

OANA General Meeting Minutes 04-15-2021

Around 40 people turned out for our first General Meeting in over a year, held outdoors behind the Aycock Barn.

The meeting was called to order at 6:06 p.m., and opened with the exciting news that Sippin' in the Sunset will return for a single Spring date on Thursday, May 27th, 6-9 p.m. Music will be provided by Kenny Kerth Jass, and so far the vendor response has been very positive. Adjustments will be made to conform to whatever health precautions are required at the time.

OANA Officer and Board Elections will take place at the next General Meeting, scheduled for Thursday, May 20th. Active members — those with dues paid up by April 30th — can self-nominate or nominate other active members through April 30th.

Nominations were taken from the floor, with the following nominated so far:

- President — Alison Barrios
- Vice President — Troy Barrios
- Secretary — Linda Van Aman
- Treasurer — Marie Cosse
- Board — Mike Pechon, Shelli Gifford, Sal Cusimano, Ray Lauga, Susan Green, Patricia Peltier

Shout-outs were given to retiring Board Member Georgia Rilette for highlighting the beauty in our neighborhood with Yard-of-the-Month awards, and to Members Andi and Jerabelle for the lovely garden installations at the Jail and the Barn.

The guest speaker for this evening was Councilman At Large Richie Lewis, who was invited to address the two Parish millage issues on the upcoming April 24th ballot. The first is a renewal of funds for the fire department, recognized as one of the the best in the state. The second is an additional tax to fund the maintenance of canals & pumps. Previously a responsibility of the State, this job will now pass to the Parish, since the State no longer has funding to do it. The ballot issue is asking for 8 mils, up from 4.3, to cover the entire cost of \$3M per year; otherwise the Parish will have to cut its budget by 12-14%. The advantages of having control of the drainage system are that the Parish will operate the pumps and staff them 24/7, can improve the appearance of canals, and have more accountability for the use of funds. Fire and insurance ratings also depend on good management of the system. In addition, Lewis pointed out that an 8 mil hospital tax has now expired, so if both millages pass this time, there is still a net tax reduction of almost 4 mils.

The meeting ended with the announcement of several upcoming dates:

- a reminder of the next OANA General Meeting on May 20th
- Sippin' in the Sunset on May 27th
- in Chalmette, the Tomato and Crawfish Festivals towards the end of the month
- a crawfish cook-off at Old Arabi Bar on May 8th

And new OANA flags are on their way.

The meeting was adjourned at around 6:45 p.m