

**Skinker Debaliviere Community Council (SDCC)**  
**February 9th, 2026 Board Meeting Minutes**

Board Members Present:

Mike Stephens (President, Parkview), Molly Rater (Kingsbury Square, VP), Yvette Kell (Washington Heights, Treasurer), Auriann Sehi (Rosedale, Secretary), Kathryn Bulard (Busey Bank), Michelle Davidson (at-large), Adam Bergeron (Rosedale Neighbors), Karen Stokes (Grace Methodist), Jim Holzer (Rosedale), JoAnna Schooler (Washington University)

Board Members Not Present: Jeff Stokes (Grace Methodist), Callie Kesel (Rosedale), Stefan Pabst (Parkview Agents), Roger Harris (Washington Heights), Carl Merritt (Cote Brillante), Nathaniel Rivers (Washington Heights)

Visitors: Samantha Smugala (East Loop Chair, Commercial Districts Chair), Max Magee (Neighborhood Improvement Specialist), Andy Cross (Beautification Chair), Tameka Stigers (Delmar Main Street), Grady Vaughn (SDCC Security Chair)

Project Manager: Victoria Headrick

Aldersperson: Shameem Clark Hubbard

*Meeting was called to Order at 07:02 PM in the SDCC office. Quorum with 10/15 board members present.*

**Public Comment:**

Tameka Stigers (Delmar Main Street): Tameka came to tonight's meeting to introduce herself to the Board. She is the owner of Locs of Glory Salon & Spa, 5886 Delmar Blvd., which is a full-service salon & spa, including a float tank for individuals and couples and an infrared sauna. She works with the Delmar Main Street Group and they are trying to attend more neighborhood meetings so they can have more synergy with the neighborhood.

**Aldermanic Report (Shameem):**

2025-2026 session: Tuesday, February 10th is the deadline to introduce new legislation.

Tornado Recovery: The deadline has been extended for the Private Property Assistance program until February 28th. Mayor Cara Spencer will visit all neighborhoods affected by the storm and will check back in with Skinker-Debaliviere, even though she visited us last June. Shameem offered to connect neighbors and SDCC to the STL Recovers Office.

Recycling Bins: The City has added two dumpsters to the SDCC recycling drop-off location based on feedback from the recent CSB reports. The wind is scattering some of the debris, so the

Refuse Division is picking up the recycling more frequently and consistently. Mike commented that the recycling dumpster pickup has been better over the last couple of weeks.

Snow Removal: Mike requested an overall report on how snow removal went during the most recent snowstorm (January 23-25). The only complaints Shameem and her office heard were for Waterman Blvd. Kathryn submitted an issue that was not fixed in the West End neighborhood. Shameem assures this issue will be used as a guide for the next storm between the mayor's office, the Streets Department, and Shameem's office. Mayor Spencer wants to hear feedback from constituents to improve the City's snow removal process for the next storm. Shameem encourages all constituents to email her because she uses her email for tracking purposes.

Misc.: Two water main breaks have occurred recently in the neighborhood, but crews were able to address them both quickly. Money has been appropriated for new playground equipment at Greg Freeman Park.

**Approval of Minutes:** January's 2026 meeting minutes approved 9-1 abstention (Joanna).

### **President's Report (Mike):**

Neighbor Updates: Neighbor Lana Stein passed last week. She was an UMSL political science professor and longtime editor of *The Times of Skinker Debaliviere*.

Housing Corp.: Gary Benke (Housing Corp.) intends to renew their lease with us. SDCC needs to tighten the language in our lease with respect to renovating the office and receiving reimbursement for any renovations.

### **Project Manager Report - Prepared by Victoria Headrick 02/09/26**

I've chosen these areas to focus on because they (Operations and Branding/Marketing) require the most immediate attention. This report highlights the systems, processes, and strategies being developed to ensure SDCC functions effectively, maintains a clear identity, and that events, programs, and communications connect meaningfully with the neighborhood.

