



# The Buckhead Council of Neighborhoods

## Board Meeting

May 14, 2009

Peachtree Presbyterian Church

6:40 – 8:40 PM

Meeting Minutes

### Meeting Attendees:

	<b>Name</b>	<b>Neighborhood/Organization</b>	<b>Email Address</b>
1	Frank Bennett	Paces	fobennett@yahoo.com
2	Gordon Certain	North Buckhead	gcertain@comcast.net
3	Kristy Gillmann	Peachtree Hills	phca_kristy@hotmail.com
4	Daryl Graham	North Buckhead	info@darylbernardgraham.com
5	Jay Jameson	Peachtree Hills	jjjameson@gproperties.com
6	Phillips Jones	Tuxedo Park	gpjatl@aol.com
7	Kim Kahwach	Buckhead Forest	kajensen@bellsouth.net
8	Barbara Kennedy	Collier Hills	Bar2010@aol.com
9	Jim King	Chastain Park	jimking@mindspring.com
10	Stephen McCarthy	Kingswood	sdm@buchananstreet.com
11	Jennifer Moyers	Whitewater Creek	jennifermoyers@beacham.com
12	Craig Perry	West Paces Northside	Craig.Perry@aol.com
13	Elizabeth Pritchard	Peachtree Battle Alliance	elizpritchard@bellsouth.net
14	Mercy Sandberg-Wright	Tuxedo Park	mercywright@msn.com
15	John Schaffner	Buckhead Reporter	johnschaffner@reporternewspapers.net
16	Bob Schneider	Garden Hills Civic	bschneider@gardenhills.net
17	Jim Wright	Ardmore Park	wrightjr@mindspring.com
18	Henry Wyche (by phone)	Grant Estates/South Tuxedo Park	hwyche@valleycap.com

### Representation by Neighborhood:

<b>Neighborhood</b>	<b>Name(s)</b>
1 Ardmore Park	Jim Wright
2 Buckhead Forest	Kim Kahwach
3 Chastain Park	Jim King
4 Collier Hills	Barbara Kennedy
5 Garden Hills	Bob Schneider
6 Grant Estates/South Tuxedo Park	Henry Wyche (by phone)
7 Kingswood	Stephen McCarthy
8 North Buckhead	Gordon Certain, Daryl Graham
9 Paces	Frank Bennett
10 Peachtree Battle Alliance	Elizabeth Pritchard
11 Peachtree Hills	Kristy Gillmann, Jay Jameson
12 Tuxedo Park	Phillips Jones, Mercy Sandberg-Wright
13 West Paces Northside	Craig Perry
14 Whitewater Creek	Jennifer Moyers

### I. Welcome

**Jim King** called the meeting to order at around 6:40 PM. A quorum was achieved by speaker phone at one key point in the meeting.

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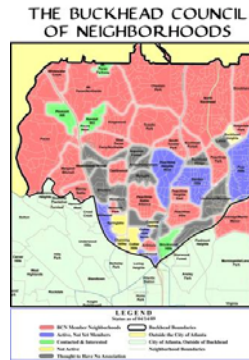
### II. Secretary's Report

Minutes for the April board meetings were not approved by the Board because of a lack of quorum.

### III. Treasurer's Report

The treasurer made no report. [The BCN has \$2,000 in the bank and \$300 in checks in hand (Paces West needs to remake their check to "BCN").]

The map at the right shows the continued expansion of BCN membership (light red).



### IV. Speakers

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*Note on Presentation Reports: For simplicity in reporting, the material reported below is usually reported from the point of view of the speakers. These reports reflect the opinions of the individual presenters and may not necessarily be the position of BCN or its member associations.*

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#### a. Kristy Gilmann, President, Peachtree Hills Civic Association, Proposed Water Meter Petition

At the beginning of the meeting there was standoff between a Channel 11 reporter/camera team and Peachtree Pres security. The 11Alive team intended to report the BCN deliberations on the problems resident have had with the Department of Watershed Management. These problems include unreturned deposits and malfunctioning water meters, some of which are equipped with mismatched components and issue incorrect readings. The cameras were not permitted to enter the building because their presence had not been approved in advance by church officials, as required by church policies. Nevertheless, the 11Alive news at 11 prominently reported the actions of the BCN board although without pictures. (Related article and video at [http://www.11alive.com/rss/rss\\_story.aspx?storyid=130127](http://www.11alive.com/rss/rss_story.aspx?storyid=130127). A cellphone video taken of the 11Alive report after this meeting is on our web site at .)

