

8Rockwood Neighborhood Council Meeting
November 5, 2019
Hutton Elementary Library

Call to Order: 7:00 pm
Chair: Dave Lucas

Note:

There will be no meeting in December. The January meeting will be the annual meeting with board member elections. Those who attend this meeting become voting members. The other way to become a voting member is to attend two meetings within a year. Neighbors are strongly encouraged to consider standing for election or nominating someone. Three of the board positions and Vice Chair position will be decided.

Quorum: Yes

Total: 17

Voting residents: 11 Residents: 13 Visitors: 4

Treasurer Report: Tanya Starkel

The account received \$250 from the Community Assembly Engagement Grant to fund additional neighborhood welcome bags.

Executive Board Actions:

Met Oct 8. No actions taken.

Upcoming decisions will prepare a list of possible uses for the NCDP (CDBG) grant. These choices will then be presented to the general meeting for a vote in early 2020.

City Council Members: Lori Kinnear and Breean Beggs, unable to attend. Dave Lucas passed on their messages:

- CM Kinnear again requested we review the PLANT ordinance, Protecting Leaves and Adding New Trees.
<https://my.spokanecity.org/projects/protecting-leaves-and-adding-new-trees-plant-ordinance/>
You can leave a comment at the bottom of that site by signing in with your name and email address, prior to Plan Commission hearing Oct. 23 (late note: Plan Commission rescheduled to Nov 13. The City Council hearing is Dec 2.)
There is an ordinance under development to set up a compensation review board for exempt City employees.
- CM Beggs sent a reminder that the City crew pickup has begun for leaves that fall naturally in the street.
CompStat, local crime data, shows a 16% reduction in crime city-wide. For more statistics
<https://static.spokanecity.org/documents/police/prevention/compstat/2019/11/compstat-report-2019-11-09.pdf>
or just google Spokane Police CompStat .

- One neighbor commented that after the early season snow storm the City crews were outside his house by 9am clearing branches from the street. He said they did “a sensational job of cleanup.”
- Another neighbor commended Avista, noting their quick and thorough response to the damage. Avista’s generous contributions to our neighborhood welcome bags was also acknowledged.

Spokane Police Department: Officer Jake Willard, unable to attend

Presentation: Avista, preparing for winter

Ana Matthews, Consumer Affairs Program Manager and Jessica Bean, Aspiring Leaders Program

Avista’s Aspiring Leaders Program helps prepare employees for future leadership roles, with in-depth experience in different areas of the organization.

The presentation covered many means of reducing heating bills. Heating/cooling accounts for 40-60% of a home’s energy bill. One hint is to use a damp hand or a candle flame to locate drafts.

Anna clarified that furnace filters should be replaced every 2-3 months during most of the year but monthly during heating season. This extends the life of the furnace since the fans don’t have to work as hard. The Furnace Filter Program offers reminders, coupons, or delivery of filters. Sign up is at myavista.com/changemyfilter

When setting a thermostat, there is roughly 3% savings for every degree lowered. When away for the day a temperature of 60 degrees will save energy but not require so much to heat back up. Low humidity levels can make a room feel colder. The ideal home humidity is 35-45%, also beneficial for skin and hair. Humidity can be added by releasing shower steam into the house, from cooking, or from plants.

The new smart meter system can immediately detect outages. For personal use, the meters will give real time information on energy usage. This will be available on myavista.com a few months after installation. This is different from a smart thermostat which is something homeowners install, allowing the thermostat to be controlled from a phone. Avista offers rebates on these and other items under the Energy Savings Center tab on their website.

Note: the rebate for gas furnace conversion ends Nov 29. There is a fuel source calculator on the website if considering changing a furnace, as well as price/energy comparisons for appliances.

Other heat conservation methods include ceiling fans (clockwise rotation moves the warm air down); insulated ductwork; insulated crawlspaces (check to make sure insulation has not fallen down).

There were a number of recommendations on how to prepare for a power outage. People who use home medical equipment have to be particularly careful in planning. Avista also partners with SNAP on a rate discount program for senior citizens and people with disabilities.

Door to door and telephone scammers have tried to threaten Avista customers with cutting service if they are not immediately paid. Be skeptical of threatening or forceful demands, and do not let them in the house even if they are wearing clothes that look like Avista. Call Avista for verification. There is never an immediate disconnect.

Anna and Jessica gave out reusable totes full of energy saving items including the apparently famous Avista night lights.

Presentation: The Snow Plan, City of Spokane

Heather Trautman, Director of Neighborhood Planning and Annie Deasy, Community Programs Coordinator

Similar to last year, the snow plan runs from Nov 15-Mar 15. Making a habit of parking on the odd numbered side of the street allows plowing without getting bermed in unexpectedly. Sidewalks (or a pedestrian path if no sidewalk) should be cleared at least 3 ft wide by 9am. Assistance with this is available by calling 311 in advance. They can make arrangements for the entire season. If you are out of town during a snowfall, make arrangements with a neighbor or a lawn care company to clear the sidewalk. Road obstructions such as boats, trailers, or campers must be removed by Nov 15. Call 456-2233 to recover if they have been towed. More information will be in the media as the season gets underway.

Old Business:

Traffic calming plans are being developed by neighbors on 18th between Upper Terrace and Grand. There will be a house by house canvassing to gather input.

Meals on Wheels is available for delivery of meals to disabled or homebound neighbors. It is also in need of volunteers in the Rockwood area. (Their website is mowspokane.org)

New Business: Dave

The neighborhood council is in need of a social media person or committee. They would manage the website and other public outreach. Contact Dave at rockwooddave7@gmail.com. Much appreciated!

Committee Reports

Community Assembly: Greg Francis

The CA meets the first Thursday of the month, two days after this neighborhood meeting. They will discuss the upcoming census, as well as neighborhood engagement grants (like the ones that funded our block party and welcome bags).

Plan Commission: Greg Francis

- The Downtown Plan is updated every 10 years. It is part of the Spokane Comp Plan. The update process has begun and will take 6 months or so to complete. Greg will keep us updated or google Spokane Downtown Plan Update 2020 for a link to the project webpage.
- The PLANT ordinance is due to come before the Plan Commission for review. They will make recommendations to the City Council.
- The Plan Commission is finalizing the arterial map.

Land Use: Toni Sharkey and Greg Francis

The PLANT ordinance and the North Bank development were discussed.

There was a question about cell tower extensions going up on poles without notification. Heather Trautman responded, saying that these are Verizon units, going up on wood poles. The City has a franchise agreement but can't regulate their location. The City wants a conversation about appearance and placement. There is a work group developing standards, the Downtown 5G Subcommittee. Greg will keep us updated.

Traffic:

The intersection at 29th and Grand was a focus of a walking tour hosted by the City at the end of October, looking at land use and safety. DKS is the consultant for the study with a survey coming out in a few weeks, results and analysis in January.

The 10th and Cowley intersection has been slightly modified to remove the island, improving vision, and the pedestrian crossing. This is a short term solution in the larger issue of that crossing and all its parts.

The contacts for the traffic calming initiative on 18th are Robert Flowers and Laura Burger-Glass.

Announcements

None

Open Topics

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

Meeting adjourned: 8:30 pm

Minutes submitted by Mary Terhaar

Next meeting:

Tuesday January 7, 7pm

Annual General Meeting with Executive Board elections.

