

Ability Awareness Committee

Minutes of the Meeting on
July 11, 2023

Village of Homer Glen
14240 W. 151st St.
Homer Glen, IL 60491
Community Room

1. Call to Order

Chair Neitzke-Troiike called the meeting to order at 6:30pm

2. Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag

3. Roll Call

Members present: Chair Neitzke-Troiike, Vice Chair Adamczyk, Members McKenna and O'Connor

Member absent: Members Crones, LaHa and Sandler (excused)

Also present: Staff liaison Kris Pasquini

4. Approval of Amendments to the Agenda

Vice Chair Adamczyk motioned to add an "official logo" under New Business. Member McKenna seconded the motion. All in favor, none opposed.

Member McKenna made a motion that was seconded by Vice Chair Adamczyk to approve the amended agenda. All in favor, none opposed.

5. Approval of Minutes

- **May 9, 2023**

Vice Chair Adamczyk made a motion to approve the May 9 minutes. Member McKenna seconded the motion. All approved. None opposed.

- **June 6, 2023**

Vice Chair Adamczyk motioned to approve the June 6 minutes with two short items removed due to their non-relevance to the meeting. Member McKenna seconded the motion. All approved. None opposed.

6. Public Comment (3-minute limit please sign in prior to starting the meeting)

None

7. Reports and Communications

a. Report from Chair

Chair Neitzke-Troiike deferred to later agenda items

b. Report from Staff

Kris asked about the benches and the plaque. Chair Neitzke-Troiike said one bench will go in Heritage Park, another will go outside her office. There was a discussion about a plaque on the bench and another to explain the multi-colored bench is not a "rainbow," but rather represents the various disability awareness colors. Chair Neitzke-Troiike said she will send an email to everyone telling them what needs to be done.

Pasquini said she needs new member Sadler's information. Chair Neitzke-Troiike said we have not received an application for her. Vice-Chair Adamczyk said she will talk to Member Sadler and get what we need.

c. Report from Members

Member O'Connor suggested gathering the parents and kids once a month at the park to do an activity or something just so that there is some social interaction. He said this idea stems from his wife's conversation with Butler School. The school tried to do Club Butler but it never got off the ground. They put it on the back burner so he thought maybe we could host something for socialization.

Chair Neitzke-Troiike suggested doing something end of summer/back to school in August at the Park with the new bench, etc. Have pizza and give each a backpack.

There was brief discussion about conducting a survey at the event and via email to see what parents want/need from the committee.

Pasquini mentioned the village will host Chalk It Up on August 5 and Movie Under the Stars on August 11.

After several dates were brought up and ideas of what to give out were discussed, it was decided to host an event on the same night as the movie and provide school supplies, no backpack. Chair Neitzke-Troiike said she would call Dan Kenney, who sponsors the Movie Under the Stars, and make sure he is ok with that. The bench dedication could also be done at that time if it's ready by then.

After members tossed around ideas about what to give out at the event, Member McKenna said she will come up with a list of school supplies.

Pasquini suggested we provide something special since many kids probably already have their school supplies by Aug. 11.

Member McKenna suggested we call it a Homework Kit and we could include a fidget toy and a timer and put the items in a pencil box.

Pasquini suggested we look into getting a timer with our logo on it.

Chair Neitzke-Troiike deferred this conversation to later in the meeting after they discuss how much money they have to spend.

8. Old Business

a. Pamphlet

Pasquini gave each member a printed copy of the AAC brochure Vice Chair Adamczyk had put together. Vice Chair Adamczyk asked everyone to email her with any changes by Friday (July 14). She said she would send the brochure to those members who were not present.

b. Fest review

Member McKenna pointed out that people arrived very early (before 2). She said from one aspect that was great because there was rarely a line. Chair Neitzke-Troike said that it worked out fine.

Member McKenna said we need to improve the flow of check-in next year. Chair Neitzke-Troike said we were supposed to have a larger tent and two eight-foot tables on the other side of the walking path so no one would have to come through the grass.

Member McKenna suggested more check-in information signage explaining the process; perhaps we give them a one- or half-pager with information when they check-in.

The discussion moved to the toys. Chair Neitzke-Troike said each special needs participant should have only received one small and one large toy but she saw people leaving with armloads of our toys. She suggested next year, there should be one adult at each game (not just student volunteers) Perhaps we should get one size toy, not big and small, she said.

Member McKenna requested the check-in list be in alpha order by family last name or by individual with disabilities name (guest of honor) This year, it was alpha by first name of the person who registered. Pasquini said she can set up registration differently so the first and last names are filled out in separate blocks and can quickly be sorted differently.

