

Colonial Heights Neighborhood Association

Guidelines

Summary

This set of guidelines describes and outlines the Colonial Heights Neighborhood Association (CHNA) organization structure, decision making, communication and history. This document is intended to give clarity to members of the association in regards to roles and responsibilities, participation and decision making. This set of guidelines is considered interim, while the membership explores incorporation into a 501(c)3 or the development of formal bylaws. If the members do not formalize the organization further through 501(c)3 or bylaw development, the organization shall follow the guidelines outlined herein as approved.

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Section 1 - Overview and History

Overview

The neighborhood of Colonial Heights is located in Southeast Sacramento. It consists of the area bordered on the west by Stockton Boulevard including homes on the east side, east by 58th street including homes on the west side, north by 14th avenue including homes on the south side, and on the south by 22nd avenue from Stockton to 58th street including all homes on 22nd in this area. Colonial Heights has a city park (Colonial Park) located at its center. The park consists of the area between 18th and 19th Avenues north-south and between 54th and 53rd Street east-west. The park contains a wading pool, playgrounds for children and toddlers, picnic benches, a softball/baseball diamond, a field for soccer or other activities, and a basketball half-court. Additionally, the Colonial Heights Library, which includes a garden and community room, anchors the southwest corner of the neighborhood. Colonial Heights also contains San Francisco Boulevard, known for its unique palm tree lined triple lane boulevard.

The mission of CHNA is to build community by providing a forum for sharing information, connecting neighbors, promoting activities and fostering civic involvement in our diverse community.

The CHNA meets monthly (outside of November and December) on the fourth Thursday evening of every month, at the Colonial Heights Library unless there is a conflict with other meetings.

History

In 1981, Shirley Johnson, a resident of Colonial Heights founded an active neighborhood association called the Colonial Heights Arts and Recreation Effort (CARE) which she lead for over 20 years. The focus of CARE was safety and security of the neighborhood centered around the park and activities for children and teenagers. This organization ran an after school program, a softball league, and made many improvements to Colonial Park, including the wading pool and the shade structure. The organization dissolved due to many reasons, primary of which was Johnson's failing health.

In 2007, several neighbors joined together and formed the current neighborhood association and created an online forum for the neighborhood. During the Great Recession, CHNA organized efforts to tackle vacant houses, absent owners, and squatters, and transient issues at the park. CHNA's primary focus during the downturn was to improve participation in the neighborhood through events such as National Night Out, and organizing a Neighborhood Watch. Over time, CHNA continued to add events, such as the Easter Egg Hunt, Neighborhood Yard Sale, Movie Night, and Music Festival. CHNA also actively participated with city officials around an upgrade of the playground park facilities and changed and expanded the planned remodel. Issues at the park resulted in a neighborhood-wide vote on the disposition of the shade structure, ultimately resulting in a vote to remove all of the walls. Key neighborhood-wide impacted and permanent projects include this shade structure change, the 103 palm trees planted on San Francisco Boulevard to replace dying trees, and the implementation of street toppers around the neighborhood in the shape of streetcars to reflect the pride and history of Colonial Heights.

Section 2 - Organizational Structure

CHNA is a volunteer-run organization with an emphasis on participation of individuals who live, work or volunteer in Colonial Heights. Anyone can participate within any level of the organization and the essential mission of the organization is met through monthly meetings, special events and committees of people working together including business owners, property owners, renters, volunteers and others who are invested in the community.

CHNA is built around committees that are organized to produce neighborhood events or perform an ongoing community service. Committees are self-forming and result from an idea for an event or activity that has been discussed at a CHNA meeting. A leader and committee members are identified, and participation in activities is open to those interested and willing. These committees are then considered a part of the CHNA organization. Committees are given a great deal of independence and freedom in how they are organized, and what responsibilities they take on.

Committees formed as a part of CHNA are responsible for maintaining communication with other committees, the organization and the neighborhood more broadly. This is to avoid conflicts, reduce duplication and to keep the organization open and transparent. Communication may include regular emails with members and leaders, presentation of work status at monthly meetings and the posting of events and activities to CNHA social media accounts.

