

Rockwood Neighborhood Council Meeting

October 7, 2017

Hutton Elementary Library

Call to Order: 7:05 pm

Chair: Dave Lucas

Quorum: Yes.

Total neighbors: 12 Voting members: 11 Visitors: 4

Approval of Minutes: Minutes from the September meeting were reviewed. Motion to accept as presented carried.

Treasurer Report: Kurt Helgerson

The non-profit registration with the Washington State Secretary of State has been completed.

A donation of \$15 was received at the neighborhood movie event.

Executive Board Actions

There were no actions taken at the September meeting. Upcoming events were discussed, but no action required.

City Council Representatives:

Council Member Lori Kinnear, unable to attend.

Council Member Breean Beggs:

The City Council meeting on Monday focused on people and issues impacted by homelessness. It was well-attended and lasted 4 hours. The council has a list of every proposal made. The next Monday meeting will be on public safety, working on solutions. One of the thoughts was the Albuquerque Model, summarized as a city van driving around, offering panhandlers a minimum wage job for that day.

CM Beggs will send the list of ideas compiled at that meeting to add to these minutes. (See Addendum).

The City budget is in the reconciliation process and looks to be in pretty good shape. This is due in part to fiscal discipline by the City over the last number of years. One of the budget priorities will be additional police officer positions. It is anticipated that the school safety zone cameras may fund more traffic officers. The capital improvement budget is \$81 million and the document itself is 1000 pages long. Thus, the Council relies on City staff for the details and Council Members consider the overall picture. The City is spending more on roads than ever before, but there remain so many roads in need of repair. The City is now more data driven when setting budget priorities.

There is a new committee among the Police Dept, the Fire Dept, and Health and Human Services to combine their three hot spot lists to identify high-service-use citizens.

COPS Shops are now on their neighborhoods' Nextdoor social network. The City is experimenting with having neighborhood resource officers also in that group.

The group of homeless people on Stevens near the Corbin Center has been given 48 hours to move. The 48 hour notice gives the City time to offer support services.

Who are homeless in Spokane? A study tracked people in the local shelters and found that the #1 reason was loss of job/income, and that most people are from Spokane County. With the local housing market tighter, rentals have become more expensive. There are more units being added for those who are chronically homeless.

One estimate is that there are 200 people under the freeway or in shelters every night, but that is probably undercounted.

There are needs unique to homeless people who are veterans, LGBT, with PTSD, or youth. Next year there will be requests for proposals specifically for those groups.

Also under consideration is a 1-stop social service outreach at the Intermodal Center downtown.

Spokane Police Department: Detective Ty Snider

Det. Snider distributed incident maps specific to Rockwood Neighborhood from the last 3 months. These cite vandalism, motor vehicle theft, other theft, burglary from motor vehicle, burglary-residential, and suspicious circumstances, e.g. fire. There were 37 incidents in July, 30 in August, and 20 in September.

He encouraged neighbors to attend the Citizen's Academy to better understand what is going on in our community and the limitations on policing. The next session will be in the spring, information when available.

He suggested a website, www.forcescience.org for The Force Science Institute. It offers current research about movement, reaction times, and human behavior during high stress encounters.

For questions about policies, procedures, or specific incidents, Det. Snider offered his email: tsnider@spokanepolice.org

Presentation: Judy Gardner, South Hill Coalition, Cliff Cannon Neighborhood Council

The South Hill Coalition includes the 6 South Hill neighborhoods. The group came together in 2012 to develop a plan for connectivity for the area, including traffic calming. The plan outlines such projects as a greenway prioritized for biking and walking from 10th to 43rd. The coalition provides no monies for these projects; they are concept only. Specific projects are developed with funding for study and then for building. One example is the greenway along 27th in the Lincoln Heights neighborhood. A similar undertaking has been the Tiger Trail in the Cliff-Cannon Neighborhood, where the study is complete and the project is awaiting funding.

For the Rockwood Neighborhood, the City Council has set aside \$40K to study streetscape improvements at 29th & Grand, and at 12th & Grand. These would improve appearance and safety, possibly using such items as landscaped medians, pedestrian refuge islands, signage, seating, bike racks, or waste bins.

The benefit of the South Hill Coalition backing a project is that their size brings increased visibility to requests.

In response to a question about bus shelters, Judy noted that STA handles those, and bases their location on boarding counts. If a rider identifies a specific spot of need, they can contact STA.

