

2018 PHRA Board Candidates' Statements

Bill Bickel

I have been a shareholder at Poplar Heights for more than 20 years. I am in favor of vibrant, member-oriented swim and tennis programs, for adults and especially for kids. However, I view a tennis bubble as an unsound, complicated proposal that would turn our club into a commercial enterprise at great risk and no reward for the majority of our members. I am in favor of surveying members to find what they are most interested in and developing a solid financial plan for our future. I want to budget appropriately for our current infrastructure needs for both tennis and swimming, and add "extras" as we can afford them. I will also work for a clean and well-maintained pool, clubhouse, and courts.

Matt Borman

Our family has enjoyed being members of Poplar Heights Recreation Association for nearly a decade. We use the pool regularly and our children have played on the Crush Tysons' Cup junior tennis team. I co-captain the men's tennis team, and my wife (Laurie Oberembt) captains the mixed team and co-captains the ladies team. As a current board member, I appreciate the opportunity to contribute to the prudent spending of funds to maintain and upgrade the pool, tennis courts and grounds, including the resurfacing of the courts with pickleball and mini-tennis lines and replacing the tennis deck with the tennis pavilion. I would be honored to serve another term on the board.

Peter Gouvis

My family has enjoyed PHRA for the last 6 years currently as members and previously as renters. I am interested in serving as a board member. As a CPA, I believe in doing proper financial analysis for all major expansionary projects and the membership should be properly surveyed as to their interest in these types of projects before a board member formulates a yes/no decision on such projects.

Sandy Kiersz

I spend my summers, falls, and springs at Poplar Heights. From swim team to tennis lessons to having pizza in the pavilion, my family truly benefits from being members of PHRA! I would like to give back to this wonderful community for all that it has given us. Being on the Board will allow me to make a contribution to benefit all the members of Poplar Heights. I am open to new ideas to make Poplar Heights the best it can be; however, I will take into consideration all views for and against any new idea so as to best serve as many members as possible. A little more about me.... My family and I live in the Falls Hill neighborhood and we have been part of Poplar Heights for 12 years. I am a lawyer turned Jazzercise instructor and now own the studio on Broad Street in Falls Church. I just finished a two-year term as the President of the Shreveewood Elementary PTA. I believe all of these experiences will be valuable in dealing with the many issues facing the Board. Thanks for considering a vote for me!

Shawn Kline

Shawn Kline has been on the PHRA Board for four years. As well as his important contributions to discussions and general issues facing the board, he has also taken care of important but easy-to-overlook regular maintenance and necessary upgrades. He was instrumental in making sure PHRA replaced not-to-code and problematic electrical wiring, pool heaters and pool pumps, as well as pool security lighting. As a board member, Shawn supports maintaining PHRA's park-like setting and its not-for-profit status. He is opposed to arrangements that give our land or facilities, such as our pool or tennis courts, over to for-profit business ventures. He believes PHRA's land and facilities should be managed to best serve the needs and interests of PHRA members, to stay in compliance with local laws, and to be a good neighbor with the surrounding community.

Jonathan Lang

As a member for the past six years (and a renter prior to that) our family has extensively used the swimming and tennis facilities. Our children actively participate in both the PH Crush swim team meets and the PH Crush tennis meets. I believe I am open minded with regard to the numerous potential changes suggested at Poplar Heights, including but not limited to an expansion of the snack bar, additional swimming areas/lanes, and the construction of bubble(s) for winter tennis and/or swim. I have lived in the Falls Hill community for more than 25 years and am acutely aware of how changes at Poplar Heights could affect the surrounding neighborhoods. In addition, as a small business founder and owner with an MBA in Finance, I will be very sensitive as to how Poplar Heights efficiently and cost effectively utilizes its resources.

Dorothy Lange

My family has enjoyed being members of PHRA for over 30 years. As a member of the board I would like to survey the membership to determine their priorities as we move forward and develop a strategic plan for accomplishing these goals. I hope that we can balance the interests of all members to provide high quality programs and facilities while maintaining our beautiful, verdant setting. My family has participated in and strongly supports the funding and development of our excellent swim and tennis programs, but after serving on the PHRA Tennis Advisory Committee I am deeply concerned that a "bubble" over our courts will be exorbitantly expensive, legally risky, and detrimental to the aesthetics of our club and our community, even threatening our autonomy if we lease, as suggested, to an outside, for-profit company. While on the Board, I will work to ensure that the membership is well-informed and included in all important decisions so that everyone can feel that their voice is heard and respected.

Eric Maier

My name is Eric Maier and together with my wife Colleen, we have been shareholders for close to a decade. The relationships I have formed through the Poplar community have enriched my life. In return, I now want to serve that community. I was raised in Alexandria and graduated from James Madison University. For over 25 years, I have worked in various leadership positions within the information technology industry. I also own several businesses including a preschool in downtown Washington. These diverse experiences have taught me how to work as part of a team and accomplish things. My hope is to bring energy and a new perspective to improve upon the Poplar experience for all members of our community. Thank you for your consideration.

