 Waco Community Watch Meeting

Thursday October 6, 2022

6:30 pm

Minutes:

* J. Barrett opened the meeting at 6:30 pm and welcomed all members present. Meeting turnout again was small. We will continue to encourage members to attend the meetings via Facebook and email. Barrett reported that he had included all the email addresses that were provided by people attending the Block Party on August 27th in a group email announcing the meeting.
* J. Barrett stated that window stickers remain available to members of the community at no cost.
* Barrett asked the members present to pay attention to the Neighborhood Watch signs throughout town and to notify him or 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. It was noted that there isn’t one on the “Waco City Limit” sign as you enter on North Main St. Barrett will have one placed there.
* J. Barrett reported that the Waco Community Watch Facebook Group page membership continues to grow and is currently at 88 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. Several recent postings from the Cherryville Community watch page have been shared as are any postings from the Cleveland County Sheriff’s Department. Barrett reported that the page is getting 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. Attendees from the Block Party that provided email addresses have been added to the group emails. Barrett apologized for not posting more to the email group and promised to be more active.
* J. Barrett presented the October 2022 financial statements for the Community Watch program. 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.
* The group discussed setting up a meeting with the Washington Elementary staff to discuss their participation in the program. The group agree that working through the children at Washington will be a good avenue to reach all areas of the community. Barrett encouraged other members that are interested in attending the meeting to contact him. Flavio Hallais expressed interest in speaking with the Washington Elementary staff. Barrett will also ask Tracy Chichester to join them. The group will be notified when the meeting is scheduled.
* Barrett said that he would follow up with Burns Middle and Burns High School concerning some type of participation in the program.
* 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. Barrett and 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 discussed included:
* Identifying street lights that are blocked or partially blocked by tree limbs. This has been taken to the Town Board to be addressed.
* Illegal dumping of construction waste on Moss St. Will continue to watch.
* 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.
* 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.
* 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.
* Barrett reported that he was still having trouble getting in touch with anyone at Burns High School about working with the School Shop class to build a small “Neighborhood Book Library” and a “Neighborhood Blessing Box” where members of the community could provide books and non-perishable food items for others. These wooden structures would look something like a large bird house on a post where books and food items could be stored. The idea of placing these in the area of the new playground behind the Community Center was discussed. Barrett reached out to the Burns High School principal via email this week to get more information. He also stated that he would reach out to Alex Leonhardt, Assistant Athletic Director at Burns, to see if he would be able to help. More on this at the next meeting.
* If anyone else has information on someone in the community that does carpentry or wood working that may be interested in helping with the Book Library and Blessing Box, please let someone know.
* Barrett mentioned that the Holiday season was coming up fast and asked if anyone with the Community Watch program wanted to assist in hanging or adding holiday decorations, to please notify him and to please attend the November meeting. He stated that the town would like to continue to add things to their current displays.
* Minutes of the meeting will be completed and shared via Facebook and email to members.
* The next meeting is Thursday November 3rd at 6:30 pm. Please attend and bring a friend.
* Meeting adjourned at 7:10 pm.

Book Library / Food Pantry ideas

