



The Buckhead Council of Neighborhoods Board Meeting

November 18, 2010

Peachtree Presbyterian Church, Room 2315

6:30 – 8:30 PM

Meeting Minutes

Attendees:

	Full Name	Neighborhood/Organization	Email Address
1	Yolanda Adrean	City Council District 8	yadrean@atlantaga.gov
2	Michael Julian Bond	City Council, Post 1	mbond@AtlantaGa.Gov
3	Laura Braddick	Northside Neighbor	lbraddick@mdjonline.com
4	Arthur Cater	Grant Estates	Unk
5	Eleanor Cater	Atlanta	cater35@hotmail.com
6	Gordon Certain	North Buckhead	gcertain@comcast.net
7	Hannah Chung	Zone 2 Community Prosecutor	Hannah.Chung@FultonCountyGA.gov
8	Glenn Delk	Historic Brookhaven	glennelk@mindspring.com
9	Kristina Garcia-Bunuel	Michael Bond's Senior Legislative Aide	Unk
10	Nick Giuliano	Aide to Councilman Watson	Unk
11	Tom Gordon	Ardmore Park	tgordon@mindspring.com
12	Phillips Jones	Tuxedo Park	gpjatl@bellsouth.net
13	Kim Kahwach	Buckhead Forest	kajensen@bellsouth.net
14	Barbara Kennedy	Collier Hills	bar2010@aol.com
15	Jim King	Chastain Park	jimking@mindspring.com
16	Bill Langley	Ridgedale Park	langleybill@comcast.net
17	Walda Lavroff	North Buckhead	waldalavroff@comcast.net
18	Reuben Mann	Peachtree Hills	mannra24@hotmail.com
19	Louis Mayeux	North Buckhead	Louis.Mayeux@patch.com
20	George Mirgorod	Pine Hills	gMirgorod@comcast.net
21	Felicia Moore	City Council District 9	fmoore@atlantaga.gov
22	Buff Quillian	Peachtree Heights West	buffquillianphw@gmail.com
23	Jane Rawlings	Lindridge Martin Manor & President NPU-F	president@lmmna.org
24	Loulie Reese	Memorial Park	Loulie_tarbutton_reese@yahoo.com
25	Mercy Sandberg-Wright	Tuxedo Park	mercywright@msn.com
26	John Schaffner	Buckhead Reporter	johnschaffner@reporternewspapers.net
27	Bob Schneider	Garden Hills	bschneider@gardenhills.net
28	Sally Silver	NPU-B D&T Chair	sl_silver@hotmail.com
29	Frank Toye	Chastain Park	ftoye@bellsouth.net
30	Charlotte Vicens	Margaret Mitchell	cavicens@yahoo.com
31	Debra Wathen	Paces	6wathens@bellsouth.net
32	Aaron Watson	City Council Post 2	aaronwatson@atlantaga.gov
33	H Lamar Willis	City Council Post 3	hlwillis@atlantaga.gov
34	Jackson Wilson	Grant Estates/South Tuxedo Park	president@grantestates.org

Representation by Neighborhood:

Neighborhood	Name(s)
1 Ardmore Park	Tom Gordon
2 Buckhead Forest	Kim Kahwach
3 Chastain Park	Jim King, Frank Toye
4 Collier Hills	Barbara Kennedy
5 Garden Hills	Bob Schneider

BCN Board Meeting Minutes – November 18, 2010

6	Grant Estates	Jackson Wilson, Arthur Cater
7	Historic Brookhaven	Glenn Delk
8	Jane Rawlings	Lindridge Martin Manor
9	Margaret Mitchell	Charlotte Vicens
10	Memorial Park	Loulie Reese
11	North Buckhead	Gordon Certain, Walda Lavroff, Louis Mayeux, Sally Silver
12	Paces	Debra Wathen
13	Peachtree Heights West	Buff Quillian
14	Peachtree Hills	Reuben Mann
15	Pine Hills	George Mirgorod
16	Ridgedale Park	Bill Langley
17	Tuxedo Park	Phillips Jones, Mercy Sandberg-Wright

I. Welcome

Jim King called the meeting to order at around 6:40 PM.

II. Introductions

The attendees introduced themselves. A quorum was in attendance.

III. Approval of October Minutes

Minutes for the October meeting were approved.

IV. New Members (If any)

No new neighborhoods asked to join BCN.