#### Operations & Admin

1. Operational Plan
  - a. There is currently no infrastructure for the day-to-day operations of the SDCC office or organization.
  - b. Timeline: Ongoing; first draft complete by end of Q1.
2. Role & Scope Clarity
  - a. Existing role descriptions and responsibilities are too vague and broad for one individual to manage.
  - b. Timeline: Ongoing; due by end of Q1.
3. Event Storage System

There are still materials from Wintermarkt in the office, including a tree. I am developing an efficient way to store and organize event materials using the space we currently have. If additional space becomes available from Gary, that will be helpful, but since that is still uncertain, a system is being created for the existing space.

Timeline: In progress/ Ongoing

4. Office Phone System
  - a. Discovered an existing virtual phone number connected to the physical office phone. This allows me to download a free app so office calls ring directly to my phone. Additional features include texting and visual voicemail.
  - b. Timeline: Completed.

### Brand & Marketing:

1. Brand + Relationship Building
  - a. Coming up with strategies to strengthen SDCC's connections with key stakeholders to present a united and supportive front to the neighborhood. This includes strategic outreach, joint initiatives, and consistent messaging to enhance SDCC's brand and community presence.
  - b. Timeline: Ongoing
2. Marketing Priorities
  - a. Organizing and developing marketing priorities for the year to help create more brand presence in the neighborhood.
  - b. Timeline: Ongoing.
3. Website Launch
  - a. Yvette and I have resolved the financial portion, so the website is ready to launch. A few additional days are needed for the domain transfer to complete.
  - b. Timeline: Expected to go live between tomorrow and Wednesday.
4. Website Marketing
  - a. Working on how to communicate the website, including design, copy, and overall strategy.
  - b. Timeline: In progress; Targeting next week for launch.

### **Financial Report (Yvette):**

2025 EOY Financial Report: Yvette started by responding to questions from Adam sent last month. Yvette thought our savings account was a High Yield Savings Account (HYSA), but turns out it was not. Our operational savings are in a checking account. The Certificate of Deposit (CD) matures in May 2026 and is currently at an Annual Percentage Yield (APY) of 4.15% with a little over \$21,000 total. Board members discovered the CD in 2023. Recently, Kathryn, Yvette, Mike, and Molly reviewed the CD again together. An arts grant from the West End Arts Council many years ago was in a random account and put into a CD. Yvette proposed we should have a full discussion next month on how to spend it in the spirit of why it was collected (e.g., fund the playground, book more artists for Porchfest). Multiple Board members pointed out that the playground is already funded and paid for by the City. Yvette has the receipt for the air conditioning - it was \$684 last summer. We are responsible for heat & A/C per our lease with the

Housing Corp. We had to replace the CPU board, which was why the repair was so expensive. Some transfers happened to help achieve the ideal threshold for our accounts, e.g., our savings account should be a little over \$40,000. The Board will have to pull from it again before the year is out. We will need to determine a new threshold for the savings account before year-end.

Expense Reimbursements: Two new Google Forms have been created—one to request an expense and one for submitting receipts. Board members will still be reimbursed even if they have not submitted the request form.

2026 Budget: Yvette sent the Board 2025 recap and projects an approximately \$70,000 income for 2026 and expenses of \$69,000 (same income and expense estimates from last year). The only thing that would change for us to increase our income is whether we want to purpose more grant money, like the Regional Arts Commission (RAC) grant. We could continue doing something as big as Porchfest or improve upon it, bring back the concert series, or stick to the current programming calendar (Garden Walk, Recycling Day, Rags 2 Riches, Wintermarkt, Porchfest).

Events: Yvette pointed out that if we were to bring back the concert series, we would need someone to put on the concert series again. Most likely a committee would be better suited to take this task on (book artists and volunteers, select dates). Victoria does not have the capacity to bring this program back by herself. Tamika shared that Delmar Main Street won a grant to host ten concerts per year at the lot at Delmar Blvd. & Hamilton Ave. Tameka sits on Delmar Main's sub-committee for promotions & their concert series. Auriann asked whether Porchfest had enough food for all attendees. Molly shared that there was not enough volume at Porchfest 2025 to have a second food truck. She will share our thoughts with the Porchfest committee.

