

Promoting TRRG Post-Pandemic
Tucson Residents for Responsive Government
Sixth Annual Meeting
Saturday, May 8, 2021, 9:30-11:00 am

TRRG president Bonnie Poulos called the Annual Meeting to order at 9:30 am. There were 26 members present.

Poulos announced that TRRG founding member J.D. Garcia will not seek re-election to the board; she offered a summary of his contributions to TRRG and thanked him (in absentia) for his service. TRRG will present him with a plaque in recognition of his service.

TRRG Business Meeting

1. **Board member election:** Amanda Maass, Bonnie Poulos (returning), and Barbara Lehmann (returning) were nominated to the Board. A doodle poll will be sent to all members within the week to vote. The 26 members present all voted for the slate.
2. **Request to suspend By-laws related to term-limit criteria for terms of officers of the Board:** As was done in 2020, the membership voted without objection to suspend term-limit criteria for one more year to accommodate the uncertainties of the pandemic.
3. **Treasurer's report:** Barbara Lehmann reported as follows:
 - \$1818.95 in the bank account as of this date from dues and gifts
 - 128 members as of May 7, 2021
 - 37 friends

She explained that dues pay for the website, meeting expenses, the post office box, and printing and mailing.

2020-2021 TRRG Achievements

1. **Board meetings and code enforcement report:** Poulos reported that over the past year all quarterly board meetings had been held via Zoom and that the annual meeting was cancelled to accommodate the public safety requirements of the pandemic. Kris Yarter reported that COT's Code Enforcement Office (which is the enforcement arm for the Planning and Development Services Department (PDSD)) was merged into Environmental Services which has been good for Code Enforcement. They managed well during the pandemic, although the temporary closure of the court system caused problems with enforcement. There are now 12 inspectors (down from about 22 several years ago) but resources are lacking and the old electronic system complicates remote working and reporting.
2. **Public Participation Booklet and Bookmarks:** TRRG members Colette Altaffer and Ruth Beeker wrote and produced "Public's Guide to City of Tucson Land Use Development Proposals: Plan Amendments and Rezonings," available at <https://tucsontrrg.org>, written to explain the intricacies of planning and zoning. A small number of copies were printed and bookmarks were also developed and distributed which will direct interested parties to the TRRG website version, which will be easier to keep current. Booklets and bookmarks have been distributed to Mayor and Council, Ward offices, and neighborhood associations.
3. **Comments to Mayor and Council:** TRRG addressed the failure to obtain public input on Sign Code Master Plan review. The Sign Code Master Plan option is supposed to go to a citizen committee, the Sign Design Review Committee (SDRC), which includes neighborhood notification and representation. Even after several years, PSDS has not

implemented the SDRC. Instead, PDSO makes the determination itself in accordance with a loophole written into the code, allowing the by-pass if it has not established the SDRC. On behalf of TRRG, Ruth Beeker pointed out the need for the SDRC when M/C revisited the Sign Code at its sunset hearing.

4. TRRG participation on Accessory Dwelling Units (ADU) Stakeholder Group:

Poulos is representing TRRG in review of the new ADU ordinance. Summaries of the meetings are on the COT and TRRG websites. All members are encouraged to participate in the Zoom public meetings scheduled for May. Some citizen concerns with the new ordinance include the proposal to eliminate minimum lot size requirements, allowance for off-site parking and absence of owner occupancy requirements.

Guest Speaker: Rebecca Ruopp, Principal Planner & Neighborhood Engagement Specialist

Ruopp, who works for COT PDSO, spoke of her work with neighborhood associations (NA) in getting neighborhood plans updated, as many have languished for years. Challenges over the past year include loss of many staff, including all contract employees, the need to develop flexible work arrangements, adoption of new software programs that will require extensive training, and new distance communication processes (e.g., on-line rather than face-to-face meetings) that have amplified “digital exclusion.” Successes include the implementation of an internship program to get youth involved in neighborhood development activities. She has worked with several NA at whatever level of involvement needed as they update, reactivate, or in some cases, create, neighborhood plans. Over the coming year she plans to work with Ward offices to insure they have current information on the NA in their wards and to encourage Ward/NA collaboration. She also wants to encourage neighborhood-to-neighborhood as a most effective method of communication and information sharing. Plan Tucson revision, due in 2023, is being managed by Koren Manning, Planning Administrator.

TRRG Plans for 2021-2022

Beeker noted that the current mayor has used public surveys to judge public opinion on some issues. Does TRRG wish to monitor such surveys in order to determine if follow-up is necessary? Are processes that are being followed effective or are they just “wall paper?” Plan Tucson 2013 will be revised over the next two years; the Mayor and Council do not want a major re-writing, just minor revisions. In the Plan, Chapter 2 addresses neighborhoods extensively, but Chapter 3 provides the policies and neither neighborhoods nor residential areas are mentioned at all. Policies are enforceable but goals are not. Therefore, it is essential that discussion of policies with respect to neighborhoods and residential areas be incorporated into Chapter 3. In discussion, there was general agreement that TRRG should work on policy for “residential areas,” not just neighborhoods. Poulos said that she would send out an electronic poll in the next week to address prioritization of goals for the next year and each member’s willingness to work on specific issues.

Poulos adjourned the meeting at 11:05.

Respectfully submitted,
Beth Grindell
TRRG Board Member