V. Annual Elections

The following officers were unanimously elected as a slate:

Chairman	Jim King	Chastain Park
Vice-chairman	Elizabeth Prichard	Peachtree Battle Alliance
Secretary	Gordon Certain	North Buckhead
Treasurer	Barbara Kennedy	Collier Hills
Communications	Bob Schneider	Garden Hills
Member at Large	George Mirgorod	Pine Hills

The Parliamentarian/Legal position was not filled.

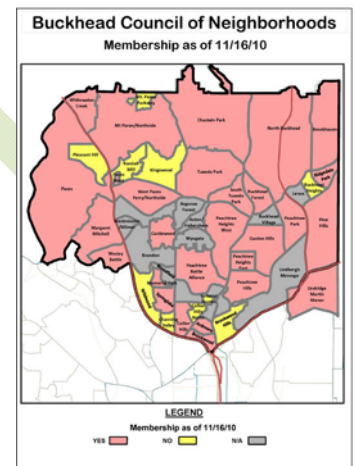
At Kim Kahwach's suggestion, a **nominating committee** was unanimously established by the board to meet in October to identify and review candidates for the 2011/12 BCN elections. Two current members (Gordon Certain and Elizabeth Prichard) were identified in the motion with the remaining two remaining members to be appointed by the chair in the August/September timeframe.

VI. Committee Updates (alphabetical, not meeting sequence)

Communications (Jennifer Moyers, Chair) – No report.

Development and Infrastructure (Elizabeth Pritchard, Chair) – No report.

Education – Jim King reported that the BCN Executive Committee had "suspended" the Education Committee. The reasons included:



BCN Board Meeting Minutes – November 18, 2010

- the resignation of chair Glenn Delk, who stepped down because he had been retained to represent some members of the Board of Education in their defense of litigation brought by other BOE members.
- There was a series of sometimes heated e-mails related to education which Jim thought were not productive.
- Further, **Kim Kahwach** had been identified as a member of the Education Committee though she was never invited to attend a meeting of that committee. But since she was a party to the filing of an ethics complaint against five BOE members, the appearance of a conflict for the committee might be inferred.

So, henceforth, the entire BCN Board will deal with the topic of education until “things settle down”.

Regarding the BCN request for information from BOE/APS about the process of identifying a high school site, Jim had sent a letter to the BOE which was forwarded to APS. (Also, the day after our October board meeting, **Nancy Meister** asked about the details of BCN’s motions which she subsequently conveyed to APS.) The initial BOE/APS response was a request for a delay of about three days. Subsequently, Dr. Hall’s contract was provided. After a few more days, the APS provided an “answer/non-answer”, treating our request as an “open records” request. They basically said they couldn’t (wouldn’t) tell us any details because the information was privileged – such information didn’t have to be provided under the “open records” law in cases of real estate acquisition.

The letter that **Sally Silver** mentioned at the last meeting as being related to APS condemnation actions regarding the Paces Apartments site on East Andrews Drive which she committed to release to BOE and the public was discussed further. Copies of the letter were provided to BOE members. A copy of the letter was also provided by Councilman Shook to **Gordon Certain**. He subsequently distributed it to BCN board members with the request that it not be further distributed in accordance with the landowner’s desires to not have it become public. The letter did not say that the land was being condemned; rather, it asked that APS, as a government authority capable of condemnation, be granted access to the land for physical tests (such as core samples) and to business records to establish its suitability for potential acquisition.

Yolanda Adrean reported that her office had received 83 e-mails about the use of the Paces property as the school site. These have been provided to Nancy Meister and to APS. 80 of the 83 opposed using the Paces site as the school.

Yolanda said that Atlanta’s major problem in attracting new business was the perceived quality of the school system. She also expressed concern that the leadership impasse in the BOE was hurting Atlanta’s ability to attract a high quality school superintendent in the future.

Glenn Delk encouraged the board to read and become familiar with the pleadings made in the BOE litigation. Gordon said that Glenn had provided pleadings for his side. Gordon said that if the pleadings were made available for the other side he would distribute them all to the BCN board. Glenn agreed to provide all the pleadings and Gordon will make them available on the web site.

When asked what the recourse was to the public citizens if the school system doesn’t get its act together, **Lamar Willis** suggested that we need to organize a recall of the BOE and the resignation of Superintendent Hall.

