



WAMM CIVIC ASSOCIATION QUARTERLY MEETING

September 10, 2025

Bering Memorial United Church of Christ

MINUTES

Lane Llewellyn, President, called the meeting to order at 6:32 pm.

1. Introduction of Officers

Board members present included: Lane Llewellyn, President; Maria Morandi, 2nd Vice President, and Kevin Sokol-White, Treasurer.

2. Order of Business

2.1. Introduction of Guests and the Speaker.

Lane Llewellyn introduced guests attending the meeting, including:

- Jeff Rushing, Greek Festival
- Gus Economides, Director of the Greek Festival.
- Alex Spike, representing Friends of the Blvd./W Alabama Street Safety Coalition.
- Nathan Sprague, Assistant Manager, Nando's Montrose.

Lane then introduced Maria Irshad, the VIP speaker for the meeting. Ms. Maria Irshad, CAPP, MPA is Deputy Director for ParkHouston.

2.2. Introductory Remarks by Lane Llewellyn

Lane reported that:

1. She received Greek Festival Tickets which will be handed out at the end of the meeting.
2. The new STR ordinance will be enforced starting January 1, 2026. Please read updates from Abbie Kamin's office.
3. Covenant House: A lunch and neighborhood tour took place today (September 10), It included her, new CEO Anthony Flynn, Kevin Sokol-White, and Maria Morandi. Concepts and plans for Covenant House were discussed as well as the possibility of holding the December quarterly meeting in their campus. At the lunch, Lane was reminded that Covenant House is present in 34 cities and 5 countries. Anthony Flynn said that Covenant House will be updating security

rules, develop a business-specific plan, and design stricter rules for young people accessing their services and programs.

4. National Night Out will be celebrated at Nando's of Montrose on October 7. Details are described in the WAMM Gazette.
5. Lane said that she will be retiring as President of the WAMM Board effective December 31, 2025. She will be appointing Kevin Sokol-White as President until the Board elections take place in December, 2026. Diane Baker and Maria Morandi will also be retiring. Lane emphasized that she is retiring from the Board but not leaving the neighborhood.

2.3. Upcoming Greek Festival

Lane thanked Jeff Rushing and Gus Economides for the free tickets to the Greek Festival. The Annunciation Orthodox Cathedral has always been an asset for the neighborhood and the WAMM association.

Jeff Rushing explained that any parking issues during the festival should be reported to 311. He thanked all in the audience for their tolerance, as some parking problem is always likely to occur. He said that the Cathedral has been fully renovated, and to please visit. Lane asked whether it would be possible for WAMM to get a dedicated tour. Jeff responded positively and said tours can be set up for certain days and hours.

Gus Economides added that there is a lot of preparation in advance of the festival. Last year was one of the best ever in terms of attendance and sales. Good news for this year is that both dinner plates and individual food selections will be available.

2.4. Nathan Srague, Assistant Manager, Nando's Montrose.

Lane reminded the audience that WAMM will be celebrating National Night Out at Nando's, and that Nathan helped Deborah Quintero and Maria Morandi in setting up the menu and event.

Nathan Sprague brought a selection of Nando's specialties, drinks, and meal vouchers for meeting attendees. He also added that WAMM members get 20% off meals at Nando's. He gave a brief background about Nando's. He described the type of food sold by Nando's in response to a question from Linda Star. Lane Llewellyn asked how many locations they have. Nathan responded that they have 3 in Houston (including Montrose), 50 in Texas, and 1500 worldwide.

Lane and all attending the meeting thanked Nathan and Nando's for their help and the wonderful food they brought to the meeting.

2.5. Speaker Ms. Maria Irshad, CAPP, MPA. Deputy Director for ParkHouston.

Lane introduced the speaker, Maria Irshad, who will talk about the residential parking program and the new noise ordinance. Lane asked the audience to hold questions until the end of the talk.

Ms. Irshad described that she oversees ParkHouston, permitting of Vehicles for Hire and business licenses, and sound permits under the new noise ordinance (for example, for special events).

Ms. Irshad explained that there are different permits under the noise ordinance, including:

- temporary permits
- commercial permits (limits hours)
- other permits that require shut down by 11pm

Permits limit noise to 68 decibels after 11pm. If the noise is exceeded, HPD is the first line of notification. Do not call the emergency line. HPD is required to measure the noise limit at the property line using their own sound level meter. There are task forces that check for noise levels in designated areas.

Parking is always an issue, especially for the 77006 zip-code because it attracts many visitors.

There was a discussion between Ms. Irshad, Lane Llewellyn and Deborah Quintero about the last parking permit application sent by WAMM, which was denied. Ms. Irshad said that the rules for the parking permit program have remain the same.

Kevin Sokol-White asked the speaker to explain the process for application and the rules. Ms. Irshad indicated that requests for permits are petition-driven, and they can be obtained for areas as small as a block to as large as a neighborhood. For example, Rice University applied and obtain a permit for an area of 27 blocks.

The petition for residential parking permits has to be signed by all the property owners in the streets the permit is requested for. At least 75% of the block(s) has to be residential footage and occupied, with at least 25% by homeowners. Parking and traffic services from the COH will check the street parking usage and traffic patterns for the blocks included in the petition. Traffic engineers have to verify that street widths are 25ft curve-to-curve in all block(s). If the codes are met, a public hearing is set up that will include notification to all residents within 200 yards of the block(s). Applications that meet all requirements and make it through the hearing are sent to City Council and placed on the Mayor's agenda. There is a 60-day waiting period after official approval before the permit can be implemented. The complete process may take at least 6 months.

