

# SGNA Board Meeting - 2026-01-19

Have a question, suggestion, or idea? Email us at [hello@sullivansgulch.org](mailto:hello@sullivansgulch.org)

**Date and Time:** January 19, 2026, 07:00-8:30pm

**Physical meeting location:** Steeplejack and hybrid on Zoho

**Facilitator:** Matt Zajack

**Notetaker:** Sue Bickerstaff

## Board of Directors Attendance

Name, Duty	Present	Absent	Excused
Babs Vanelli, Neighborhood Coalition Rep	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Keith Adamson, Vice Chair	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Keith Iding	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Matt Zajack, Chair	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Peter Sheehey, Treasurer	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Susan Bickerstaff, Secretary	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ted Schenck	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Quorum (4 required)	Yes		

## Neighbors Present in-person and virtual

1. Donald Isaacson, Mary Kinnick, Stephanie Lucas, Jeff Iding

# Agenda and Notes

## Welcome

1. Public Comment
  1. Noticed that people have been burning wood during air quality alert; people may not be aware of the recommendations during periods of stagnant air. Burning wood is prohibited during air quality alerts, unless it is your home's primary source of heat.
  2. People are still using gas-powered leaf blowers; can report using noise complaint forms; it is the property owner's responsibility; resources are available on cost savings associated with purchasing electric leaf blowers on Quiet Clean PDX
    1. Is there a program for trading in gas powered leaf blowers? Check out Quiet Clean PDX - there are PCEF grants available
2. Calendar of events
  1. Feb 16 Board meeting, 7pm, speaker from Portland Community Justice Partnership (PCJP)
  2. March 16 Board meeting, 7pm, Sameer Kanal
  3. March - Door-to-door flyer/newsletter handout in March (looking for topics, volunteers)
  4. April - SOLVE April Cleanup (seeking someone to coordinate this in April 2026)
3. Acknowledgement for MLK Day
  1. King preached [non-violent resistance against poverty, racism, and militarism](#). But it's helpful to remember that he envisioned this work happening through alliances, friendship, and community, something that's relevant to our work as a neighborhood: *"Resistance and nonviolence are not in themselves good. There is another element that must be present in our struggle that then makes our resistance and nonviolence truly meaningful. That element is reconciliation. Our ultimate end must be the creation of the beloved community."* - [Statement at Youth Leadership Conference, 1960](#)

## Guest Speaker - Elana Pirtle-Guiney of Portland City Council

1. Mat provides neighborhood background:
  1. SGNA Mission Statement - Our mission is to enhance the livability of the area by establishing and maintaining an open line of communication and liaison within the neighborhood and between government agencies and other neighborhoods. We strive to inform, involve, and represent our neighborhood. Everyone who lives or works within the boundaries of the Sullivan's Gulch neighborhood is a member of SGNA.
  2. Demographics - [Portland.gov civics life Sullivan's Gulch Neighborhood Profile](#)
    1. Age: 8% <18, 73% 18-64, 19% 65+
    2. Area (sq mi) 0.33
    3. Race/Ethnicity: 75% white alone, 8.2% Hispanic or Latino (any race); 36% diversity index (up from 26% in 2010)
    4. Households: 2,323 with 42% rent burdened; median home value (of owned homes): \$590k; median gross rent \$1,428
    5. Food insecurity 12%
    6. Median household income \$75k
  3. and [Data Rankings Table](#) (2020)
    1. Percent of households occupied by homeowners (Homeownership) 31.9% (84/94)
    2. Percent families below poverty line 9.5% (49/94)
    3. Percent land covered by tree canopy: 20.8% (63/94)
    4. Percent adults with 4-year degree: 68.0% (28/94)
    5. Vulnerability to disasters (natural or manmade): 3.29 (57/94)
    6. Density per sq km 12,190 (6/94), Total Pop 4,073 (67/94)
    7. Percent residents moved to PDX in last 12 months 6.9% (54/94)
    8. Votes cast as share of adult pop 69.3% (58/94)
    9. Probability that two random residents are of same race or ethnicity 36.5% (61/94)
  4. Keith describes neighborhood accomplishments in 2025:
    1. Restarted the Tree Team; Helped with the design new PBOT lane structures on Broadway-Weidler; Signed on to CEI Hub Taskforce; Clean Air efforts; Gulch-o-Rama; Yard Sale

2. Kick off 2026, inspiration and look-ahead: Mr. Rogers video (90-secs):  
<https://www.youtube.com/embed/kFVPkn37iFM>
2. Remarks from Portland District 2 Councilor Elana Pirtle-Guiney, Term of Office:  
01/01/2025 - 12/31/2028
  1. Elected our first group of 12 councilors a year ago. District 2 is represented by Elana Pirtle-Guiney, Sameer Kanal, Dan Ryan. We work together as a team when it comes to district priorities
  2. My background is in the labor movement. I brought that into my agenda into City Hall. How we can strengthen Portland economy for working people? How can we do that in a way that's healthy, sustainable, equitable? Try to stay focused on the future of the city.
  3. Things that stood out to me from Matt's overview of Sullivan's Gulch: voting turnout is a little low for this district. Perhaps due to the population of renters. Heard that people are likely to come out for events. This is a community of do-ers. We want to harness that energy around activism and community work.
  4. Sue: Rose, bud, thorn from your first year in office?
    1. Rose - The city's response to the Trump admin's attempted incursion into the city; every month we go without troops in the city is a win. Portlanders stepped up in a big way. On the council side, behind the scenes, we had conversations in small groups; we were not comfortable with the mayor's response to the protesters. Pulled together a small group representative of the different perspectives on council. What can we bring to the mayor? We were able to bring together very different perspectives. That was the best example of why this form of government can work.
    2. Thorn - Decorum on the city council "sucks." I wasn't able to get control of that. We treat each other in ways that I don't want to be reflective of leaders. I don't want my kids watching that.
    3. Bud - Now that I'm not in the president role, I can take on some policy work. As we become a denser city, we have less private green space. Green space creates a cooling effect. Replace private green space with public green space as we get denser. Pocket parks, not extensive maintenance required. Not just rely on expansive parks and street trees.
  5. Babs: Want to acknowledge the onerous task you took on as council president in the first year. What committees would you like to serve on?

