

West Keizer Neighborhood Association Meeting Minutes

May 11, 2017

Keizer Civic Center

Submitted by Carolyn Homan, WKNA secretary

Call to order – Vice President Rhonda Rich called the meeting to order at 7 p.m. (President Gary Blake was delayed in traffic) and welcomed about 11 attendees, including guest speakers Eric Bandonis and Max Casquero from Marion County Sheriff's Office; Mary Jo Emmett, representing John Knox Presbyterian Church Community Gardens; and Mayor Cathy Clark.

Approval of Minutes for April 13, 2017 – Rhonda called for a motion to approve the minutes as submitted and posted on WKNA's website. Art Mauer moved to approve and Kris Adams seconded. Motion carried.

Budget for 2016-17 – Rhonda reported that \$481.16 has been spent from the \$500 budget, basically for communications – mainly the website, brochures and signs. Gary presented the \$500 request for 2017-18 to the city's Budget Committee last Tuesday. Councilor Kim Freeman said the Gubser neighborhood requested \$200 and Southeast requested \$400. Since there was a \$1,200 budget item for the neighborhood associations, so the requests were forwarded to council for final approval.

Introductions – Rhonda then asked for introductions around the room and attendees added comments about plans for the summer. Mary Jo Emmett invited everyone to the John Knox Community Barbecue on Aug. 5.

Rhonda noted that this is the last WKNA general meeting before the summer break. Meetings resume Sept. 14 and Jerry McGee has agreed to be the speaker.

Presentations –

Update – John Knox Community Gardens, Mary Jo Emmett

Mary Jo shared a pamphlet from Marion Polk Food Share (MPFS) that explains the Community Garden program they coordinate and another brochure from John Knox detailing their garden beside the church at 452 Cummings Lane N in Keizer. The John Knox garden is a part of the MPFS network and part of the MPFS mission to end hunger and encourage people to grow some of their own food to cut the grocery budget while getting more nutritious food. The John Knox garden It has 20 in-ground plots and seven raised beds. She said there still is an in-ground and a raised bed plot available and this is the first year they have not had a waiting list of potential gardeners.

There is a “nibbling garden” along the front street side, which invites neighbors to help themselves to tastes of produce. They also put out a “share box” when production swings into high gear and also donate extra to the Keizer Community Food Bank.

John Knox is one of two or three gardens with no fee to reserve a plot because they have been identified as a “core garden” in the MPFS network – one of those serving a high percentage of low income families. Gardeners can get advice, as well as access to tools, seeds, fertilizer, mulch and much more.

Report – Eric Bandonis and Max Casquero, Marion County Parole and Probation Officers

Eric passed along an update from the Keizer Police Department about a large drug bust carried out this week on Delight Street. Officers remind citizens to pass long information on abandoned and vacant houses, which can be targets for illicit activity and transients. He said Code Enforcement is working with Keizer Police to get these houses boarded up.

Max explained that he is one of three parole officers in the Sheriff's Office focusing on parolees with mental health issues. The mental health focus is fairly new in the corrections field, he said, so they're

learning as they go. He deals with those with bipolar issues, schizophrenia, PTSD, etc. The priority is to get them help and on their medications so that they are stable. Problems arise when people go off their meds, he said, and issues seem to be on the rise because they are being acknowledged more these days.

He also runs a diversion program for low-risk, low-need offenders. The focus is the stop anti-social thoughts and actions. The 18-month program intends to get people into treatment and counseling and perhaps anger management. There's a 90% success rate.

He can be reached at mcasqueiro@co.marion.us, 503-316-6687. His office is at 3867 Wolverine St. NE, Bldg. F.

"State of the City," Mayor Cathy Clark

She started with information about the need for five more police officers in Keizer. The city has 37 officers, which is low for the population, in comparison with other cities of similar size. Police Chief Teague has asked for a traffic safety officer, two night patrol officers, a burglary and property crime detective and a community response officer. These five additions would cost \$4/month/household.

She said there's been a community conversation on possible fees for parks because parks lend themselves better to community input on what's needed where. Chief Teague knows what's needed by Keizer Police, she said. She said that a community town hall on the police proposal is being scheduled (6 p.m. June 12). She sees the need for police and parks funding as an "and" situation, not "either/or."

