

West Keizer Neighborhood Association Meeting Minutes

Oct. 12, 2017

Keizer Civic Center

Submitted by Carolyn Homan, WKNA secretary

Call to order – President Gary Blake called the meeting to order at 7 p.m. and welcomed about 12 attendees, including guest speaker Bill Lawyer, Keizer Public Works director. Introductions were made around the room.

Approval of Minutes for Sept. 14, 2017 – Gary called for a motion to approve the minutes as submitted and posted on WKNA's website. Davis Dyer moved to approve and Rhonda Rich seconded. Motion carried.

Budget for 2017-18 – No expenses as yet from the \$500 budget.

Speakers

Shirley DeShon re: Sunset Park Safety – Shirley lives next to Sunset Park and testified at the Sept. 18 City Council meeting on the recent incident involving gunfire originating in a gravel pit gun range on the west side of the Willamette that resulted in bullets entering Sunset Park and frightening pedestrians and neighbors walking along Sunset Avenue. She thanked the 18 or so neighbors who joined her at the council meeting to report on the incident and request a response from the city. There was talk at the meeting of sending a letter to Polk County officials about the matter, but since then, it has been decided no letter will be sent, she said. Instead, it was decided to post a sign at the gravel pit advising shooters not to shoot in the direction of the park. She said Keizer Police Department's Lt. Copeland and City Attorney Shannon Johnson have been cooperative. The land owner involved, Lance Davis, said he had no idea there had been problems and is said to be cooperating. Thus, it was decided to try the signage, which should go up soon, and hope for compliance, she said. She and her husband, Daryl Richardson, are leaving soon for the winter and she has asked a neighbor to keep a log of gun fire emanating from the gravel pit site. In discussion, it was noted that the WKNA Board has decided to write a letter to City Council expressing concern over the incident and the public safety issues involved. Gary thanked Shirley for her efforts and said WKNA will be monitoring the situation.

Bill Lawyer, Keizer Public Works Director – Bill gave a run-down of the divisions within Public Works: Water, Streets, Parks, Stormwater, Environmental/Technical.

Environmental/Technical deals mostly with stormwater regulations and EPA compliance. It's important work but pretty much number crunching behind the scenes.

The Water division ensures clean, safe water for the city. This winter, water main replacement will take place along Deets, Greenwood and Cummings west of Shoreline. Other work will include inspections of the city's 15 water wells and any needed water pump repairs – one pump is replaced every year.

The **Streets Division** has some big projects in the works. Replacing the bridge on Dearborn over Claggett Creek will begin in May and continue to October next year. Dearborn will be closed from 13th to Verda for the duration. The new bridge will be 3 feet higher to comply with flood requirements. Cost is \$2.3 million. He said the city will take out a loan to pay for the project, repaying the loan with gas tax dollars the city receives annually.

Next summer, River Road from Chemawa to the south city limits will be resurfaced. Work will be done at night to keep traffic disruptions to a minimum. The cost, \$1,2 million, will take all of the city's road repair funds. A Pavement Condition Index is used to determine which streets need to be resurfaced. He said the relatively good condition of Keizer's residential streets allows him to use the entire road repair fund to tackle River Road beginning next summer.

Keizer is partnering with the Transit Center on installation of a traffic signal at the Transit Station on

Keizer Station Boulevard. The timing is unclear, but access to Keizer Station will be maintained throughout.

A project of particular interest to WKNA is the desire and need for sidewalks or walking paths along Delight Street for the safety of children walking to Cummings Elementary and McNary High School. The desire for a 10-foot path on both sides of Delight is problematic because a couple of homes on the east side have steep driveways. Creating the walking path would make the driveways even steeper. A 10-foot path on the west side only was under consideration, but parking areas would have to be realigned as the path meets Cummings school property. A solution is to put the path inside the school's chain-link fence on the west side of Delight. There's less disruption and it saves money, he said. But it requires Salem-Keizer School District to grant an easement. He met recently with an SKSD representative and is waiting for a response. If he gets the easement, it's possible he can fit it into the next budget cycle, beginning July 1, 2018. The cost should be about \$50,000 and work could start as soon as next July depending on receipt of the easement and the timing. This path will be the first step and then they'll work on a solution for the Dearborn to Chemawa section of Delight.