BCN Board Meeting Minutes – November 18, 2010

Gordon Certain made a **motion** that BCN ask the BOE/APS again to release the information requested as a result of our motions in October. APS' answer that they are not required to provide that information is not responsive to our request. We deserve that information requested and not already provided. The motion passed unanimously.

Parks (Gordon Certain, Chair) – No report.

Property Taxes (George Mirgorod, Chair) – **George Mirgorod** reported that there are 19,000 appeals of 2010 tax assessments.

Public Safety (Kim Kahwach, Chair) – **Kim Kahwach** reported that approximately 70 people attended the opening of Community Prosecutor Hannah Chung's new office. Kim said the committee's 2011 efforts will focus on an evacuation plan for Buckhead.

Transportation (John Haliburton, Chair) – No report.

Watershed Management Coordination (Kristy Gillman, Chair) – No report.

VII. Community Concerns

VIII. Discussion with Atlanta City Council Members

- **Yolanda Adrean** District 8
- **Michael Bond** Post 1
- **Felicia Moore** District 9
- **Aaron Watson** Post 2
- **H Lamar Willis** Post 3
- (Councilmembers Mitchell, Wan and Shook were invited but were unable to attend.)

Jim asked each Council member to tell the BCN board which Council committee they are involved in and the principal issues they are dealing with.

- **Yolanda Adrian** is the chair of the Finance/Executive Committee. She's also on the Public Safety and City Utilities Committees.

Finance/Executive Committee

She said they are beginning work on the 2012 budget. She said that she thought the city would continue to struggle with financial resources for the next several years. She said that 10% of the property tax base was under protest (\$2.5 billion was under protest out of \$25 billion).

City Utilities Committee

She attended the recent open meeting in Buckhead, where about 130 homeowners talked about problems with their water bills for 3 1/2 hours. She said the issue is driven by the fact that 5% of the water bills are being estimated. She said that sometimes the antenna doesn't work and the driver is unwilling to get out of the truck to make a reading, so an estimate is done. Ultimately when an actual reading is made there may be a big spike. They have done a study of 1387 water meters and found that in 22% of the cases the antenna wasn't working. There also broken meters and meters that the wrong head was put on. Right now 900 water bills are being appealed and there are 1300 bills under

BCN Board Meeting Minutes – November 18, 2010

dispute, or 1.6% of our water bills. They get 27,000 calls a month. Customers are devoting horrendous amounts of their personal time trying to get help.

Call any of the following people for extra help with water bill problems:

- **Dexter White**, Interim Commissioner of Watershed Management: 404-330-6138.
- **Jim Beard**, CFO for the water department: 404-330-6814.
- **Peter Aman**, the water department reports directly to him: 404-330-6025.

They have retrained the call center personnel, they are recording all calls, and they will test all water meters. If neighborhood associations want a briefing from Watershed Management, contact your district councilmember.

- **Felicia Moore** is chair of the Committee on Council. That committee is responsible for appointments to commissions and counsel operations. She is also vice chair of the Finance/Executive Committee and is on the Transportation Committee.

Finance/Executive Committee: They just passed the budget, 12 to 1; she was the 1. What she considers the biggest issue of the city is the financial stability of the city. She got the council to pass a requirement that we do a financial stabilization plan that looks at five years' worth of spending so we can see what we're doing before we start the budgeting process. She is very concerned because she thinks the budget we passed was incorrect. She thinks we spend money that we don't have or have not budgeted for. She thinks we will run out of money and doesn't favor a tax increase. She thinks will have to find things to cut or other sources of revenue.

- **H Lamar Willis** is also on the Finance/Executive Committee, the Public Safety Committee, and the Transportation Committee. He spends most of his time on the Transportation Committee and is the Council's representative to the Atlanta Regional Commission.

Transportation Committee: He said the committee and the entire Council is spending time on a referendum for an additional one cent sales tax for transportation.

- **Aaron Watson** is chair of the Zoning Committee. He serves on the finance and utilities committees.

Finance/Executive Committee: He agrees with Felicia that the biggest issues are around the budget. He said a big issue that the city faces is pension reform. He said that we need to ratchet down the amount of money we're spending on pensions.

- **Michael Bond** serves on the Community Development/Human Resources Committee, the Transportation Committee, and the Committee on Council.

