

ODWNA Association Meeting Minutes

Date: Wednesday, November 16, 2022

Place: Third Christian Reformed Church – Small Conference Room

Board Members:

Present: Chris Shook, Vice President; Christopher Bovid, Secretary; Kathy Shook, Treasurer; Eric Boersma

Excused: Peter Kushner, Paul Scott, Diana Morton-Thompson

In Attendance: Approximately 26 people (includes Board members and City staff)



I. **Call to Order:** Chris Shook, Vice-President, 7:00 pm

- Welcome, introduction
- Open invitation for new business / new information
- Bill Reed:
 - Passed out a handout with results of his survey of 60 homes in his “closed loop neighborhood” (Sycamore, Magnolia, Fair Oaks, Pinegrove) indicating percentages of responses in favor of keeping no parking in the bike lanes by the Asylum Lake Preserve, ambivalent, and in favor of returning parking at that entrance.
 - Invited the Board of Directors of the ODWNA to personally walk/ride to the Winchell Avenue entrance to the Asylum Lake Preserve and see what it takes to get there and the limited space available there. Board members responded that they have been there in person including daily running/bicycling.
 - Discussion regarding whether/how Bill Reed claims to know what was said by the City Traffic Engineer about the bike lane drawing idea discussed at a meeting between City Traffic Engineer, the ODWNA President, and a representative of ALPA, especially since the City’s written position to date is that the bike lane will not be modified. Bill states he does not know but rather has just heard.
 - Discussion regarding the decision-making authority versus persuasiveness of the ODWNA Board of Directors vis-à-vis the City Planner, City Traffic Engineer.
 - Discussion regarding advocating for parking in the bike lanes / eliminating a bike lane according to the Neighborhood Plan versus consideration of alternative parking options that do not involve parking in, or eliminating any, bike lane.
- Dick Wheeler:
 - States large population of residents in the neighborhood are still concerned about the deer in the City. They have contacted Nolan Bergstrom (Community Planner) with the City of Kalamazoo asking for a meeting with him and his associates to move the deer plan forward. He reported that he and his staff are trying to get meetings with the DNR and WMU and the Kalamazoo Nature Center as there are no experts at the City in deer herd management.
 - Read an email to the meeting attendants that Mr. Wheeler sent to Mr. Bergstrom.
 - What the City has done so far with allowing 10’ fences is put a band-aid on the situation to placate residents but the deer problem is not going away.
- Chris Chadderdon: States that the traffic calming measures in the City seem to be in trial phases and why not try parking in the bike lane in front of the Winchell Avenue entrance to the Asylum Lake Preserve.
- [Unknown]: The gentleman notes that the ODWNA Board says that it is concerned about safety with respect to parking in the bike lanes but notes that delivery companies and contractors apparently can get permits to park in the bike lanes for limited work, but he notes the massive piles of leaves in the bike lanes for the last few weeks. The gentleman states that if the City really cared about safety, then the City would be enforcing ordinances about keeping the bike lanes clear, including the leaves in the streets in the fall. The suggestion was made to the gentleman to report it to the City for enforcement.

II. **Guest Speaker for this evening is Pierre van der Westhuizen, Executive Director of The Gilmore Keyboard Festival; Director of Marketing (Kelly McGuinness, lives on Tipperary)**

- Mission at The Gilmore is to nurture a passion for music
- Piano Labs for kids (\$15 for the entire year)
- KeysFest – taking over The Epic Center for
- Piano Camp – partnering with Sherman Lake Camp / YMCA for at least 20 years, week long either day camp or overnight camp
- 3D Jazz Trio / Baby Grands informal educational session for babies all the way to 7-8 year olds, parents hang out in back
- The Gilmore Artist awards – \$300,000 every four years. It is the largest prize for piano in the world. Puts Kalamazoo on the map. Open to any nationality, any age. The process is modeled after the MacArthur Genius grants. It is a secret process with a committee of 5 or 6 people and they go around the world scouting for artists, sometimes incognito. It takes them 2-3 years and then they surprise the recipient with the award. The award was created to honor the legacy of Irving Gilmore and his quiet way of philanthropy. When he passed away the Gilmore Foundation was created. What came next was the idea to have a festival to invite these artists to come back and perform.
- Larry J. Bell Jazz Artist Award – jazz version of the Gilmore Award. It is also the largest jazz prize in the world at \$300,000 every four years. Young artists receive \$25,000 awards.
- Commissioning – new works for piano
- Discussion regarding artists at The Gilmore Keyboard Festival.
- Notes the amazing depth of culture in Kalamazoo and that unlike in bigger cities, here you can mow your lawn and then go see world renowned artists in just a few minutes.

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- TheGilmore.org
- Monday – Friday 11am – 1:30pm & 2pm-6pm
- The Gilmore prides itself on shockingly affordable tickets. Prices for adults tend to range from \$18-45. There are student tickets at even lower prices. The Gilmore goes the extra mile with sponsors and funders to underwrite those costs.
- The next festival is in 2024.
- Discussion regarding Master Classes as way to have up close and personal interactions with the artists.
- The Gilmore experimented with a lot of different times over the years for shows and the results showed that Sundays at 4:00pm were the most popular times.
- Executive Committee of 26 people plus several committees (standing, fundraising, marketing, education, audience). Each committee helps continuing development of The Gilmore's policies. The Director of Operations oversees about 100 volunteers. There is also a Communications Director that oversees the recent investments into livestreaming that became necessary during the pandemic. The quality is excellent and major record labels (including Sony) have inquired about partnering with The Gilmore regarding recordings of those performances.

III. **Adjournment:** 8:07 pm

Respectfully Submitted,
Christopher Bovid, ODWNA Secretary