1. 4 things I'd like to spend my time on:
  1. Workforce and economic development, need more living wage jobs. Need to solve the gap between wages and cost of living
  2. Climate, long-term planning, parks, sustainability; how do we regain our stake as forward-looking on sustainability?
  3. Governance issues
  4. Finance policies
6. Keith: What do you think about merging Multnomah County and City of Portland?
  1. In the long run, it would be more efficient. They often work against each other (intentionally and inadvertently); coordination is needed around homelesses, public safety, other issues. The city is charged with public order and the right of way. Enforcing laws and keep the streets clear (not a values statement). County's charge is human services. Having 2 entities with different charges creates inherent conflict.
  2. On the other hand, we have a nascent form of government and not a lot of consensus on how to work together; systems change costs more money than you think it will. It may not be the right time for a change.
7. Houselessness: mayor has increased camp clear and has been more aggressive in connecting people to services. You have a limited stay if you aren't accessing services. He doesn't have an answer for people who are not accessing services. I asked about self-governed villages, like Right to Dream right down the street. For individuals who are not engaged in services. You have some stability. We have not invested in those types of self-governed villages in a few years.
  1. Pete: How well have the mayor, council, and county worked together?
  2. I would give us a grade of C or B- , which is an improvement from the previous council. There is a requirement that we meet quarterly to talk about our approach and to get some joint metrics. This is an important exercise to be in a room together. What are our metrics? What do we want to see changes? Looking at new key performance indicators. We're not in alignment yet, but the fact that we are talking together and the lines are communication are open.
  3. I'm lucky that Shannon Singleton (district 2 county commissioner) and I knew each other before we ran for office. We both worked for governor Brown at the same time.

8. Keith: Why did you decide to put a 3-year pause system development charges that are added onto the cost of the permits that fund other bureaus?
  1. This was not an easy vote for me. I voted yes. But voting yes goes against my values on paper, but in order to get to where we need to be, it felt like a necessary temporary move. I see it as a pilot, not as something permanent.
  2. We have little investment from out of the community right now. Single-family, duplex development with local developers are doing all right. The money doesn't add up right now for Portland. I see this as a temporary pause. The permitting department said that there were projects that were stalled. I don't believe that we must constantly have growth to have a healthy economy. We are in a place right now where we do need housing. We expect that more people will move here. We need to build housing to hold down costs. We needed to break the logjam; it felt like a 3-year was a risk I was willing to take.
  3. Follow-up from Donald: Is it working so far?
    1. Some of it is still wait-and-see. Mixed bag. Not as much as we were told, but some new things have come through. I'll want to sit down and see where we're going.
9. Ted: Lloyd Center's master plan just came out. What's the likelihood of Council approving the plan?
  1. If the community is supportive, it will be hard for Council to say no. They may have some tweaks. I have only glanced at the master plan. I want to hear what you all think about it. If you have opinions, try to get them in during the planning process.
  2. I'm a fan of Albina Vision Trust because they have broad community support; they have mixed income housing in a small area and affordable homeownership opportunities. As Lloyd moves forward, this inner northeast area can become a really sought-after part of town. Hopefully it can be done intentionally.

## Standing Items

1. Officer Updates
  - a. Secretary: Approval of [recent minutes](#)

- i. Unanimously approved
  - b. Chair: request for approval to sign on to the [Trimet alliance letter](#)
    - i. Unanimously approved
2. Tree Team
- 1. Mission Statement adopted 11.9.25: “Promote a healthy and sustainable urban forest where all neighbors can share in the benefits of trees.”
  - 2. Goal adopted 11.9.25: “Plan and conduct education and outreach activities designed to motivate residents and property owners to plant trees.”
  - 3. Planning underway to offer 4 neighborhood tree walks beginning this Spring
  - 4. Exploring outreach strategies to identify volunteers interested in helping with one or more future Tree Team activities; exploring a way to carry out outreach collaboratively with the SGNA Volunteer Corp
  - 5. You’re invited to our next **Tree Team meeting: February 9<sup>th</sup> at 7pm** at Holladay Park Plaza (1300 NE 16<sup>th</sup> Ave; come to the front desk and then the Club Room).

## **New Business**

- 1. Lloyd Center Master Plan has been released:  
[https://drive.google.com/file/d/1phk7kdg4SW4zfaxW77UapKKf0N\\_tNNvU/view](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1phk7kdg4SW4zfaxW77UapKKf0N_tNNvU/view)
  - 1. Ted will review and circulate a statement for the board to approve
  - 2. Would be good to have another discussion about this.

# Motions / Nominations / Resolutions

1. Secretary: Approval of [recent minutes](#)
  - a. Keith motions, Ted seconds
  - b. All in favor and none opposed
2. Transportation: Sign on to [Trimet alliance letter](#) (Jan 2026)
  - a. Pete motions, Ted seconds
  - b. All in favor and none opposed