Vice Chair Adamczyk said the signs on the games in bright green paper blended with all the bright colors around the games. Perhaps something different next year. Pasquini suggested a big star like Member McKenna had previously suggested.

There was a brief discussion about returning the T-shirts next year and getting sponsors to cover the expense.

Vice-chair Adamczyk took inventory of the leftover toys and reported there were 51 large, 47 small, and 170 light-up wands.

Pasquini reported 133 Papa Joe's food tickets turned in and 119 Joey's food tickets turned in.

Chair Neitzke-Troiike said the donated Mega Passes that were not used by Member O'Connor (2), Joey's Red Hots (2), and herself (2) were given to the student volunteers.

Chair Neitzke-Troiike discussed money raised through their various activities at Fest.

She said there was an incident at the Dunk Tank when Member LaHa was in it. A YouTuber had his friend recording when he came up and hit the button. Member LaHa wasn't paying attention so she wasn't ready for it. She fell in, hit her back and head. Not badly injured just more or less shocked. She did have a little mark on her back. They tracked down the kid who did it and the Sheriff's Office escorted them out.

Chair Neitzke-Troiike said tips that night totaled \$1374, much lower than in the past, but the dunk tank and pie made up for it. The Dunk Tank, which BI Rental donated, raised \$1590 and Pie in the Face was \$475. We had a \$500 donation from Curt Mason (a check made out to Homer Cares because his wife wanted to use it as a tax write-off, which Chair Neitzke-Troiike she said she will refund turn back to Ability Awareness). Paul McGarry gave \$100 donation and Vito & Nick's gave \$400 donation. \$4437 total divided by two. AAC got \$2218 and Homer Cares got \$2219. Pasquini said the quote for the bubble wall provided by the library was \$1951-\$3000 plus a dedication plaque so maybe \$3200 max. Chair Neitzke-Troiike said the AAC will write a check for \$2218 to the Library and Homer Cares will cover the rest. Whatever is left is what we will use for everything else.

Pasquini said she will reach out to Sheree LaHa to notify her that enough money was raised and have her get a final price. Also to ask where she'd like the committee to present a check to the library—at a Village Board meeting, a Library Board meeting, at the event on Aug 11?

Chair Neitzke-Troiike said with Curt's check they have \$1537 to donate to whatever they do with the park social. "And Homer Cares has more money so whatever we're short we can figure that out," she said.

Member McKenna said she thinks they needed more signage about tipping and the bells.

Chair Neitzke-Troiike pointed out that they were in the tent with the band last year. This year they were separate. She said all groups reported tips being down so that's something we can work on for next year.

Referring to the Dunk Tank, Chair Neitzke-Troiike said they didn't do it on Thursday because they forgot to pick it up.

Chair Neitzke-Troiike said she's had a lot of people reach out to her, and express a desire to be involved next year including Ben's Pretzels and Walt, who said he would do corn on the cob next year.

Karen did a great job of collecting the money as tip jars filled. However, she said, there was some confusion about the money being wrapped up and given to the people in the ticket sales booths to tuck away. She suggested tightening up that procedure next year.

Split the Pot. Last year, we raised about \$1500 this year was only \$425. Again, because we weren't part of the crowd. And last year Mike Carlson went around with a bucket asking for donations and this year he didn't get a chance to do that.

Chair Neitzke-Troiike said Pie in the Face went well. However, there was one incident that took place. We probably won't be doing that again next year, she said. BI Rental said they would donate the Dunk Tank again next year.

Chair Neitzke-Troiike said Joey's had left their sign-up all weekend so they were giving away free food for staff, police, and everybody the whole weekend. He was happy to do it, she said, adding he also gave away pop and water of his own. "He pretty much gave anybody what they wanted on special needs day. He was very generous. He did promise to do it again next year," she said. However, she adds that it's not really up to AAC, it's up to the HomerFest Committee to allow him. She suggested next year as Fest gears up, we should remind Joey's to put in an application, which they didn't do in time for the deadline

this year. The only reason they got in at a late date was because another food vendor pulled out last minute.

Chair Neitzke-Troiike suggested getting a stack of "Thank You" cards and handwriting thank you notes to everyone whose address we can get—volunteers, Joey's Papa Joe's, etc. Vice Chair Adamczyk added we then should do a social media post thanking all those we might have not been able to get addresses for or who we might have missed.