Transportation Committee: He asked to chair the committee on parking which he says has pretty much taken over his life for the last six months. He agrees with his colleagues that the financial stability of the city is paramount. He also believes that we need to strengthen public safety and the school system.

Q&A Session

Pensions: **Glenn Delk** asked how the Council planned to solve the pension problem. He said pensions required \$110 million or about 20% of the budget. **Felicia Moore** said they did

BCN Board Meeting Minutes – November 18, 2010

make some changes with the pension budget which saved about \$7 million this year. She said the major changes that need to be made are with people who are in the current plan. She said that there are legal issues in going back. **Yolanda Adrian** added that the state of Georgia passed a special law that only applies to Atlanta. That law says Atlanta's pension plan can only be enriched; it cannot be rolled back. She said that Mayor Reed hopes to get the law changed. She suggested that we write e-mails to the mayor. The city has, however, started a new plan for new employees. She said that the city has set up a task force on pensions but that it hasn't met lately. **Felicia** commented that she has not seen pension reform and the legislative package that the city has prepared for the upcoming session. **Aaron Watson** commented the pension task force has been endowed with several hundred thousand dollars, privately raised, to dig into the legal issues related to pension reform. He expects a comprehensive report in the first quarter next year which will explore a range of options.

Privatization of services: **George Mirgorod** asked if there had been any talk related to privatization of services, for instance the airport. **H Lamar Willis** said that before he was a Councilman that he was an attorney for the FAA. He said that with the exception of Heathrow there had never been privatization of an airport the size of Hartsfield Jackson. He said Heathrow is now wishing they hadn't. He said that even if it were privatized none of the funds from the sale of Hartsfield Jackson could be used by the city of Atlanta. He said that parking was one of the largest generator of funds at Hartsfield. Parking (which is privatized) generates a profit of \$100 million a year. But that money has to stay at the airport. **George** asked if there was discussion of other areas of possible privatization. **Felicia Moore** said, "I'd like to say this about privatization. It is not a bad word. It can work. But the city's history on large privatization efforts has been dismal. One of the reasons is that we don't do what we're supposed to do. That's why when I first got on Council they were trying to privatize water. I was the only person that voted against it, because we have not done our homework. You have to make the department as efficient as possible before you turn it over [to private operators] to see any savings. ... The most recent effort is parking. Mr. Bond was not here to vote on it, but he is the one diligently working to make it better." **George:** Wasn't Peter Amin part of Bain when they made privatization recommendations? **Yolanda:** "There may be some small initiatives under way, but she is not aware of any big ones. "But until we learn how to write a contract, and administer it – until we learn how to do that, I'm not interested. We screwed up the vendor program, the kiosk program, the Park Atlanta program" and one more she couldn't think of.

Michael Bond said water and parking are two very different things. "The rationale is different -- you just can't privatize something that is a commodity like water. There's only one set of pipes running under the streets. It is one of the most valuable resources you will ever have. Parking is very different. The contract was written poorly in some respects but the issue is that you can't go from netting \$400,000 a year to netting \$5 million a year ... without there being aggressive enforcement. ... So that's the issue there. We, as a Council and the city, should have come to our constituents and said, hey folks: this is one way for us to generate more money. So it is about us doing one thing well and that is communicating in writing better contracts. I would propose that if we privatize anything we go the route Charlotte took privatizing their solid waste and sanitation. What they did is they went out and divided their city into quadrants and they allowed their department to bid on the project. The solid waste department actually won one after they lost the first two because they realized that they had to compete. Since then they are operating in half of the city and it's privatized in half of the city." The result is managed competition. "If you can split it up like that, and then if it doesn't work – similar to parking – you couldn't do it with water, that's the problem with water – but in

BCN Board Meeting Minutes – November 18, 2010

those areas where you can split up services, you can run a test case. As Ms. Moore said, it's not a bad word, but you've got to do it right."

