

Charlestown Neighborhood Association Minutes
Called Meeting
June 1, 2011
First (Scots) Presbyterian Church

President David Smythe called the special meeting to order at 5:35 PM and asked the membership to join in saying the Pledge of Allegiance. Mr. Smythe thanked John Thompson for allowing this meeting to be held two days after the three weeks deadline set forth in Mr. Thompson's motion made at the May 9th membership meeting to discuss joining a lawsuit .

Mr. Smythe called on board member Jeff Leath to explain the background for the action to be voted on at the membership meeting. Mr. Leath reviewed with the membership the points that had been emailed in the meeting announcement of May--- which are attached to the minutes including the fact that those present at the May 15 board meeting had voted unanimously to join the law suit against Carnival Cruise Lines to elicit a declaratory judgment. Mr. Leath also explained the issues addressed in the brief.

Mr. Smythe explained that there is no exposure or liability to either the CNA board or the membership if the membership votes to join the suit. He announced that a legal committee had been formed composed of Steve Gates, Randy Pelzer, Margot Rose, Preston Wilson and himself, ex officio. Mr. Smythe emphasized that the purpose of the suit is not to get rid of cruise ships but to determine the City of Charleston's jurisdiction over their regulation.

Mr. Thompson amended his May 9th motion

Mr. Smythe opened the floor to members to comment on CNA's joining the suit. Each speaker was to be allowed three minutes with a maximum of ten speakers and the speakers were limited to members of CNA. Mr. Thomas Thornhill spoke against having the Association join the suit saying that CNA should support the city. Mr. Jay Williams advocated CNA's joining the lawsuit because the city had neglected its oversight responsibilities as relates to the cruise ships and the suit would force the city and the State Ports Authority to come to grips with the issue. Mrs. Jane Waring thought it would be irresponsible not to join the suit because there needed to be more than verbal assurances from those involved to live up to their word. Mr. Charles Corley asked who owns the land the SPA occupies. Mr. Randolph Pelzer answered that. In response to a question from Mr. Charles Rhoden about the short and long term legal expenses, Mr. Smythe and Mr. Pelzer answered that there have been no expenses incurred, the Southeastern Environmental ---- is doing this pro bono and the only expenses will be court costs which will be in the hundreds of dollars. Mr. Smythe said that the board will deal with the approval of any costs incurred. Mr. Theodore Stoney said that he could see both sides of the issue. He feels the biggest problem with the ships is the traffic problem and he wants to see both sides working together. He said that the SPA has demonstrated a desire to listen and those wanting improvements in plans should be attending meetings. Dr. Jack Simmons said that the city is suffering from success. He served on the city's 2003 Cruise Ship Task Force and is on the permanent advisory committee. He is concerned about volume.

A call for the question ensued. Mr. Thornhill questioned that ballots had been distributed to each spouse at one address rather than each address in the neighborhood receiving one vote. Each spouse was allowed a vote. Paper ballots had been distributed at a check in table prior to the start of the meeting, and only valid members were given a ballot.

While the ballots were being counted, Mr. Pelzer asked members who had not previously signed the petition to move the proposed Union Pier terminal to Columbus Street and were interested in supporting that move to sign it. He also had sheets for members to furnish their name and email if they were interested in supporting the Task Force's efforts in that regard.

Mr. Smythe announced the outcome of the vote: 135 members voted in favor of CNA's joining the suit; 35 voted against. He thanked all present for their participation and said it is now time for CNA to address other business.

Respectfully Submitted,

Cornelia H. Pelzer
Acting Secretary