussed how to approach invitation to community attend board meetings. It was agreed that if anyone is interested in attending board meeting that they would RSVP Mark no later than two weeks before the meeting. Mark will then inform the “host” of the upcoming meeting of any visitors so they will have time to prepare for additional people. This issue should be re-addressed and confirmed at our next board meeting.

TO DO: Mark will send out the agenda for July 12 board meeting. **Done✓**

Draft agenda items include:

- Treasurer’s report that includes success with email request for donations
- Vision, Mission, Goals and Poll
- Document storage
- Mailboxes and administration

7. Next meeting date, time and location.

July 12, 2022 @ 4:45pm at Mark’s place

8. Adjourn 7:23pm