Committees are responsible for preparing and distributing documentation and marketing materials, as needed. Documentation of contacts, donors, budgets, committee members, and decisions should be preserved and shared for future committee leaders and members. This information is maintained on the CHNA Google Drive, shared among CHNA leaders.

General Committee Guidelines

- Ideas and events are brought to the neighborhood association for discussion before becoming official committees as a part of CHNA.
- The neighborhood association members vote on whether to approve development of a committee at the monthly meeting.
- Committees are made up of more than one member and are transparent about their activities.
- A committee representative must report on progress at each neighborhood association meeting. If there is no update, a committee member must communicate with leaders prior to the meeting.
- Committees share documents, flyers, budget information, etc. during the meetings and eventually on the Google shared drive, for archiving purposes. Committees requiring funds outside of their own members' donations, particularly CHNA funds, report on the budget before and after funds are spent.
- The Communications Committee creates and distributes flyers with a list of meetings twice per year to every home in the boundary. For promotion of annual events, committees follow general communications guidelines and works, as needed, with the Communications Committee.

Leadership Committee

CHNA is organized primarily around the committees performing event and activity planning. The Leadership Committee is made up of the leaders of all these various committees and others who want to participate in the day-to-day functioning of the organization. All of these roles are currently informal, with no paid staff and without the voting of executive or leadership roles. A leader who participates in the leadership committee should be either leading an event or activity committee and/or regularly attending and participating in monthly meetings.

The Leadership Committee meets informally regularly, as needed. The intent of this committee is to discuss and resolve issues arising from conflicts within the various committees and leaders, to coordinate efforts between committees, and to learn from each other how to be a better neighborhood leader. These meetings are also an opportunity for committee leaders to discuss plans and strategies and to organize efficiently to communicate with membership, the public and partner organizations and government agencies.

Examples of topics that are discussed in leaders group:

- Ways to improve outreach to neighbors regarding neighborhood meetings
- Recommendation of leader addition to leaders group
- Discussion of confidential item (e.g., grievances)
- How to improve as a leader
- Suggested topics for upcoming neighborhood association meetings
- Review what leaders meetings are for, purpose and usefulness
- Annual updates of activities and events

Leaders have the responsibility to:

- Provide guidance to CHNA for events and committees
- Attend at least half of the monthly CHNA meetings
- Be willing to work with the community and its stakeholders
- Demonstrate leadership qualities by leading a committee and/or event

- Demonstrate professionalism and ethical purpose when conducting business on behalf of CHNA or the community
- Know the neighborhood and work for the benefit of the neighborhood

Meeting notes are taken at leaders meetings to look back on as reference and to capture any action items discussed. Notes are stored in the shared Google drive.

The Leadership Committee is not an executive committee, meaning that decisions that have impacts to the neighborhood or represent a particular position to the public or partners are discussed and decided at monthly meetings, not by leaders only. The leadership committee may meet and discuss an issue, bringing a topic of discussion for the monthly meeting discussions.

The Leadership Committee presents an annual update to the association on accomplishments, challenges and opportunities from the prior year. The process includes discussions with committee leaders, review of meeting notes, Facebook posts, and other social media from the previous year and presenting a summary at the CHNA January meeting.

CHNA strives to have a leadership group and membership that reflect the diversity of the neighborhood.

Annual Events

The organization focuses on organizing annual events for community members to participate in the Colonial Heights neighborhood. This emphasis means there are many ongoing annual events, which are organized by a committee of association members. The following is an outline of current annual events.

National Night Out Committee

Held the first Tuesday of every August, National Night Out is a community-building campaign that promotes police-community partnerships and neighborhood camaraderie to make neighborhoods safer, more caring places to live. Held at Colonial Park, National Night Out, includes a BBQ, games, music and a photo booth. The neighborhood has participated in this event since 2011, and the activities vary from year to year depending on volunteers, participants, and donors.

Yard Sale Committee

This committee is responsible for putting on the Yard Sale event each September. The Yard Sale was started by the previous C.A.R.E. association (documents reflect the event started as early as 1989) to raise funds for C.A.R.E. projects. The Yard Sale, revived in 2012 as the Colonial Heights Yard Sale Extravaganza, is a community-wide event, where individual neighbors sell used items at their own house and keep their own proceeds.