Nichael Salinas complained that two side parking in our 2-way streets makes it impossible for cars to travel in both directions simultaneously. Ms. Irshad advised to call 311 and request a traffic engineer inspection, but to be mindful that the 25ft wide street rule also applies in this case.

Jamie Roark asked about the problem that the city's trash/recycling removal is compromised by parking streetside. Ms. Irshad responded that this is an issue to be addressed by the new director of Solid Waste Management.

Jamie asked also described that construction workers are parking all over the neighborhood and accumulate dirt in the residential areas. She asked what can be done about it. Ms. Irshad responded that some builders/developers provide parking for workers, while others do not. Sometimes workers will park where it is convenient, not in the provided parking area. The problem is enforcement on the part of construction supervisors.

Deborah Quintero explained the situation with the last parking permit application she submitted on behalf of WAMM, which was denied. Ms. Irshad responded that she would look into it. Lane indicated that WAMM will try to submit an application again.

Chris Sokol-White asked about the problem with single family STRs that advertise for a larger number of occupants than allowed by occupancy codes. Lane Llewellyn explained that the new STR ordinance will start to be enforced on January 1, 2026. Ms. Irshad said that there is nothing yet in place for STR-related parking, noise, or crowd control enforcement yet, but there will soon be a portal to send complaints.

Deborah Quintero asked whether STR hosts should have a permit for street parking. Ms. Irshad responded that she will check on this issue. She also advised to report bad actors and coordinate with HPD with the final goal of deplatforming the owners. Lane also reminded everybody that come January, 2026, Council Member Ramirez has recommended to hire new people dedicated to STR enforcement.

Kevin Begnaud asked why we were successful in getting residential parking permits in the past. Lane responded that, unfortunately, the last application sent by Deborah was turned down.

Ms. Irshad indicated that her department has rules focused on pedestrian safety issues, and residents can help with enforcement. For example, there are flyers newly designed for placement on the windshield of cars parked blocking sidewalks. Her department has a volunteer program that will train residents on issues related to maintaining pedestrian safety.

Kevin Sokol-White said that there is a bad actor on his block that parks blocking the sidewalk. Ms. Irshad recommended to call HPD.

Deborah Quintero mentioned that sometimes the parked vehicles are partially on the driveway and partially on the road. Ms. Irshad responded that they are blocking a roadway. Lane said to call HPD. Deborah advised to check the COH APK Code tables for the description of parking violations.

Lane Llewellyn thanked the speaker for an excellent and informative presentation.

3. New Business

3.1 Covenant House.

Lane reported that communications with the new CEO and other staff continue and that progress has been made.

3.2 Resignation of three Board members and appointment of replacements

As described earlier, Lane will be resigning from the Board at the end of this year. She will be appointing Kevin Sokol-White as her replacement until new elections for Board members in December 2026. Kevin will nominate replacements for Diane Baker and Maria Morandi.

3.3 Ongoing projects

Chris Sokol-White gave an update on:

- Successful trash pickup campaigns throughout WAMM.
- Landscaping of the esplanades in the Lovett/Yoakum Blvd area.
- Ongoing cleanup, landscaping, and keep-out signage at the Lovett Triangle.
- Plan to apply for a COH neighborhood grant to continue the esplanade landscaping and maintenance.

Kevin Begnaud remarked that this is an important effort to stop loitering and used of these areas as staging zones for COH road construction.

Kevin Sokol-White explained that the city helped identify trees that were salvageable. The landscaping company that contracts with Covenant House helped with tree removal pro-bono. Chris is also partnering with Covenant House to keep the area clean and to help address other issues such as loitering.

Lane Llewellyn thanked Chris and Kevin for their efforts. Chris called for volunteers to help with the cleanup and maintenance of the esplanades and the Triangle area.

Lane added that there had been a plan to develop a park in the area but everything took back seat with changes in management at the COH. Kevin added that recapturing this area for the neighborhood is a critical issue at this time, and that the park project can be taken up at a different time. He also indicated that there are good relationships with Skanka and Covenant House.

Kevin Sokol-white reported that the association is in solid financial grounds. There were 90 members at the time, including two sponsors. The Park IV HOA is interested in becoming a sponsor through the efforts of Ann Miller. Kevin wants to increase the number of individual memberships at Parc IV. He has been invited to speak at one off their meetings.

Lane indicated she had received a letter from Friends of the Boulevard requesting WAMM support to revise the proposed W. Alabama development plan. She indicated that she will speak with Alex Spike after the end of the meeting but is not inclined to support the letter.

Kevin Sokol-White announce that Southwestern Development Co. appears to be ready to start construction at the former Kroger site. He was informed by the city that permits had been extended through January 2026. Stakes had been placed on the ground indicating work will start soon. The Skanska project is still at the stage of securing funds. They are in talks with the TIRZ for obtaining some tax abatements. He also informed that the former Shake Shack site will be occupied by a PNC Bank branch.

Lane asked if there was any new business. Hearing none, she called the meeting adjourned at 7:45pm.