The board made refinements to the draft petition that Kristy had prepared. Henry Wyche participated by speakerphone to achieve a quorum. With Henry's vote, the board in attendance unanimously endorsed the proposed petition. The petition, as approved by BCN, is attached (Attachment 1). This petition is to also be approved on-line by Buckhead residents who believe they have experienced inaccurate DWM meter readings/billings. They will be able to use Peachtree Hills' web site to record their contact information and complaints against DWM (as outlined at the top of page 1 of Attachment 1) and to approve the petition.

Kristy was designated BCN's official representative to the Atlanta Department of Watershed Management.

#### b. Gordon Certain, President, North Buckhead Civic Association, How Fulton County Property Tax Values are Set

Gordon gave a Powerpoint-style video presentation of his research on how Fulton County property tax property appraisals are calculated. Building and land values appear to be set by predetermined formulas, equations, and tables. A key element of this system is the notion of "neighborhood codes" which are 4 to 6 digit numbers which are assigned to geographical areas that generally do not correspond to recognized neighborhoods such as North Buckhead or Paces. The principal faults of this system are that abrupt (as opposed to progressive) valuation changes are experienced at neighborhood boundaries. Other deficiencies are doubts about the statistical validity of the system and the lack of consideration of the building's age. It does not appear that selling prices or construction costs of individual properties have any bearing on the valuations set. It appears that some

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“neighborhood codes” result in significant under-valuation or over-valuation of groups of properties. Appeals in some areas (those already under-values) may not achieve the hoped-for results.

- Gordon’s presentation is on the BCN interim web site at [www.nbca.org/BCN/tax](http://www.nbca.org/BCN/tax)

### **V. Community Concerns**

#### **Elections**

There was a discussion about how BCN might be involved in candidate interviews or forums. Jim suggested that once candidates are qualified in early September that BCN could pursue having them participate with BCN individually or as a group.

#### **Survey of Neighborhood “Best Practices”**

Craig C. Perry, President of West Paces Northside suggested that neighborhoods have different strengths and that it might be useful to identify what different neighborhoods do to achieve high levels of neighborhood membership and participation. Craig will prepare a survey to be circulated to BCN member associations during the upcoming month.

### **VI. Committee Reports**

a. **Public Safety**: There were reports of high frequencies of burglaries in Buckhead neighborhoods.

b. **Transportation**: No report

c. **Education**: No report

d. **Parks**: No report.

### **VII. Updates and Announcements**

#### **VIII. Next Meeting : June 12 or June 19, 2009**

*(Note: June 25 was finally determined to be the next meeting date.)*

#### **IX. Adjourn**

The meeting adjourned at around 8:40 PM.

Prepared by Gordon Certain  
BCN Secretary  
June 24, 2009

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<b>BCN Organizational Status as of 05/14/09</b>										
			<b>Represented?</b>							
	<b>Neighborhood</b>	<b>Member?</b>	<b>2008 Oct</b>	<b>Nov</b>	<b>Dec</b>	<b>2009 Jan</b>	<b>Feb</b>	<b>Mar</b>	<b>Apr</b>	<b>May</b>
1	Arden									
2	Ardmore Park	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes			Yes	Yes	Yes
3	Brookwood							Yes		
4	Brookwood Hills									
5	Buckhead Forest	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes		Yes
6	Castlewood	Yes								
7	Chastain Park	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
8	Collier Hills									Yes
9	Collier Hills North									
10	Garden Hills						Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
11	Grant Estates/South Tuxedo Park	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes		Yes
12	Historic Brookhaven	Yes			Yes		Yes	Yes	Yes	
13	Kingswood	Yes	Yes							Yes
14	Lindridge Martin Manor	Yes	Yes				Yes			
15	Margaret Mitchell	Yes					Yes			
16	Memorial Park	Yes	Yes		Yes	Yes	Yes		Yes	
17	Mount Paran Parkway									
18	Mt. Paran-Northside	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	
19	North Buckhead	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
20	P'tree Battle Alliance	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes		Yes
21	Paces	Yes		Yes	Yes		Yes	Yes		Yes
22	Paces West	Yes				Yes	Yes			
23	Peachtree Heights East	Yes	Yes	Yes		Yes	Yes	Yes		
24	Peachtree Heights West				Yes					
25	Peachtree Hills	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
26	Peachtree Park	Yes		Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes		Yes	
27	Pine Hills				Yes					
28	Pleasant Hill									
29	Randall Mill									
30	Ridgedale Park	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes		Yes	Yes	Yes	
31	Springlake									
32	Tuxedo Park	Yes	Yes		Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
33	Wesley Battle	Yes				Yes		Yes		
34	West Paces Northside	Yes	Yes		Yes		Yes		Yes	Yes
35	Whitewater Creek	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes		Yes
36	Wildwood		Yes							
	<b>Count</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>14</b>

## Attachment 1 to 05-14-2009 BCN Minutes - Page 1 of 2

Fields to be captured in the eForm to support the BCN Petition to the Department of Watershed Management (DWM). Respondents will be instructed to complete the form and by doing so, are submitting their name in support of the petition.