Garden Tour Committee

This committee is responsible for organizing the Charming Garden Tour held each May. The first garden tour was held in 2016. The Garden Tour is an opportunity for neighbors to share gardens and for those outside the neighborhood to visit and enjoy the beautiful landscape. Proceeds have gone to the Colonial Heights Library Read & Feed garden.

Creative Craft Fest Committee

This committee is responsible for organizing the Creative Craft Fest held each November at Wesley Social Hall on 15th Avenue. The first craft fest was held in 2015 and proceeds from table sales were split between the Wesley UMC for use of the space and CHNA. The craft fest is an opportunity to highlight and support neighborhood creativity and talents. Photos with Santa are also provided at the event for free.

Other Committees

Welcoming Committee

This committee is responsible for welcoming new neighbors to the neighborhood. This includes home owners, renters and new businesses. The committee puts together welcome packets that include a one page info sheet about the neighborhood, resource guide and welcome card signed by neighbors at monthly meetings. This committee formed in 2014 and has welcomed hundreds of neighbors to our community.

Youth Development Committee

While youth development extends across multiple areas, this committee is mainly responsible for creating and coordinating the Explore and More! after school program at the Colonial Heights library. Since the Fall of 2012, this program conducts 37 weeks of programming every academic year. Program funding of \$500 has been provided annually from the City of Sacramento, with occasional assistance from the Colonial Heights Library, Friends of Colonial Heights Library, and neighbor donors.

Park Committee

The Park Committee is responsible for initiating and coordinating Colonial Park projects often working with the District 5 office and Parks & Rec in planning projects and obtaining funding and supplies. Projects have included a playground rebuild, a building remodel, tree watering and mulching, painting, and graffiti removal, along with maintenance and repairs of equipment, buildings and grounds. The committee takes a lead in coordinating park cleanups the Saturday prior to CHNA events in the park and in obtaining and storing tools and supplies in the park storage room.

Guidelines Committee

The Guidelines Committee is tasked with defining the roles and relationships within CHNA, and developing new guidelines and /or bylaws.

Communications Committee

The Communications Committee is responsible for managing external-facing communications including website creation and maintenance, social networking platforms, group e-mail accounts, and establishing communications guidelines as protocol for receiving incoming communications as well as handling outgoing communications.

Section 3 - Roles and Responsibilities

The following are roles with associated responsibilities.

Monthly Meeting Facilitator

- Reserve and confirm location for upcoming meetings
- Advertise on Facebook/Nextdoor/Twitter
- Print 750 flyers for distribution in neighborhood (depending on upcoming big events)
- Create event on Facebook/Nextdoor
- Solicit agenda items, contact representatives in city/councilmember/assemblymember office to invite
- Create agenda and post on the Google Drive
- Print copies of agenda/minutes/additional meeting materials
- Communicate with guest speakers
- Follow up on action items, individual questions

Monthly Meeting Minutes Recorder

Take minutes during the CHNA monthly meetings. Distribute minutes to leaders group for review no later than five days after the meeting. After five days review, send to listserv and post on social media channels. Update any corrections or additions to meeting minutes.

Leadership Committee Meeting Organizer

Solicit agenda items and create agenda for meeting. Confirm location for meeting.

External Communications Representative (see Section 5 for communication guidelines)

Correspond with partner organizations on behalf of CHNA.

Social Media Communications Representative (see Section 5 communication guidelines)

Manage the social communications channels (Facebook, Instagram, Twitter) and communicate externally on behalf of CHNA.

Web Design/Maintenance Representative

Ensure that the website is working, consistently updated and meeting the general needs of CHNA.

Community Liaison

Communicate with external community groups including but not limited to: businesses, Colonial Heights Library, surrounding neighborhood associations, local churches, etc., and report back to CHNA leaders and members

Treasurer

Manage CHNA account. Ensure bookkeeping is accurate and up-to-date. Oversee budgets for events and ensure that events and projects requiring CHNA funds are carried out on budget. Report budget to leadership and monthly meeting.

Section 4 - Membership and Decision Making

Members of the organization are anyone from the community who lives, works or plays in Colonial Heights. The organization is volunteer-run and has a mission of building community. Anyone who wants to participate is encouraged and empowered.

