

## ODWNA Association Meeting Minutes

**Date:** Wednesday, October 18, 2023

**Place:** Third Christian Reformed Church, 2400 Winchell Ave, Kalamazoo, MI

**Board Members:**

**Present:** Chris Shook, President; Diana Morton-Thompson, Vice-President; Christopher Bovid, Secretary; Rachel Bennett, Treasurer; Peter Kushner, Past President; Barb Miller; Christine Chadderdon; Stephanie Watkins

**Excused:** Eric Boersma; Paul Scott

**In Attendance:** Approximately 46 people (includes Board members)



- I. Meeting called to order by Chris Shook, President; 7:03 PM
  - A. Chris Shook welcomed everyone and thanked them for attending.
  - B. Chris Shook highlighted the ODWNA website for its regularly updated helpful information.
- II. Featured Speaker – ODWNA Speaker Series
  - A. Dr. Darrin Slade, Superintendent of Schools (Introduction by Kelly Corrigan, Principal of Winchell Elementary School)
  - B. Presentation: Progress, Priorities, Expectations
    - i. Discussion regarding the Kalamazoo Promise and its benefits to students and families
    - ii. Reviewed Kalamazoo Public School statistics
    - iii. Noted priorities for 2023-24 school year
    - iv. Enforcement of “no cell phones in class rooms” rule
    - v. Enforcement of dress code
    - vi. Removal (at least temporarily) of disruptive students
    - vii. Discussion regarding dropout / graduation rates
  - C. College, Career, and Life Readiness
    - i. Kalamazoo is the first City in the United States to provide for students to attend college
    - ii. Knock and Talk Event (Improved Attendance)
  - D. Improving Culture and Climate
    - i. Discussion regarding provision of welcoming environment to all students.
    - ii. Focus on
      1. Advanced placement
      2. Honors Courses
      3. Music
    - iii. Discussed ways that feedback is valued
    - iv. How community members can help
  - E. Dr. Slade heard and responded to comments and questions from the attendees.
    - i. Bus driver pay, teacher pay, class sizes
    - ii. Safeguards to alleviate fear of retaliation for speaking up at teacher input session
    - iii. Neighboring district class sizes and teacher raises / significantly smaller neighboring school district
    - iv. Issues with better elective spreads at magnet schools
    - v. Mechanisms for implementing Dr. Slade’s vision for student conduct and attendance
    - vi. Dr. Slade’s opinion regarding recommendations/state laws regarding earliest allowable start times for schools and particularly older students
    - vii. Vocational programs at KPS, in particular at the high school level; new regional vocational school building being built
    - viii. Expectations for time usage for suspended students
    - ix. KPS utilization of nationwide program regarding disciplinary actions
  - F. Dr. Slade’s email address is [sladeda@kalamazoopublicschools.net](mailto:sladeda@kalamazoopublicschools.net) for any additional questions.
- III. Minutes of September 20, 2023 ODWNA meeting (Chris Bovid, Secretary)
  - A. No changes presented; minutes adopted without objection.
- IV. Treasurer’s Report – (Rachel Bennett, Treasurer)
  - A. Reported checking account balance as of September 30, 2023
  - B. Reported anticipated upcoming expenses to be paid from the balance
  - C. Reported that ODWNA account documents are printed and available for review on the back table for anyone interested.
- V. Business Items:
  - A. Complete Streets/Safe Routes to School (Eric Boersma) – tabled until November meeting.
  - B. Neighborhood Quick Win Project Updates (Rachel Bennett / Stephanie Watkins)
    - I. Overview of “Quick Win” funds
    - II. Request for member input into Quick Win Funds project ideas
    - III. Encouragement by City staff to remove ‘infrastructure’ types of projects from Quick Win ideas lists
    - IV. Reported “Quick Win Funds” of \$7500 awarded for use in the neighborhood for City-reviewed and City-approved projects that specifically align with the Neighborhood Plan and can be paid for by 12/31/2023

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- V. Report on the list of project ideas that had been promulgated and prioritized by the Board of Directors and submitted to the City for its review, project costing, and approval/disapproval:
  - 1) Pollinator/wildflower seeds
  - 2) Traffic Calming Signs – Hillcrest
  - 3) Neighborhood Benches
  - 4) "Winchell Neighborhood" Sign
  - 5) Winchell Information Boards
  - 6) STOP signs (solar flashing)
  - 7) Neighborhood Street Banners
  - 8) "Children at Play" signs
  - 9) "Peace" Poles
  
- VI. Reported that allocation of another \$7500 in Quick Win Funds is anticipated for the ODWNA in 2024.
- VII. Re-emphasis made on request to membership for project ideas in the coming year (email them to [odwnanews@winchellneighborhood.org](mailto:odwnanews@winchellneighborhood.org))
  
- C. Asylum Lake Policy Management Council (Paul Scott) – tabled until November meeting.
  
- D. ODWNA Constitution Review Committee Update (Barb Miller)
  - I. Next Constitution Committee meeting is Thursday, October 19, 2023 with all five members.
  
- E. Woods Lake Association (Chris Bovid)
  - I. Separate water quality and water chloride studies by the City of Kalamazoo – Dept. of Parks & Rec and by the State of Michigan – Dept. of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy are continuing at Woods Lake.
  
- VI. Old/New Business
  - A. Comments and announcements were made by attendees.
  
- VII. The meeting was adjourned by Christopher Shook, President, at 8:38 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Christopher Bovid, ODWNA Secretary