Kathy Lincoln, a member of the Salem Area Transit Board, asked if Keizer could apply for funding for some of the work under the new state transportation bill, which has money for sidewalks. Bill said it's a possibility. He's also heard Keizer may be getting additional gas tax funding as well but doesn't know how much.

Another topic of interest to WKNA is the rain gardens along Chemawa Road, which have gotten overgrown in some areas and cause problems for people backing out of driveways. He said the city has been using Marion County inmate crews to trim and maintain the plantings. The city also plans to put a landscape contract out for bid soon for monthly maintenance on the rain gardens. Work would begin in March. He said he is not happy with the appearance of the rain gardens and he's asked staff to come up with a replant plan.

The **Stormwater Division** fixes and replaces pipes as necessary. They're currently having the whole system video inspected by a contractor and are fixing issues as fast as possible after they're identified. Catch basins are cleaned annually and outfalls are inspected annually. This year's replacement project is being incorporated with the Dearborn bridge project. That pipe is being realigned as part of that work.

The **Parks Division** has exciting prospects thanks to the new \$4/month parks fee approved by City Council. He said he's excited but nervous because he feels pressure to do a good job. The Parks Board is working hard to get citizen input on priorities for use of the extra funding. He urged people to attend another public forum set for 6 p.m. Oct. 24 at City Hall.

The new fee will add about \$600,000 to the parks fund, which stands at \$335,000 now. The funds will allow the division to do things he never thought possible. They will be adding full-time staff, increasing temporary hours and also adding new equipment. They will be able to replace a play structure when needed and not have to scrimp and save or divert funds from another need to accomplish it. They will be able to add amenities, such as a recently requested drinking fountain near the amphitheater in Keizer Rapids Park. A drinking fountain costs about \$3,000 and is another kind of project that had required long-term planning to accomplish so it wouldn't blow a hole in the budget.

A West Keizer project that's been an issue is the tennis courts at Willamette Manor Park. Repairs were made, but the harsh winter caused problems and need for more repairs. He said parks manager Robert Johnson is in contact with the contractor, who has had a serious accident and isn't physically able to address needed repairs. They will stay on top of it. Meanwhile, he said the courts still are usable.

He also cited the ongoing issues with homeless people camping out at Wallace House Park and Keizer Rapids and brush removal issues at Palma Ciega. He said the new parks funding will allow them to do brush removal and even mowing in the lower area of Wallace House Park to encourage visitors to access the river. This will help inhibit the unwanted camping by transients. Brush clearing can also be planned at Palma Ciega.

In answer to a question, he said Keizer has no issues with lead in its water. In answer to another question, he also said that the Parks Division is looking at new ways of operating thanks to the new

funding. Options such as having equipment housed at the various parks, rather than shuttled from central storage, may be considered for greater efficiency.

He urged anyone with a question or concerns to call him. He can be hard to get hold of but does return messages – 503-856-3555 or LawyerB@keizer.org

Council Liaison Report – Roland Herrera

Roland filled in for Kim Freeman, who could not attend. He thanked WKNA members for attending the Council in numbers to report on the gunfire incident across from Sunset Park. He said it does make an impression. He also said that in deciding not to send a letter to the property owner, City Attorney Johnson felt that Lt. Copeland was addressing the issue and that it was best not to have too many signals crossing.

He said that issues with the Development Code and new construction site improvement requirements are being worked out with the business community and the Chamber of Commerce.

He urged everyone to attend the Parks Board forum Oct. 24 to provide input on priorities for use of the new parks fee.

He said the Gubser neighborhood's Miracle of Christmas event is looking for volunteers to tend the donations barrel.

Discussion

Ideas for 2018 general meeting speakers and topics – Kris Adams

She shared copies of possible topics and asked for suggestions. Anyone with ideas can contact any Board member or bring them to the next WKNA general meeting.

Upcoming calendar items:

- Salem Audubon Society tour of Keizer Rapids Park, 7:30 a.m. Oct. 13. Meet at the Boat Ramp parking lot.
- Adopt-A-Street, TBA
- Next WKNA general meeting, Thursday, Nov. 9, 7 p.m.
Speaker: Jerry McGee, Keizer historian

Meeting adjourned at 8:45 p.m.