Decision making is made through informal discussions and votes by members present at committee and monthly meetings. If an item affects the organization of CHNA or the neighborhood, committees must bring options to the monthly meeting, and allow time for these to be discussed. Committees do not make decisions that affect the neighborhood, as a whole. Instead, they facilitate the neighborhood in making those decisions.

As a neighborhood, CHNA monthly meetings are the preferred venue for most decisions. A show of hands with a simple majority shall decide. A simple implementation of "Robert's Rules of Order" will govern the voting process, including a motion, second of the motion, discussion, and formal vote by show of hands. An appropriate period of discussion should be allowed. All opinions should be heard, given credence and considered.

The vote should be tabled for a subsequent meeting if appropriate and timely. Appropriate objections and reasons for delaying the vote include:

1. Lack of adequate notification that a vote would be happening at the meeting.
2. Lack of sufficient discussion at the meeting.
3. The need to gather more facts or information.
4. An insufficient number of participants attending the meeting.
5. An attempt to "stack a vote" by an interested group or party.

6. An objection by a neighborhood member presenting a reasonable argument for delay.

When in doubt, and when timely, votes should be delayed. Decisions on delaying votes are discussed and approved in monthly meetings.

Minor decisions are decisions that are focused on event planning and other activities, such as the starting of events or activities, and decisions on how to organize these events and activities. Minor decisions are made either in the process of organizing through a committee or are made by a vote at monthly CHNA meeting. When in doubt, committees bring decisions to a CHNA meeting.

Major decisions, such as physical changes, decisions financially impacting the organization, organizational development changes, and association positions related to government policies are made by the members through discussions and voting at monthly meetings. Committees are responsible for presenting reasonable options and creating an unbiased process whereby the neighborhood can make those decisions. Members should provide sufficient opportunity for participation in major decisions including dissemination of information, a timeline for review and discussion and a final opportunity for voting, either in person or other means. Every member is entitled to participate in a vote, regardless of the nature of their membership.

Minutes are taken at these meetings and published on social media platforms and the CHNA website. Decisions reached at meetings are posted in the minutes, and on social networking sites. A note should be added to the posting indicating any major decision that was made.

Some decisions may require Informal opinion polls that can be created via online polling tools such as a Survey Monkey (surveymonkey.com) when additional neighborhood input is desired. These results are discussed at CHNA monthly meetings, and the results included in the minutes. Online polling does not reach the entire neighborhood, and at times the response rate has proven to be limited. Additional polling options should be considered to address community members that may have language, technology, or other barriers, especially when considering major decisions.

Section 5 - Communications

Communications from CHNA and among CHNA leaders and members should be consistent, clear, and direct. External-facing communications should be consistent and unified in content and appearance, and include use of the CHNA logo.

Primary communication and review of events occur at monthly CHNA meetings. Committee leaders are responsible for presenting updates and information to the neighborhood at each monthly meeting, or appointing someone else to present this information. The Committee Leaders can also provide updates at the leaders' meeting.

Outbound Communication Channels

The following are various channels from which CHNA leaders and members exchange information about the community

Facebook: *Friends and Neighbors of Colonial Heights*, closed group open to anyone (to prevent spam) and *Colonial Park*, a public Facebook page

Google Groups Colonial Heights Neighborhood Watch listserv: Requires an administrator to add someone to the list. To be added, an interested person can email colonialheightsneighbors@gmail.com.

Nextdoor: www.colonialheightsca.nextdoor.com. Requires valid address within the neighborhood boundaries. Members are verified by the company that runs Nextdoor; if Nextdoor is unable to verify, the leads may do it.

Twitter: CHNA_CA https://twitter.com/CHNA_CA

Instagram: ColonialHeightsNeighborhood
<https://www.instagram.com/colonialheights/neighborhood>

Pinterest: www.pinterest.com/CHneighborhood

Website: www.Colonial-Heights.org & Email: ColonialHeightsNeighbors@gmail.com

Flyers: Announce monthly neighborhood association meeting and upcoming events. Passed by hand to each residence using volunteer assistance.

