

# 2026 GCA BOARD ELECTION - BALLOT

## BOARD CANDIDATES

### Yolanda Burnett



Q1. Please list up to three previous or current experiences on the GCA Board and/or Committees (if any).

A1. GCA Board Member since April 2022, GCA Street & Block Captain Coordinator, Fundraising-Welcome & Youth and Education Committee Member.

Q2. Please list up to three previous or current experiences on other Boards or Committees (if any).

A2. Leader with my church's Youth Ministry and hospitality committee; Advisory Board Member for Pages Bookstore.

Q3. Why do you want to serve on the GCA Board of Directors?

A3. It has been my humble honor to be a part of the GCA Board of Directors. I have witnessed first-hand the positive impact of our collective work and I am passionate about continuing to contribute to the mission and vision of our community. Since 2021, I had the privilege to be a part of various committees and these efforts from the Longacre Street Party, Ramsay Park clean ups, our Board Walk, BTS events, Longacre Trunk or Treat and too many others to name. I have seen how the impact of these events have absolutely strengthened our community and I am proud of the progress we have made. Looking ahead I want to continue to encourage positive change in our community, I want to continue to make a strong impact that our future generations will be proud of. I want to continue to build stronger relationships within the city with our community partners and businesses and see both flourish in the years ahead. I am honored to have a voice in our community and have thoroughly enjoyed the last 4 years of passion work for the vitality of our neighborhood. With my strong leadership experience, effective communication and spirit of excellence, I know I can continue to bring positive change to our community. I have always believed that it is a privilege to serve and my light should shine in whatever work I put my hands to do. I am a proud lifelong Detroiter and I desire to continue to help to make our city better and it starts with the community that I live in and love.

Q4. Please provide your vision for the future of our Grandmont community.

A4. My vision for Grandmont Community Association starts with a spirit of oneness within our 5 neighborhoods. A neighborhood where it reminds you of old school neighbors, where there is genuine care and concern for one another. My hope is for GCA to be one of the premier communities when people think of a nice neighborhood to raise their children and build their family. A neighborhood that is an amazing place to live, work and enjoy I want our community to thrive and be recognized for our esthetically appealing homes, good neighbors and a stronger sense of unity in our community. I would love for our membership dues to increase so we can provide more resources to residents. My hope is that the investment and the impact that I have made in Grandmont lasts for generations. I believe in fostering a safe, welcoming and vibrant community. I would love for all residents to feel connected and valued as I do.

## **Stephen Franklin**



Q1. Please list up to three previous or current experiences on the GCA Board and/or Committees (if any).

A1. Currently, I serve as the Editor of the Grandmonitor, Webmaster and Street and Block Captain for Woodmont.

Q2. Please list up to three previous or current experiences on other Boards or Committees (if any).

A2. I am elected to serve as a representative for Grandmont on the GRDC Board of Directors.

Q3. Why do you want to serve on the GCA Board of Directors?

A3. I believe in community activism and bringing neighbors and communities together. I have lived in the neighborhood for more than 4 years and have become passionate about where I live. I want it to see it grow and prosper just like the other historic neighborhoods in the city of Detroit.

Q4. Please provide your vision for the future of our Grandmont community.

A4. My vision for Grandmont is to have more of a cohesive network of neighbors that stay engaged with each other and support one another. I hear the stories from older neighbors of what used to be, and I want that for myself as well as for them. I believe that we have the collective ability to live by our motto of being "Detroit's Home of Good Neighbors."

## **Emily Gagnon**



Q1. Please list up to three previous or current experiences on the GCA Board and/or Committees (if any).

A1. I currently am a member of four GCA committees including Fundraising, Youth and Education, Welcome and Art Fair. In addition, I supported the replanting efforts in our community and adopted the care of two plants at Grand River & Abington and Grand River & Grandmont streets.

Q2. Please list up to three previous or current experiences on other Boards or Committees (if any).

A2. In addition to serving on the GCA committees, I also serve as a volunteer with St. Joseph's Helpers.

Q3. Why do you want to serve on the GCA Board of Directors?

A3. I want to serve on the GCA Board of Directors because I care deeply about this community and want to play an active role in its future. I believe strong communities are built on relationships, thoughtful leadership and clear communication. I'm excited to collaborate with others and contribute my skills in support of Grandmont.

Q4. Please provide your vision for the future of our Grandmont community.

A4. My vision for the future of the Grandmont community is a neighborhood that honors its roots while planning intentionally for its future. I would hope that we would continue to grow in ways that allow residents to stay connected, feel valued and proud to live here.

**Kavivi Muli**



Q1. Please list up to three previous or current experiences on the GCA Board and/or Committees (if any).

A1. Board Member, Fundraising Committee, Block Captain

Q2. Please list up to three previous or current experiences on other Boards or Committees (if any).

A2. Board Memberships 1. Michigan Clinicians for Climate Action 2. The Ecology Center Ann Arbor

Q3. Why do you want to serve on the GCA Board of Directors?

A3. 1. To serve my community. 2. To be an active participant in the decisions made that affect my community.

Q4. Please provide your vision for the future of our Grandmont community.

A4. That Grandmont Community will foster a vibrant, inclusive neighborhood that promotes sustainability, safety, connectivity and quality of life for all residents.

