

OANA General Meeting Minutes 07-17-2024

The July General Meeting was held on 7/17 at the Community Center of St. Bernard, 7143 St. Claude Ave. Around 27 people attended, and the meeting was called to order at 6:05 pm. The Agenda was presented on a slide show.

Attendees were welcomed and led in the Pledge of Allegiance by treasurer Troy Barrios, who then presented the Annual Financial Report. The 2023 Fiscal Year End Balances (as of 5/2023) were \$21,347 in the Operating Account and \$12,120 in the Smith Culinary Scholarship Fund. Balances as of 5/2024 were \$18,780.85 and \$13,000. Fundraising totals for the period were \$14,000 from Sugar Fest 2023 and \$3500 from the Spring Sippin' in the Sunset series. Donations in 2023 were \$5600, and went to Arabi Elementary Families for the holidays, Sama Yoga Studio, Community Center of St. Bernard, holiday treats for St. Bernard Parish school chorus kids, and Knights of Nemesis.

The Smith Scholarship has now been funded and matched by the Nunez Foundation. The idea began several years ago, with money coming from fund-raisers and donations, and a large annual donation from Debbie Smith. Scholarships have been awarded to several deserving students. It has now become an endowment, so will be managed by Nunez on behalf of OANA.

An area real estate update was featured, compiled by Alison Barrios, with data on number of sales, average sale price, price per square foot and average days on the market. Figures were broken down for both Old Arabi and all of zip code 70032 for 2024 year-to-date, and compared to all of 2023 and 2022. See details in the slide show. There was some discussion about the effects of interest rates and the cost of insurance on the housing market.

In a review of upcoming events, Sugar Fest is scheduled for Saturday, October 19th this year. There are ample opportunities to join a planning committee and volunteer at the event. The first planning meeting will be held on Monday, July 22nd at the Community Center. Other dates to save are:

- four Fridays of Pub Sprawl — a chance to support local bars during their slowest season and enjoy some A/C in the heat of the summer — proposed for July 26th, August 9th, August 23rd and September 6th, details TBA
- the next OANA General Meeting on September 18th, with a speaker from the Sheriff's Department and a Neighborhood Business Expo
- Night Out Against Crime Fall Social, early October (date TBA)
- and our Members' Holiday Party in December (date and venue TBA)

News & Notables:

Around the Neighborhood

- Backyard Bar Olympics at PWB on Saturday, August 24th

In the Parish

- Knights Of Nemesis Luau August 17th, 8 pm at the Sigur Civic Center, tickets \$30, 10 tickets/table

Members' Celebrations

- Congratulations to new OANA Board of Directors Member Shirley Pechon
- July Yard-of-the-Month was awarded to John Helffrich at 1013 Mehle St.
- Alison & Troy Barrios introduced their new business, Olive Cheese & Crackers, featuring charcuterie boards & bites, with options for catering, take-out and Pop-Up hours at the St. Rich Market

Announcements & Introductions

- Old Arabi Lighthouse Records & Books has an ongoing schedule of live music, open mic nights and readings — details on their FaceBook page and website
- New neighbor and member Elizabeth Killeen introduced herself — she and her new family moved to 709 Mehle St. in May

Future Board & General Meeting dates were announced. Next General Meeting is September 18th and will feature a Neighborhood Business Expo. Door prizes were awarded, and the meeting was adjourned at around 6:40 pm.