Cary Meltzer

Briefly, fix and maintain the pool pump and surrounding trees before anything else.

I oppose the tennis bubble proposal because I don't want any outside group (i.e. of anonymous investors) controlling how we run our club and putting our pool -and perhaps **even our personal assets-** at risk. I believe in a local community-run neighborhood association and strongly favor asking membership to vote their priorities (e.g. snack bar, additional pool, upgraded club house, etc.) before any major commitment. As many already know, the pool desperately needs a new pump; I will work to ensure it gets done before it breaks.

If you decide I'm worthy of your vote, I hope you will also vote 'No' (against) any resolution to spend any more money on the tennis court bubble (this year we spent almost \$10,000 on extraneous lawyer fees and missed out on almost \$15,000 renter's fees.)

James Nach

I've been a member since 1990, time enough for our daughter to grow up enjoying swimming and tennis at PHRA and now apply for membership for her own family. I want my grandchildren to have the kind of PHRA I've known. That requires a Board of Directors that listens to members, looks to facility maintenance and improvements benefiting all, and prudently manages finances. I oppose a tennis "bubble" that would change PHRA from a family association into a predominantly commercial enterprise; raise a host of legal, financial, tax, zoning, and neighborhood issues; and cause significant tree canopy destruction. My background as a retired U.S. Foreign Service officer and a current condo board member has given me useful experience in planning, budgeting, and negotiating.

Megan Pawlowski

I have been a member of Poplar Heights for over 45 years. I grew up in Poplar Heights and was a member of the Tennis & Swim Teams. My husband and I live in Poplar Heights, raising children who have been on the swim team and have participated in CORE tennis lessons. I also play pickleball with neighborhood friends.

My professional skills in Asset Management and Venue Operations Management would aid in developing a strategic plan for PHRA that aligns with our identity as a community pool and tennis club. Any real estate holding must understand the life cycle of existing improvements overlaid with a capital budget. It is my understanding PHRA does not have this detail and is thus unaware of what future costs will be to ensure that our existing infrastructure is properly maintained. The last property assessment was completed 13 years ago.

Recently, I was asked to chair the Tennis Advisory Committee to evaluate the CORE Tennis Bubble Proposal. We were to advise the Board on a membership voting structure, draft a document to tell shareholders about the proposal, and draft a resolution for members to vote on the CORE plan to lease the tennis courts and erect a bubble which would relinquish control of our tennis courts and parking lot. In my professional opinion, the proposal for Board approval was premature and merely a high level overview with very little context. PHRA would have been required to invest \$40,000 towards the upfront cost of the Bubble and would have lost money annually—as the cost to operate the common areas was greater than the proposed \$10,000 annual rental fee. I am all for entrepreneurship; however, not at the financial risk of PHRA Shareholders.

My goal is to work collaboratively with all Board Members, be transparent to the PHRA Community, and to develop a strategic plan for our club. That does not include commercializing the courts and restricting access to our current amenities. In summary, PHRA is a beautiful oasis that has been around for generations and needs a Board of thoughtful leaders to ensure it is around for generations to come.

Mark Weitz

I have enjoyed being a member for 5 years and a renter prior. I have served on the board for 4 years with a goal of keeping our organization a fun and safe place for our members and renters to swim and play tennis. As treasurer during this time I have tried to maintain control over both our costs and increases to dues while maintaining a long term outlook for larger cost maintenance and replacement projects such as tennis court remilling and pool pipes replacement and believe we should perform another condition assessment and reserve fund plan (last done in 2007) to help with prioritization and planning I would be pleased to serve an additional term to continue my work on the board. With respect to the tennis bubble proposal, we should proceed with due diligence to uncover any hidden costs as well as impact to our non-profit status, impact to the neighborhood before moving ahead with a vote among the members should the proposal reach that point.

Cynthia Wilson

Hi. My name is Cynthia Wilson and I am asking for your vote in the upcoming PHRA Board Elections.

My connection with PHRA goes back to 1991 when my family purchased a membership. Two of my three children were Crush backstrokers; all three have enjoyed PHRA's tennis programs, as well as just hanging out at the pool, playing ping pong and basketball. Our family has especially enjoyed evening hours at the pool.

I am currently on the Board, serving as PHRA's Registrar. I was previously on the PHRA Board in the late 1990's when I was also the swim team rep. In addition to serving in many volunteer positions at PHRA and in the Falls Church community over the years, I also have several years of experience as a condominium property manager in both Washington, D.C. and northern Virginia.

As a Board member, I have been a careful listener and have tried to keep my fiduciary responsibility to PHRA and all of its members foremost in all matters that have come before the Board. I have supported PHRA's swimming and tennis programs. While I have deep concerns about the impact of a seasonal bubble on the tennis courts--the loss of trees, runoff, security, maintenance, management, the neighbors and the neighborhood among them--the PHRA Board has a responsibility to examine all bubble options and to give everyone a chance to weigh in on a project with such far-reaching implications. PHRA has a unique community feel that I hope we can preserve while still meeting the needs of its membership.

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