Votes: Two motions to approve the Treasurer's Report and the 2026 budget. The Treasurer's Report passed unanimously and the 2026 budget passed unanimously.

### **NIS Report (Max Magee):**

Overall Report: 94 reports to Citizens Service Bureau (CSB) since last meeting, mainly about 1) snow & ice removal on residential streets 2) whole block and single lights out for a couple weeks 3) vehicle towing. The planning commission is holding a public hearing on 2/11 at 5:30 PM via Zoom or 1520 Market St. on data centers.

Trash/Recycling/Yard Waste: Within the next week or two, Max wants to go through every alley & street to assess container maintenance ahead of the spring months. President's Day weekend will impact trash services for a day or two. Bulk pickup is doing a great job staying on time even with all the holidays in January & February. Joanna asked whether dumpsters in the alleyways are available for trash and whether they can be marked for trash or not. Max has voiced our concerns to the recycling team before. There is a high volume of recycling cans in the City (200 in our neighborhood alone), and now we have 8-10 in our neighborhood. The Recycling team did not initially anticipate how many signs would be needed on the alleyway dumpsters. Joanna stated that WashU has communicated the City's changed recycling program to students. Max stated City

residents are recycling the same amount or even more due to lower contamination rates. Some alleyways do not have enough trash dumpsters, which leads to overflowing. Andy stated he constantly finds recycling in the green dumpsters and will try to educate neighbors they are only for grass, clippings, and leaves. Max stated yard waste cleanup will start in March.

**Tornado Recovery:** Tornado debris pickup has been extended until February 28th. Applications have also been extended to February 28th for private property debris removal, tree assistance, roof tarping, windows/doors, and potentially home repairs. Max is there every Tuesday at the Disaster Recovery Center. Residents can call in or submit their requests online and a caseworker can work with you by the deadline.

**Potholes (issue raised):** Mike's question: What is the City's plan for potholes - do they survey the streets or wait for CSB reports? Max will do rounds throughout the neighborhood, then the Streets team will go Ward by Ward on a rotation.

**Snow Removal (issue raised):** Samantha stated parking lanes in front of Delmar Loop businesses were very rough, which hurts the businesses when people cannot get out of their parked cars safely. Max: Arterial roads are the first priority, then schools, intersection clearance, and emergency requests through CSB.

## **Committee Reports:**

### **Security Report (Grady Vaughn):**

**Crime Report:** Crime is really down as a whole throughout the neighborhood – only about 4-5 crimes in January 2026, thanks to the cold temperatures.

**Incidents:** On the evening of February 2nd, there was a homicide at the 5700 Waterman block, but it was an isolated incident (domestic disturbance), and the perpetrator has been apprehended and is in custody. Captain J.D. McCloskey of the Fifth District was at the Security Meeting the evening of February 3rd. The police did everything they could do. Auriann asked for clarity from Grady whether anyone on the Security Committee is on the mobile application *Nextdoor*. Grady is on the app and knows neighbors were discussing the incident on the app.

**Operational Office Issues:** none to report

### **Historic Committee (Jim Holzer):**

**Upcoming Meetings:** Next meeting is on Thursday at 6:30 PM in the SDCC office. They will provide an update at the March 2026 meeting.

### **Commercial District Committee (CID) Report (Samantha Smugala):**

Delmar Loop Ice Carnival: Event was rescheduled due to the snow storm to January 31st. There was less attendance than last year (4,000), while last year it was closer to 10,000. They still had great attendance despite having to reschedule.

The City of St. Louis Zoning Upgrade (ZOUP): Samantha reached out to the Zoning Committee about the conceptual zoning district they are proposing for our neighborhood. She encouraged them to use the form-based districts and include the form-based elements in the conceptual district. Community feedback has been collected but no follow-up meeting on form-based districts has been planned yet. ZOUP has not had a general meeting in a long time. Samantha will share any updates about the form-based districts to the Board when possible.

