

York Neighborhood Association Board of Directors Meeting

Nelson's Market, 514 Potter Street

October 8 2025 Minutes

Approved: Motion 2026-03-26.1 ✓

Present: Colin Beazley (President), Erin Vonnahme, Kevin Cussen, Mark Ellis Walker (Secretary), Megan Doyle, Opie Knechtel (Treasurer). **Quorum satisfied.**

Excused: Élan Engel, Jeremy Ferrera, Paul D'Agnolo.

Absent: Chris Donaldson (Vice President), John DeOrio, Todd Kleinbrook, Tom Scott.

Guest: WWU Urban Planning student Lilli.

Action Items, both general and for specific Board members, are listed at the end of the Minutes.

The meeting began at 6:36pm with introductions for our guest and a round-robin sharing of reflections on York's current mood and situations.

1. Introductions and Thoughts

Colin noted that the neighborhood is feeling more family-friendly these days, with efforts such as a back-to-school bike day and a bus activity as examples—things the YNA could help foster. Megan introduced a guest, a student of Urban Planning at Western Washington University (WWU) who reports that fellow students in their cohort would likely be interested in attending such Board meetings and that she will give thought to becoming one of our Student Representatives.

2. Summer Picnic Retrospective

The picnic, held on Saturday the 6th of September, was certainly a success! It was estimated that from 200 to 250 people attended, and there was a very good mix of ages and interests, including many students who had learned of the picnic thanks to the newsletter. Holding it on a Saturday rather than Sunday, and later in the day than usual, seemed to work out well and improve turnout. It was agreed that offering food at our events is good strategy in general.

Lessons learned included the need to supply plain drinking water rather than just flavored beverages, that a port-a-potty should be arranged well in advance next year, that more engagement and connection among the represented populations should be fostered—perhaps by initiating some voluntary-participation introductions games—and that there should be more games for the kids (possibly including purchasing a supply of Frisbees, maybe even York-branded, or other toys to have on hand at future events). Also, Colin had to pay \$90 for a City permit for the use of the park the day beforehand in order to be nearer to formal compliance with rules we have perhaps historically overlooked.

Opie reported that \$120 was raised in donations, including ones made for treatment at Jeremy's friend's massage station. York-branded hat sales were impressive, especially nearing the end of the event as more people were seen wearing them, with \$250 raised and just four left in our supply.

Ideas were discussed for how to better promote the event in advance, with having a YNA station in the York Yard Crawl again being agreed as a good method. That could be an opportunity to get people to sign up in summer for helping with the picnic still a couple of months away and be contacted as the event date neared.

3. Treasurer's Report

Opie was pleased to say that we are actually in good shape financially. To Mark's surprise, the newsletter is currently our best "moneymaker" and indeed helping fund the YNA's activities.

4. Rock Hill Park Refresh Status

Kevin reported that a land transfer of a bit of the right-of-way at the south end of Iron Street is 99% a go, with the City very likely to approve it, and that purchase of the new playground equipment may well begin right away and the materials to be stored in a local warehouse until time for installation. Construction can basically begin once a contractor for it is selected, probably in spring or early summer, with completion envisioned for fall.

There was a lively discussion of what bands could be booked for a Rock at Rock Hill concert to inaugurate the new amenities and full resumption of the park's use. Death Cab for Cutie is definitely to be approached!

5. Small & Simple Grant Outlook

Mark gave a recap of how the design of interpretive signage for the parks had been in limbo, with nobody quite "owning" the project (himself included), but that he will now lead it more and get it done by the end of the year so we can have costs reimbursed by the City's grant monies as intended.

6. Newsletter Status

An early-November issue of the newsletter is planned, to be distributed from the second week on, and Halloween was agreed upon as the deadline for getting content to Mark for it. He gave a quick rundown on envisioned content, both likely and just potential, and entertained suggestions and offerings from the Board members present, a few of whom indeed volunteered to contribute.

As many longtime sponsors will be asked to renew their ads as of this issue, there was a discussion of the idea of encouraging them to consider running some sort of York-specific offer or coupon, possibly in the form of a QR code, that would indicate to them that their ad is working and getting them local business as hoped. Mark will make that suggestion as he approaches them this month.

7. 2026 Board Priorities/Goals

Again in round-robin fashion, the Board was polled on their interests and wishes for 2026 YNA projects and activities. Megan, newly being freed up from long-distracting home-renovation work, intends to focus on the YNA archives. She also suggested that we could host a temporary structure for loaner sleds to have on hand at Rock Hill Park when it snows—a sort of "sled library"—which Kevin and Colin expressed interest in helping with as the Board members living adjacent to the park.

Guest Lily suggested we host a true cooperative service by which students could actually get large items hauled instead of feeling they have to dump them along streets and alleys. Erin would like to see more passive-participation activities such as the scarecrow contests of years past. Opie hopes to have more women join the board. Kevin intends to push for the Rock Hill Park concert for late 2026. Mark will continue to helm the newsletter but probably will not run for another term as Secretary next year, as his nonprofit commitment load is unbalanced and priorities are slipping unacceptably.

Colin also announced that a last General Membership meeting will be held on either the 19th or 20th of November, and he will confirm that in an upcoming email.

The meeting adjourned at 8:06pm.

General Action Items:

- Contributions of content for the November newsletter should be sent to Mark by Halloween.

Individual Action Items:

Colin:

- Reach out to the people who arrange Elizabeth Park's events for tips on City-rule-compliant arrangements we could follow.
- Produce a piece on local educators for the newsletter, along with the usual President's feature.
- Ask Chris to connect with Tom about plans for the Holiday Party and Wagon Rides.

Mark:

- Produce one last issue of the newsletter for the year, to come out in November, promoting the Holiday Party and Wagon Rides.
- Transcribe and distribute minutes for this meeting for Board review.

Respectfully submitted, Mark Ellis Walker, Secretary.