Chair Neitzke-Troiike said Rob came to her office before the carnival started on Thursday and expressed how appreciative he was of AAC and he's excited to work with the committee directly next year. She said their liaison will be Debbie (Stevens)

c. Bubble wall for library

See above

d. Golf Outing

Pasquini corrected the day of the week as a Thursday, not a Wednesday as she had said last month.

Chair Neitzke-Troiike said Pelican Harry and Homer Tree want to sponsor.

Chair Neitzke-Troiike asked what their role in the outing will be. Pasquini said the committee could be a hole sponsor or we will need volunteers for a variety of areas.

Pasquini asked the committee to come up with another project they want to fund so we could promote something specific for fundraising.

e. Wheelchair basketball

Chair Neitzke-Troiike said we talked about doing it in September, but since we now have the golf outing...I think it should be a winter event.

f. Park benches and swing plaque

See above. Christina will send out an email.

g. Gift for Rob's wife

Chair Neitzke-Troiike opened a discussion about a dinner gathering with the AAC Committee, the HomerFest Committee and Rob from AAA Amusement and his family.

She said she talked briefly to Trustee/HomerFest Chair Dan Fialko about it and they decided to do a buffet in the back room at Front Row on August 2. She asked what the committee thought about it. Vice Chair Adamczyk was concerned the focus would not be on thanking Rob. Chair Neitzke-Troiike told the committee to think about it.

h. Chesdan's gift certificate

We still have it

Chair Neitzke-Troiike returned to the topic of funding for the August 11 Back to School event.

Including the \$2219 she just put into the Homer Cares account, "we have \$5560 minus \$10 because I had to pay my annual fee. So \$5550 so I think we're good if we take off \$1500 (for half the bubble wall expense), we have about \$4000 left so we have some money to spend for this event if we really want to.

9. New Business

Chair Neitzke-Troiike brought up an item not on the agenda. She said lots of people have been asking about the pop tab challenge. She said she talked to the mayors of Orland Park, Tinley Park, and Mokena and they are all really excited if we challenge them. Mokena and I talked about challenging Tinley. She said this item could be deferred to a future meeting.

a. Open Meetings Act info

As a reminder, Chair Neitzke-Troiike said, "We cannot text message each other as a group. You can send out an email to the entire group, but if you are going to do that put at the top "all committee members are included in this email, please do not respond to all." You can respond to each other individually, but not collectively. Vice Chair Adamczyk indicated she is aware she needs to take the OMA class.

b. SOP review

Chair Neitzke-Troiike reviewed the AAC SOP and asked everyone to read through it and let me know if they were ok with it.

Chair Neitzke-Troiike said Member O'Connor and his wife attended a school board meeting and asked if he wanted to share anything.

Member O'Connor said some board members and special ed teachers in 33c wanted to have a committee for special needs (to talk about different things in the school, what equipment they would need, etc). The committee would hash through ideas and bring recommendations to the board. However, some board members thought it would be too much work and there were logistical questions.

Chair Neitzke-Troiike said she will attend the 33c School Board meeting on July 18 at 7pm to let them know the village has the AAC and we would love for them to have a committee and AAC could partner with them.

Chair Neitzke-Troiike went on to suggest inviting a liaison from each school to participate in the AAC if they don't want to start their own committee.

Chair Neitzke-Troiike brought up one more thing, budget. Our committee doesn't have a budget, all the money we raise, we spend. She said she has asked for a budget of some sort. Budgets don't come out until next year so there is some time, but she asked what the committee thought a good operating budget for the committee would be for the various events we want to do.

Vice Chair Adamczyk said, "it depends on where this committee wants to go."

She suggested a brainstorming session to discuss where the committee wants to go, and what they want to do.

c. Official Logo

Vice Chair Adamczyk brought up the idea of having a logo for the committee. Chair Neitzke-Troiike and Member McKenna said they thought they had created a logo in the past, but nobody seemed to know for sure what it was. Pasquini said she will look through the files and see if she can find anything.

Discussion reverted back to the August 11 Back to School event. There was a discussion about how much to spend per person if registration is limited to 125 people and what to include. There was a discussion about dividing the \$500 Chesdan's gift card into five \$100 gift cards to raffle off.

Chair Netizke-Troiike said she would call Culvers and see if they will donate ice cream coupons for each of the kids.

\$3125 is the budget

10. Adjournment

At 8:32pm, Vice Chair Adamczyk made a motion to adjourn and Member McKenna seconded. All approved. None opposed.

Respectfully submitted:



Kris Pasquini

Events Coordinator