1. Last Name
2. First Name
3. Apt # (if any)
4. House Number
5. Street Name
6. Zip Code
7. Telephone
8. Email
9. Water Dept Acct #(Main)
10. Water Dept Acct # (Irrigation, if applicable)
11. Neighborhood (Select from drop down)
12. City Council Rep (Select from drop down)
  - a. Howard Shook
  - b. Clair Muller
13. Are you participating in the law suit filed on 9<sup>th</sup> April (Webb v City of Atlanta)? (Matthew C. Klase is the plaintiff's attorney) (Y/N)
14. Dispute Type (Select from drop down)
  - a. Incorrect Billing
  - b. Unreturned Deposit
  - c. Other
15. Estimated Amount associated with #13 above
16. Comments (OPEN SPACE)
17. By completing this form, do you agree that your name will be used in support of a petition by the BCN to the Atlanta Dept of Watershed Management seeking assistance for a resolution? (Y/N)

(NOTE: By completing the form [http://www.peachtreehills.org/eform\\_list.asp](http://www.peachtreehills.org/eform_list.asp) by May 30, 2009, I willingly and knowingly attach my name and support to BCN's petition to the DWM.)

### **BUCKHEAD COUNCIL OF NEIGHBORHOODS PETITION: RESOLVE COMPLAINTS TO DEPARTMENT OF WATERSHED MANAGEMENT NOW!**

#### **SUMMARY OF THE PROBLEM:**

A large majority of Buckhead residents with incorrect billings and unreturned deposits are not getting timely resolution to calls, emails, or letters of complaint to the City of Atlanta Department of Watershed Management (DWM). In many cases, residents' communications are either unacknowledged by the DWM or the resident is being told that no workable solution is possible. For a large number of residents, attempts at appropriate resolution have been ongoing for up to 8+ months with no end in sight. Many Buckhead residents have experienced pressure tactics from the City to pay bills regardless of their accuracy—or run the risk of a disconnection of water services. In some cases, disconnection has occurred even after payment of incorrect bills.

With DWM officials publically recognizing that there have been issues with billing processes, meter equipment, and estimated meter readings, the treatment of our residents is appalling. Furthermore, with the recent completion of the KPMG performance review of DWM, it is apparent that the DWM is experiencing extensive problems with billing procedures and resolution practices that are inconsistent across residents' complaints.

15 May 2009

Questions to Kristy Gillmann. Email: PHCA\_Kristy@hotmail.com; fax: 404-816-0592; mail: The Buckhead Council of Neighborhoods | P.O. Box 11934 | Atlanta | GA | 30355

## Attachment 1 to 05-14-2009 BCN Minutes - Page 2 of 2

### BY SIGNING THIS PETITION ON BEHALF OF YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD, YOU SUPPORT:

- Requesting DWM to assign a departmental representative to spearhead resolution of the complaints from the residents included in this petition; with such representative to be named within 30 days of receipt of this petition;
- Requesting that the DWM representative report monthly on previous month's activities and resolved/closed cases to Kristy Gillmann, BCN representative;
- Asking for DWM to issue written confirmation to each account holder in the petition that the DWM recognizes the account is in official "dispute" status and verifies that the resident is not at risk of having his/her water services disconnected during the dispute period. Written confirmation should to be mailed to residents within 45 days of receipt of this petition;
- Commitment by DWM that the representative assigned will work diligently to resolve billing/deposit disputes of BCN residents within 90 days of receipt of this petition;
- Asking our elected city council representatives to join in this petition and facilitate resolution with the DWM
- Encouraging letters of support for this petition from fellow neighbors, civic and business leaders.

The Buckhead Council of Neighborhoods hereby goes on record that a solution to each resident's complaint with the DWM MUST be reached within 90 days. Please join with us in signing this petition as soon as possible.

This petition is respectfully submitted by members of the The Buckhead Council of Neighborhoods (BCN) and supporters of the Buckhead Community. I want to publicly go on record that the City of Atlanta Department of Watershed Management must address residents' complaints now.

15 May 2009

Questions to Kristy Gillmann. Email: PHCA\_Kristy@hotmail.com; fax: 404-816-0592; mail: The Buckhead Council of Neighborhoods | P.O. Box 11934 | Atlanta | GA | 30355