**Minutes - General Meeting - September 20, 2018.**

* Introductions all around - we were very glad to welcome quite a few new neighbors!
* **Faisa Sharif** - Mayor's Office of Neighborhood Services; **Steve Moore** - on behalf of **Councilor Ed Flynn**; **James Freeman** & **Eric Francis** - BPD District 4 Community Service Office, all spoke about their responsibilities in the neighborhood.
	+ Faisa is the Mayor's direct contact for us on all issues pertaining to our neighborhood.  She suggested that the 311 App is usually the most efficient way to get services for particular issues - trash, illegal parking, broken signs/streetlights, etc. - but she is available to us and she left her cards for attendees. She can be reached at 617-635-4517 or faisa.sharif@boston.gov.
	+ Councilor Flynn is our district representative on the City Council.  He's been working diligently on many issues affecting the quality of life in the SE, especially pedestrian safety. The Councilor requests that we copy him on any emails we might send to Faisa, so that he be in the loop and assist, if he can.
	+ The Community Service Officers keep us informed about incidents in the SE and assist us with activities to ensure that our surroundings are safe and pleasant to live in and work in.  They regularly give us crime reports for the PBNA area and are responsive to neighbors' concerns.  In general, we are a safe district, and we appreciate their willingness to collaborate with us, whenever we ask!
		- Remember to **always lock your car** and never leave any items visible inside.
		- Make sure that your **house number is easily visible on the back of your building in the alley,**so police & fire can locate your building quickly, in an emergency.
		- Packages are routinely stolen from front stoops in the SE.  **Have your packages  sent to the UPS Store or an Amazon locker or a neighbor's house**, so they won't end up in a thief's hands.
		- Report stolen packages and any other crimes - however small - to 911.  Even if it is low on the priority of activity that day, the report will be logged, which is important for discussions about neighborhood safety with our elected officials and the police.
* **Scott gave a report about membership**. A large number of people moved into the neighborhood over the summer and we have welcomed those whom we know about.  Please let us know about new neighbors that you meet! There is a PBNA Welcome Letter, which is put into mailboxes whenever we are notified that someone has moved in, and this letter is also on our two communication boards in the neighborhood.  We have estimated that there are about 1000 people living within the boundaries of the PBNA and we have about 389 names on our current mailing list.
* **PBNA by-law changes were presented**  - the changes were aimed at simplifying the document, making items easier to understand and making the rules a bit more flexible, in order to enable more neighbors to get involved at any time.
	+ A conditional vote was taken by all present approving the by-laws as amended, with a request to come forward with any suggestions, comments, etc. before the next meeting.
	+ A final vote will be taken at the next general meeting.
* **Chip gave the Treasurer's report**.  Our general fund is approximately $3800 and the alley fund is about $1400. The alley fund is used for the upkeep of surfaces of the unpaved alleys within our boundaries.  The general fund is used to finance social activities, for the most part.
* **Nicola reported about on-going neighborhood issue**s:
	+ A **city program called Slow Streets** is aimed at reducing the number of pedestrian fatalities in the city and there is a large project in the works to redesign [Tremont Street](https://www.boston.gov/departments/transportation/tremont-street-design-project). See the link for more information.
	+ **Trees and landscaping** on public ways are often taken care of by neighbors.  Take note of some of the lovely plantings in tree pits around the neighborhood!  If you want to do something with the landscaping of tree pits in front of your house or on your block, the PBNA leadership is happy to assist you with gathering volunteers or making contact with city officials.
	+ The **gate access to the alley** between the rear of Whaling in Oklahoma and 153 W. Brookline will be locked in a few weeks.  The PBNA has worked with all business owners on Tremont Street who use the ramp at the opening for deliveries and for trash bins to get an agreement to keep the gate locked and to use a code for access, when needed.  Residents on the alley between W. Brookline & W. Canton have been requesting this for a long time, and the PBNA is glad it was able to convene all involved parties to arrive at a useful understanding.
	+ The **proposed marijuana dispensary** at 633 Tremont is still in process to our knowledge but there has been no new activity about it since before the summer.  It is our understanding that the South End community meeting about this proposal will not be scheduled for some time.
	+ The issue with **private sewers** continues to be a source of concern for residents on the W. Brookline/W. Canton alley.  A short history of the issue was presented along with a notice about the current state of the negotiations with Boston Water & Sewer.  We will update at the next PBNA meeting.
	+ **Halloween** will be another huge event in the SE and in the Pilot Bock area, as usual!  The PBNA will again give out prizes for the best decorations.
	+ **Wreath sales** will take place again starting in November and the get-together for**installation around the neighborhood**will be on **Saturday, December 1 at K9 Strolls on Pembroke**.  More about this later and all are welcome to help!
* Our next general meeting is **Wednesday, November 14. 6:30 - 8pm at the offices of Sprogis & Neale Real Estate, 679 Tremont St.**
	+ A large thank you to Brad Sprogis and John Neale for accommodating us!