 Waco Community Watch Meeting

Thursday January 5, 2023

6:30 pm

Minutes:

* J. Barrett opened the meeting at 6:30 pm and welcomed all members present. Meeting turnout was good. We will continue to encourage members to attend the meetings via Facebook and email. Barrett reported that he had again included all the email addresses that were provided by people attending the Block Party on August 27th in a group email announcing the meeting.
* Window stickers remain available to members of the community at no cost.
* Please continue to pay attention to the Neighborhood Watch signs throughout town and to notify a Watch Captain if any are found to be missing or damaged. Signs were placed on all town streets and there are still a few available. We currently do not have any additional signs but we have funds available to order if needed.
* The Waco Community Watch Facebook Group page membership continues to grow and is currently has over 152 participants. Participation in sharing of news and crime stories is active on the page. Stories and other information are being shared on the page on a regular basis. The page continues to get several request to join the page from people from the Waco Texas area. Those request are being referred to a community watch group in Texas. Group members are encouraged to continue to post to the page.
* The email chain group also continues to grow and remains active in sharing of information. Information shared on the Facebook page is also being shared via email. Anyone interested in taking over the email notifications, please let us know.
* The financial statements for the Community Watch program was presented. To date donations have been received totaling $1,250.15. Expenses (window stickers, signs, the logo, postage supplies, the brochure, etc) total $1,046.07. The current balance is $204.08. The Town of Waco did pick up the cost of the hardware to install the Community Watch signs.
* We still haven’t set up a meeting with the Washington Elementary staff to discuss their participation in the program has not been set up to date. Flavio Hallais has expressed interest in speaking with the Washington Elementary staff. Barrett will also ask Tracy Chichester to join them. Need to schedule.
* The meeting with Burns Middle and Burns High School is still pending.
* Community Watch brochures remain available and members are encouraged to hand out brochures to others in their neighborhoods. Brochures have been placed at the Waco Post office and in other establishments in the community.
* Watch Captains for the program are currently Tracy Chichester who volunteered to serve as the South Main St. Captain. Flavio Hallais volunteered to serve as the North Main St. Captain. The names of members in the other parts of town were mentioned for other positions. We will continue to discuss this issue at the next meeting. Anyone interested in volunteering can contact John Barrett, Tracy Chichester or Flavio Hallais.
* Specific Community Watch issues that have been discussed include:
* Identifying street lights that are blocked or partially blocked by tree limbs. This has been taken to the Town Board to be addressed*.* ***(Duke Energy is currently working to cut trees off power lines in Waco and the problem with the trees surrounding street lights may be addressed. Will continue to watch this issue)***
* Illegal dumping of construction waste on Moss St. Will continue to watch. ***(We are continuing to watch this issue. It hasn’t happened but could be an issues on Devenny Rd. at the Duke Energy power station. Need to follow up on this issue)***
* Speeding continues to be a problem on Cherryville Rd., North and South Main St., and on Jess Hord Rd. Barrett will see if he can get the speed trailer from the Sheriff’s Dept. to help with the speeding problem. ***(The speed trailer was placed on Jess Hord Rd. following the last meeting by the Sheriff’s Department per a request from the Mayor.)***
* There have been some post on the Facebook page about loose dogs and cats in town and in the community. Barrett will provide the number to Animal Control to group members. ***(Cleveland County Animal Services number is 704-481-9884 ext # 5)***
* There is an issue with loose chickens running around in the Mike Drive and South Main St area. ***(This will be referred to Cleveland County Animal Services)***
* Suspicious vehicles have been reported on the page and members are encouraged to contact the Sheriff’s Department to report these**. *(The non-emergency Sheriff’s Department number is 704-484-4822)***
* There were two new concerns that had been brought to the attention of the Community Watch group. It is suspected that there are possibly a homeless man and woman sleeping in the Waco Post Office lobby at night after dark. The Post Master has seen evidence of people being in there at night. (***This concern was passed on to the Sheriff’s Department and they will be watching this closely.)***
* The other concern is cars pulling to the back of the Post Office at night and possibly doing some illegal activities. (***This was also passed along to the Sheriff’s Department. Watch members are asked to pay attention to any suspicious activity around the Post Office and to notify the police is they see anything that is out of place.)***
* There have been 2 homeless men knocking on the door of Waco Baptist Church and asking for food. This has scared the church secretary and she is no longer opening the door if they knock. The men are also using an electrical outlet behind the church to charge their phones. ***(This will be passed along to the Sheriff’s Department to look into. The church should contact 911 if the men continue to knock on the doors or loiter around the church.)***
* “Neighborhood Book Library” and “Neighborhood Blessing Box” project with Burns High School Woodworking class are on track. There have been discussions on placing the Book Library at the Playground but there is concern for placing the Blessing Box in the same area. Discussion on moving the Blessing Box to another location is agreed by the group. The issue will be brought to the Town Board for further discussion.
* Crime Stoppers Program information was shared with the group. This program is based out of the Shelby Police Department. This is a re-vamped program. The program is still looking for Board members. Tracy has expressed interest in being on the Board.
* The “Waco Light’s Up for Christmas” home decorating contest was a huge hit. 52 homes participated in the contest. Discussion on if the program thought it would be something the town sponsored again next year. The group agreed it would be a good idea and maybe even expand the activities. More discussion at future meetings.
* Discussion on hosting and planning another Community Block Party will be discussed at the next meeting.
* The group discussed moving the Community Watch meetings to every other month and it was agreed.
* Minutes of the meeting will be completed and shared via Facebook and email to members.
* The next meeting is Thursday April 6th at 6:30 pm. Please attend and bring a friend.
* Meeting adjourned at 7:50 pm.