Presentation: Melissa Wittstruck, Neighborhood and Housing Specialist, City of Spokane
Melissa is our neighborhood's liaison to the Office of Neighborhood Services and to Code Enforcement. Her area of emphasis is substandard housing and abandoned property. Examples of substandard housing would be that not suitable for habitation or with dangerous structure. She also deals with illegal residential parking. She reminded that Code Enforcement needs a citizen complaint to start an investigation. That can be done by calling 311 or online at <https://my.spokanecity.org/neighborhoods/code-enforcement>

Update to the Snow Plan/Weathering Winter, October 2017

Melissa distributed an outline of the plan for the coming season. After last year's snow the City took a Snow Survey and based recommendations on citizen feedback. More information will be publicized as the season gets closer, but the outline includes a better understanding of the interconnected nature of the City snow response. It will be season based (Nov-March) rather than event based. It will coordinate systems such as plowing, sidewalks, and parking. There will be better accountability and collaboration, and there will be re-evaluation of the plan to improve each year.

Some highlights are: more plowing, at lower threshold, no more stages. More equipment and more people, with 7 units equipped with gates to minimize driveway berms. Parking (other than downtown) will be on the odd side of the street throughout the season, with no on-street parking for trailers/RVs. Sidewalk clearing will be very important. There will be pre-registration available for citizens unable to clear their walks to arrange for agencies to assist.

Melissa is available for details and questions at mwittstruck@spokanecity.org

Traffic Calming Projects: Ann Fennessy

Ann was at the Cliff-Cannon neighborhood council meeting, also presenting about the South Hill Coalition.

Committee Reports

Community Assembly: Julie Banks

Julie has served as the neighborhood representative to the Community Assembly for 5 years. She is leaving that position, so there is a call for volunteers. The CA meets monthly, the first Thursday of the month, 5:30, at West Central Community Center. Julie describes the CA as the conduit for information from the community to the City and back. It is the citizen arm of city government, and can review or recommend regarding any City agency, commission, or board. The City Council often asks the CA for input on their decisions. The CA also manages some neighborhood grant funding. There are 25 members out of 29 neighborhoods. Julie has been the chair of the Public Safety committee. Among many projects, she convened The Rental Housing Quality Stakeholders Group and worked to improve the Outdoor Storage Ordinance. She will continue in that capacity even though she will no longer be our neighborhood representative.

Land Use Committee: Margaret Jones, unable to attend.

PeTT (Pedestrian, Transportation, Traffic) Committee: No representative.

Plan Commission, etc.: Greg Francis

SNAP has a program to help pay heating bills for people with low income. Additionally, they will do certain types of home repairs. (Contact through snapwa.org or at 242-2376 or 456-7627.)

Another agency offering many different supports to neighbors is Spokane's Aging and Disabilities Helpline at 509-960-7281, www.spokanehelpline.org

The City and the State have used Ban the Box applications for a number of years. That means they no longer ask job applicants about their criminal background until later in the process. The City is starting work on an ordinance to expand that to private employers. The Plan Commission is doing preliminary work on minimum housing standards to reflect International Property Maintenance Code. This may find some older homes not in compliance, which could have an effect as they come up for sale. For more information, reach the Plan Commission office through 311 or <https://my.spokanecity.org>. Cleaning From The Corridor Fall Cleanup will be Saturday, Oct 7, 9-12, in the Bemiss neighborhood.

There will be a District 2 candidate forum at Sacajawea Middle School October 18 at 6 pm, hosted by Manito/Cannon Hill Neighborhood Council.

New Business

Dana Dalrymple from the downtown library noted that there will be classes in November about open public data and how to use it. A complete list of events (amazing events!) is at www.spokanelibrary.org/calendar

Open Topics:

This time is available for any neighbor to raise an issue for open discourse. Individual time to speak may be limited to time available.

Announcements and other items:

None

Topics for next meetings:

Meeting adjourned: 9 pm

Minutes submitted by Mary Terhaar

Next meeting:

Tuesday November 7 (Election Day) 7 pm

Addendum:

Solutions Mentioned at Homelessness Forum 9/25/17

Fund \$37,000 for “Hope Works” job program.

Fund SOAR program to speed up eligibility for SSI payments.

Fund lockable storage lockers for possessions of homeless individuals.

Add shelters just for veterans.

Create an LGBTQ-friendly shelter for adults, especially needed for trans community.

Create low density shelter options for those that can't be around several people at once.

Diversify shelter locations to minimize disease outbreaks (e.g. norovirus).

Fund midnight to 7am Frontier emergency mental health team.

Add medical access on-site at the shelters.

Fund \$300K/project to increase points for tax credit housing projects.

Create more affordable housing by infilling empty lots and changing zoning rules to increase density.

Rehabilitate the zombie houses and return them to inventory.

Add more micro-apartments.

Create tiny house community project(s).

Increase motel vouchers.

Ban the Box in employment and housing applications.

Decriminalize Sit and Lie and replace with law tailored only to people actually blocking mobility.

Veterans Garage lost their lease, and needs a new location.

Increase protection against unjust eviction.

Call us “People.”