Communications to and from entities outside of CHNA should be from:

- 1) The official CHNA email address - colonialheightsneighborhood@gmail.com, or
- 2) A CHNA leader's email address, signing as Name "on behalf of CHNA" (if this is the case and if the leader is communicating for which s/he is the lead), or
- 3) A CHNA leader at an in-person or phone meeting, indicating that the CHNA leader can talk on behalf of CHNA (if this is the case and if the leader is communicating for which s/he is the lead).

All incoming communications from entities outside of CHNA should:

- 1) (If it's an email) Go through our CHNA email address - colonialheightsneighborhood@gmail.com
- 2) Be reviewed for urgency and importance and follow the guidelines in terms of sharing the information with the others that are on the leadership committee.
 - a) If the person sending the email requests that it not be distributed across the CHNA leaders or the association itself, the person receiving the email should use his/her best judgement regarding how to share or not share the information.
- 3) Be led by an activity or event committee lead regarding the topic of the communications. This means that any official communications with the government or other entities outside of CHNA should be initiated but also responded by the person leading the committee, and/or effort pertaining to this topic.
 - a) If there is no named lead, then the CHNA leader taking the first initiative on this topic would be the de-facto lead. If there is disagreement on who should be the lead, then the leaders need to meet and/or communicate via email and agree upon the lead.

Communications should be forwarded to other members of CHNA on the Leadership Committee if any of the below applies:

- 1) There is new business that CHNA has not be aware of.
- 2) There is a major change, milestone, or development of a current project.

Leaders should use their best judgment as to when to forward information to other leaders and/or the colonialheightsneighborhood@gmail.com address. Leaders have access to this account and should keep the access limited to leaders, so as to minimize accidental deletions of files or other technical glitches. If a leader needs to share this information, s/he needs to seek permission from the other leaders. Leaders should leave emails in the Inbox, with the exception of spam emails which can be deleted.

The CHNA Leaders Google Group is an email distribution group through Google. It is intended only for leaders; other people should not be included in this group. If a leader wants to have communications with entities outside of CHNA leaders, they need to send an email from their own account and indicate that the communication is on behalf of CHNA. It is not possible technically to include people outside of the CHNA leadership team in this distribution, because these people will be included on all communications among leaders, and this is not an appropriate means of communications.

Flyer and social media content should speak directly to the event being advertised: Name of the event, date, time and place, and other information deemed necessary such as the name and contact number of the event organizer. CHNA logo should be on the flyer and CHNA listed as the sponsor, organizer, or supporter.

Unless specifically approved by the board, no communication should advertise or endorse commercial enterprises or individuals. Exceptions could be made, however, if a commercial enterprise is a co-sponsor of the CHNA event and this was discussed and approved at a monthly CHNA meeting.

Section 6 – Conflict of Interest and Grievances

Conflict of Interest

To protect the integrity of the organization, the leaders shall avoid conflicts of interest and shall not use leadership positions directly or indirectly for personal gain. Members who own or run businesses may sponsor events and activities, following all the guidelines outlined in this document.

CHNA members and committee leaders, are voluntary non-compensated positions and as such are prohibited from seeking personal gain, monetary or otherwise, from their leadership position, neighborhood activities and/ or relationships, while acting on behalf of, or in the conduct of, CHNA business. Any potential conflict of interest should be presented to the leadership committee or to the members at a monthly meeting.

Grievances

All parties are encouraged to resolve disagreements and disputes through one-on-one dialogue, whenever possible. When not resolvable by parties, grievances can be brought up to CHNA either through the CHNA meeting, a leader, or other means. A grievance is defined as an issue, regarding the neighborhood association, its leadership or decision-making, and brought up by a resident that is not resolvable by the subjects involved in the issue, and thus needs to be escalated to CHNA.

Grievances must be submitted, in writing, to the CHNA leadership, within 60 calendar days of the alleged violation. A grievance must state the action being grieved, the provision that was allegedly violated, how the grievant was harmed, and identify a remedy. The CHNA leadership reviews the proposed grievance, determines its findings, and renders a decision on the grievance. The CHNA leadership notifies the grievant of the board's decision, in writing, within 60 calendar days of the receipt of the grievance.

When not resolvable by CHNA or its leaders, resolution of grievances includes a third-party mediator (who has no ties with any participant of the grievance). In all cases, the individual(s) against which the grievance is filed should be allowed to respond to the grievance.