Closings/Opening/Expansions: La Gasolina (6163 Delmar Blvd.) has closed, but Bridge Bread (616 Skinker Blvd.) opened on January 31st with Mayor Spencer in attendance at the Grand Opening. Opening soon: Doug Nguyen of Amigo Sole (6102 Delmar Blvd.) and Soul2Soul (5917 Delmar Blvd.) to put a new steakhouse next to Amigo Sole called Jekyll & Hyde (6100 Delmar Blvd.), anticipating a mid-late March opening date. The restaurant would use the same restaurant license, so no formal approval is needed, but Samantha suggested to Doug it could be fun for the CID and the Board to be invited to tour the space, test their food, and welcome them to our neighborhood. New claw machine arcade concept Claws Out is set to open this summer. Brasas still planning on expanding next door, with owner/chef Andrew Cisneros anticipating a mid-spring opening.

Three Kings Location (issue raised): Karen asked for an update on the old Three Kings location because it has not been repaired and has been sitting vacant since their commercial fire in 2023. Several Board members shared concerns about there being several vacancies on the north side of Delmar. Jim stated there was a recent fire in one of the commercial spaces again by Passport Cocktail Bar & Bottle Shop (6275 Delmar Blvd). Samantha shared several new businesses have moved into the Loop in the last year alone. There is a potential dumplings concept opening where Blue Ocean was (6335 Delmar Blvd) and Noodle Story has opened in the old HopCat space (6315 Delmar Blvd.). A new coffee shop is potentially opening next to Artisans in the Loop (6511 Delmar Blvd.) and OneFamily Church is planning to open a coffee shop in one of their retail spaces. Auriann asked if there were any plans for the old Peacock Diner location (6261 Delmar Blvd). Samantha stated nothing is currently planned for that space.

Grants Available: The Missouri Arts Council grant is due on February 23rd for a significant amount. Smaller grants are available for smaller events, but applicants must apply one month before the event. This is a potential resource the Board could take advantage of it. RAC is not offering grants this year due to internal restructuring, but hopefully will next year.

Retail Space Under Expo at Forest Park (issue raised): Michelle asked if there are any plans to use the rental space under the Expo. Starbucks has closed and nothing is happening there so far. Field Foods has closed and signs have changed, signaling new management or a new leasing agent. General discussion followed about how the space has not been maintained well post-tornado, with many window screens still missing. Mike stated he can make some inquiries about any potential plans.

**Beautification Committee (Andy):**

McPherson Garden: The garden is starting up again, hopefully by March.

Concert Series: Andy used to work on the concert committee and is willing to round up volunteers and design signs/flyers for the concert committee if they want one. He shared that concerts are one of the best things to do in the neighborhood because it allowed neighbors to come and relax with little to no major planning needed. SDCC used to even make money on the concert series. Yvette shared that maybe the West End Arts Council money in our CD could help with the money to get musical acts.

**Community Engagement (Auriann):**

STL Metro Green Line: Info shared in tonight's agenda. Next virtual open house is February 11th, pre-registration required.

Black History Month & MLK Weekend: Auriann shared a link in tonight's agenda to a list of Black-owned businesses in STL. Karen shared that Grace is participating in the multifaith MLK Bridge protest on President's Day, 10 AM-12 PM. Their social justice team is trying to create more opportunities for people to get involved. In the past, they hosted a screening for a Black History tour of STL with a Q&A afterwards. They are trying to work with community partners to sponsor it again so they can hold the event again this year.

**Porchfest (Molly):**

Upcoming Meeting: Next meeting is February 16th.

**Bylaws (Mike):**

Bylaws Changes: Auriann is working on drafting a rationale document for all the proposed changes.

*Motion to adjourn the meeting at 07:56 PM passed unanimously.*

Minutes submitted 03/08/26 by Board Secretary Auriann Sehi