Transportation: **Jane Rawlings** asked if the Council felt that House Bill 277 adequately serves the transit needs of the city of Atlanta, and specifically the funding and operational needs of MARTA. (HB 277 provides an optional transportation related one cent sales tax to be voted on in the various regions of Georgia.) **A number of councilmembers** said no. **Jane** asked whether there are plans to address that. **Aaron Watson** said that the possibilities were being worked on: have the mayor quietly renegotiate the bill with the legislature or work with other elected officials. **H Lamar Willis** said that Atlanta, Fulton, and DeKalb have spent billions on MARTA. He said that part of the reason we suffer from potholes is because while everybody else was fixing up their roads, right-of-way improvements, and sidewalks we were developing an infrastructure for transportation. He said we would need to be able to find some way to achieve equity in adding a cent on top of the cent we already pay for MARTA. HB 277 basically asks us to "take one for the team", for the other seven counties in our HB 277 region (different from the Atlanta Regional Commission's 13 counties). We need to wait to see what the list of projects includes. He said, as it is, it is not fair. He said that the HB 277 money cannot be used for MARTA.

Taxes/Schools: **Yolanda Adrean** commented that they wanted to see if it was possible to have a fractional cent sales tax. Georgia sales taxes currently need to be levied in whole cents. The APS SPLOST is due to expire in June. Yolanda talked with Nancy Meister who says APS has enough cash to buy the land for the new high school and could build the new high school with borrowed money or with an extended sales tax. If they could do fractional cent sales taxes it would be more palatable to tell APS that they could have a quarter of the penny, for example. **Aaron Watson** said that APS had had its 1% sales tax, \$85 million a year, for almost a decade and had met most or all of its capital needs and had no debt. He said that the new high school could be financed with conventional debt. **Yolanda** said that the HB 277 1% tax would pay for regional needs and wouldn't help the streets in front of our houses. Atlanta has a one hundred million-dollar backlog for local infrastructure repairs.

Public Safety: **Yolanda Adrean** outlined some of the changes being considered in expanding APD Zone 2. She also reiterated the importance of calling 911.

IX. Announcements

X. Next Meeting - December 9.

XI. Adjourn - The meeting adjourned at about 8:40 PM.

Note: *The opinions expressed by the speakers and individual neighborhood representatives in these minutes do not necessarily represent those of BCN or its member neighborhoods.*

Prepared by Gordon Certain
BCN Secretary
December 5, 2010

BCN Board Meeting Minutes – November 18, 2010

BCN Organizational Status as of 11/18/10																													
		Represented at BCN Board Meeting?																											
	Neighborhood	BCN Dues		2008			2009												2010										
		2009	2010	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	
1	Arden																												
2	Ardmore Park	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
3	Argonne Forest																											✓	
4	Brookwood		✓						✓															✓	✓		✓	✓	
5	Brookwood Hills													✓										✓	✓		✓	✓	
6	Buckhead Forest	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
7	Buckhead Heights										✓																		
8	Castlewood	✓	✓								✓					✓													
9	Chastain Park	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
10	Collier Hills	✓	✓								✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	
11	Collier Hills North										✓																✓		
12	Garden Hills	✓	✓						✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
13	Grant Estates	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
14	Historic Brookhaven	✓	✓			✓			✓	✓	✓		✓	✓		✓			✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
15	Kingswood	✓		✓							✓																✓		
16	Lindridge Martin Manor	✓	✓	✓					✓								✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓			✓	
17	Margaret Mitchell	✓	✓					✓				✓				✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓					✓	✓	
18	Memorial Park	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓			✓			✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
19	Mount Paran Pkwy																											✓	
20	Mt. Paran-N'side	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓		
21	North Buckhead	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
22	P'tree Battle Alliance	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓			
23	Paces	✓	✓		✓	✓			✓	✓		✓	✓			✓	✓			✓				✓	✓	✓		✓	
24	Paces West	✓	✓				✓	✓																					
25	Peachtree Heights East	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓		✓			✓				✓											
26	Peachtree Heights West	✓	✓			✓								✓			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓		✓	
27	Peachtree Hills	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓		✓	
28	Peachtree Park	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓			✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓		✓	
29	Pine Hills		✓			✓												✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
30	Pleasant Hill																												
31	Randall Mill																												
32	Ridgedale Park	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓		✓	✓		✓		✓		✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	
33	Springlake		✓																	✓	✓			✓	✓		✓	✓	
34	Tuxedo Park	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓				✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
35	Wesley Bohler	✓	✓				✓		✓																✓				
36	West Paces Northside	✓	✓	✓		✓				✓		✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓		✓	✓		
37	Whitewater Creek	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓			✓	✓				✓	✓			
38	Wildwood			✓																							✓	✓	
Count		26	28	17	13	18	14	20	17	12	14	18	17	15	17	11	18	16	17	24	20	10	13	18	20	23	20	17	