The Parks Board conducted a survey for community engagement and the city got great input. Council last week held a thoughtful and constructive discussion about what should be done. Council asked staff to draft a proposed to collect a \$4/month/household fee in support of parks maintenance and improvements. The mayor said the ordinance as proposed directs the fee to be collected through the Keizer services bill because that will not cost any extra.

She said City Manager Chris Eppley cautioned that it will take awhile for the Parks Department to gear up to start accomplishing the list of projects awaiting funding. She said council then will evaluate the situation in a year to determine if they need to increase the fee or keep it the same. (The Parks Board has suggested starting at \$4 and increasing the fee each year up to \$8/month/household.)

Regarding transportation/traffic issues, she said officials are anticipating a huge influx of people for the eclipse in August. With up to 1 million people drawn to our area, the event represents a public safety issue and agencies are testing emergency preparedness. ODOT, for instance, is working on access and emergency management issues, especially for I-5 traffic where drivers unaware of the eclipse could be a hazard. She said WKNA needs to be up to speed because the area will be flooded with people drawn to Keizer Rapids for planned camping opportunities there.

In question/answer, Rhonda asked about the time frame and said she felt the police issue needs to be addressed before parks. Cathy said the work session June 12 will lay the groundwork for an ordinance similar to the parks fee. Staff will be asked to prepare a police ordinance so that both can be voted on at the same time – probably the second meeting in July. A discount for seniors has been discussed. She said any discount for "low income" families is problematic because of issues around documentation.

The mayor said development continues at Keizer Station. Cafe Yum is coming and the Siletz are interested in discussions with the Grand Ronde about how to move forward with their project in Area D. The economy is strong and could make that venture very positive. The new Grand Ronde tribal

council members may help bring new ideas and energy to the process.

Keizer City Council liaison, Kim Freeman –

- Only two budget meetings were needed last week and the document has been recommended to Council for approval. She said it's a status quo budget and the city's lean operation continues.
- She said council had a good conversation at the parks fee session. She said she feels the police fee discussion set for June 12 is necessary.
- Iris Fest begins next week with the kickoff luncheon and dinner on Thursday, the parade on Saturday and the marathon and other runs on Sunday.
- May 13, 9 a.m., is the next Adopt-A-Street cleanup on Chemawa.
- Funds were found to add the Traffic Safety/Bikeways/Pedestrian committee meetings to the list of those being televised, along with council, planning commission and parks.

WKNA Business –

Delight Street – Rhonda reported that the WKNA Board has formed a committee to work with Cummings School Principal Martina Mangan and follow the issue of improvements to Delight Street with an eye to the safety of kids walking to school at Cummings. Carol Doerfler is committee chair and other members are Gary Blake and Art Mauer.

Pat Fisher, a member of the Traffic Safety/Bikeways/Pedestrian Committee, said she appreciated recent testimony on the issue to the traffic committee from Carol and Martina. As a result, she conducted an onsite at Cummings with a representative from the Oregon Department of Transportation pedestrian safety division. They observed a morning student drop-off and an afternoon pick-up period and were impressed by the amount of traffic and congestion around the school and certain traffic control issues. Infrastructure deficiencies include no sidewalks on Delight and existing sidewalks that are insufficient. The next step is to put together their ideas and observations.

She said one approach is that Cummings seems like a good candidate for the Safe Routes to School process, to look at the most cost-effective ways to address issues even before any sidewalks might go in.

Rhonda said she would have Carol contact Pat so that efforts going forward can be coordinated. Art noted that Delight around Cummings is one issue, but that Delight further north is an issue as well because of students coming and going from McNary High School. Gary said the best thing WKNA can do is keep the issue out front.

Keizer Rapids Park Property Line Adjustments, Rhonda – She outlined a concern brought forward by a property owner on 15th Street surrounding a communication from the city regarding a property line adjustment in the park. The fear was that it involved a new development, but it just has to do with a new bathroom at KRP and avoiding having to hook up to the city sewer. With the line adjustment, the city can go with a septic system instead.

Upcoming calendar items:

- Adopt-A-Street, May 13
- Next WKNA general meeting, Sept.14, 7 p.m.

No WKNA meetings June, July, August. Stay updated via WKNA Facebook!

Meeting adjourned at 9 p.m.