# **PROPOSED BYLAWS CHANGE**

## **ARTICLE IV – OFFICERS**

**SECTION 2:** The officers shall perform such duties that are incidental to such officers or as may be required by the Board and these By Laws.

### **1) Board Duties**

All board members duties include the following: serving on at least one committee sponsored by the GCA, attending all Board meetings, (absences must be communicated to the Board President) and to represent the community's interests at city-wide functions when called upon to do so. Furthermore, it is the duty of the Board to care for the property and interests of the Association and to determine policies for the conduct of its affairs, consistent with such specific instructions as the Board may receive from the members of the Association. The Board shall maintain an organized record of the policies that will be available to the members. The Board may raise and expend funds to promote the welfare of the Association and employ all such means, not in conflict with these By Laws, or with the laws of this State, as it may deem proper and expedient to secure the objects for which this Association is organized.

### **2) President**

The president presides at all meetings of the members and of the Board, appoints all standing and special committees, is an ex-officio member of all committees, calls meetings of the Board at such times as the president deems advisable, and calls special meetings of the Board at the request of a majority of the members of the Board. It is the president's duty to carry out the will of the Board and of the members as expressed in meetings and, in general, to conduct the affairs of the Association in a manner consistent with the authority and responsibility pertaining to the office of president.

### **3) Vice-President**

The vice-president, in the absence of the president, discharges the duties of the president.

### **4) Treasurer**

The treasurer keeps account of all monies received by and expended for the use of the Association and makes disbursements only as authorized by the Board. During the absence or incapacity of the treasurer, the president, or any other one of the officers may be authorized by the Board to issue checks or perform such other of the treasurer's duties as may become necessary. The treasurer shall be bonded in such sum as the Board may deem advisable. The acquisition of such bond is the responsibility of the Board, and the cost of such bond shall be paid out of funds of the Association. The treasurer will provide a monthly Statement of Activities to the Board of Directors. The treasurer shall provide a financial report at each General Membership Meeting. The treasurer shall also provide a Statement of Functional Expenses and a Statement of Financial Position at the annual General Membership Meeting.

### **5) Secretary**

The secretary gives notice of all meetings of the Board and of the members, keeps a true and accurate record of the proceedings, and performs other such duties as instructed by the Board or by the president.

## **POLL/REFERENDUM**

The Grandmont Community Association (GCA) is considering becoming a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization. Doing so would allow GCA to raise tax-deductible donations, apply for grants, and potentially fund larger community projects. This decision would also bring regulatory responsibilities under the IRS, including annual filings and adherence to nonprofit compliance rules. The purpose of this vote is to gauge community support before moving forward.

The information below is being provided to give you additional information that may assist in the decision-making process:

### **Pros of Becoming a 501(c)(3):**

1. Access to grants & additional funding – More independence from GRDC, enabling grants for beautification, improvements, or special projects.
2. Attract larger donations – Tax-deductible donations could make it easier to fund major community initiatives.
3. Support for long-term projects – Could lay groundwork for a community house or other large-scale goals in the future.

### **Cons / Considerations of Becoming a 501(c)(3):**

1. Regulatory requirements – Must adhere to IRS rules, file annual returns (typically the 990-N for small organizations), and maintain records.
2. Potential added costs – Liability insurance, accounting, and administrative requirements may be necessary to protect board and committee members.
3. Volunteer workload – Additional responsibilities may place demands on current volunteers without immediate funding targets.
4. Funding priorities – Core needs like streets, sidewalks, snow removal, and newsletter printing may still require strong community dues and city support rather than a 501(c)(3) structure.

## **FAQ**

Q1: Why should GCA become a 501(c)(3)?

A 501(c)(3) enables GCA to apply for grants and receive tax-deductible donations, which can fund major projects like beautification efforts, community programs, and long-term infrastructure projects. It opens opportunities beyond dues and GRDC support.

Q2: Will this change how dues or services are managed?

No. Becoming a 501(c)(3) would not change the collection or use of member dues. Day-to-day operations and services like snow removal, the Grandmonitor, and neighborhood safety would continue as before.

Q3: Will this add costs or workload to volunteers?

There may be additional administrative responsibilities, including IRS filings, recordkeeping, and possibly liability insurance. These costs are generally manageable for small nonprofits, but the board will monitor the impact and ensure it doesn't overburden volunteers.

Q4: Could we raise money for social activities?

While technically possible, IRS rules require that funds primarily support charitable, educational, or community improvement purposes. Social activities alone would not justify fundraising under 501(c)(3) rules.

Q5: Do we need a specific project to become a 501(c)(3)?

While not required, having a clear project or funding goal is recommended. Examples include beautification grants, educational initiatives, or laying the groundwork for a community house.

Q6: How does this compare to working with other organizations (e.g., Wayne Metro, MCR)?

Collaborations can continue. A 501(c)(3) would complement these partnerships by expanding funding options while maintaining connections to other community fiduciaries.

Q7: How much paperwork is involved?

For small nonprofits earning less than \$50,000/year, the annual 990-N form is straightforward. The initial IRS application (1023-EZ) requires basic organizational details, not complex financial records.

Q8: Will it help with major community improvements like sidewalks and snow removal?

Not directly. Those projects are typically funded through city programs, dues, or other partnerships. A 501(c)(3) primarily helps with grants, donations, and long-term projects beyond the core services.