 Waco Community Watch Meeting

June 1, 2023

6:30 pm

Minutes:

* J. Barrett opened the meeting at 6:30 pm and welcomed all members present. We will continue to encourage members to attend the meetings via Facebook and email. Ideas discussed on how to increase participation in the meetings. We are currently sending out notices on the meeting date on the Community Watch page, the Town of Waco page, on One Man’s Junk Waco and on the Shelby Talks pages. We are also sending out an email notice to a group of 30 people.
* 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. 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 168 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 including post from the Cleveland County Sheriff’s Department and the Shelby Police Department. 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.

Discussion on opportunities to raise money for the program were discussed. One idea that was discussed in May was to speak with Foothills Shooting Complex about setting up a food tent at the range on a Saturday and sell hotdogs, chips and drinks. Other organizations are doing this to raise money. Members thought this would be a good possibility. Barrett has contacted Foothills but hasn’t heard back. Will follow up and report back in July.

* Meetings with Washing, Burns Middle and High Schools 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. We will continue to discuss this issue. Anyone interested in volunteering can contact John Barrett, Tracy Chichester or Flavio Hallais.
* Specific Community Watch issues that have been discussed include:
* Speeding continues to be a problem on Cherryville Rd., North and South Main St., and on Jess Hord Rd. This is a continuing problem. ***(Will see about getting the speed trailer from the Sheriff’s Department).***
* No new information on the pack of dogs that have been seen between South Main St. and Capernium Rd. Tracy states she hasn’t heard them lately***. (Nothing new here. No one has reported seeing or hearing the dogs. Will remove this issue from the list)***
* Watch members are encouraged to continue to report any suspicious vehicles to the Sheriff’s Department. (The non-emergency Sheriff’s Department number is 704-484-4822 or 704-476-7800).
* The issue with a homeless man and woman sleeping in the Waco Post Office lobby at night after dark has been resolved apparently. ***(Nothing new here. Will remove this issue from the list.)***
* The other concern is cars pulling to the back of the Post Office at night and possibly doing some illegal activities. (***This may still be a problem. 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.)***
* The 2 homeless men knocking on the door of Waco Baptist Church have not been seen around lately. ***(Nothing new here. Will remove this issue from the list.)***
* There have been reports of suspicious individuals between Jess Hord Rd. and Bingham Rd. with some walking in the field near Judy Barrett’s house. ***(Need to continue to watch this and report to the Sheriff’s department.)***
* There has been a break-in to a vacant home on North Main St. and the Sheriff’s Department is investigating. ***(Please watch for suspicious activity and report this if seen.)***
* Nothing new on Racine Dr. ***(Police investigating)***
* Enola Dr. possible drug sales ***(Will report to Crime Stoppers)***
* One member asked if anyone had heard anything about an assault of a female at the Waco Stop & Shop that had led to a possible death investigation. ***(No one had heard this rumor)***
* The Waco Comm. Vol. Fire Dept. will be having a practice burn starting at 8:00 am on Saturday June 17th on Oak St. in Waco. (***Members encouraged to limit traffic activity in the area that day.)***
* The Town has voted to install security camera’s to the rear of the Community Center focused on the playground and at the Town Hall focused toward the Community Center. ***(This will be completed in the next few months.)***
* The “Neighborhood Book Library” and “Neighborhood Blessing Box” projects with Burns High School should be completed. Barrett will follow up with Mr. Wybril on the status of the project.

The Book Library will be placed at the fence near the fire hydrant and playground. Members will monitor what people put in there to alleviate some “un-wanted” material to be placed in the library. The Blessing Box will be placed on Dodd St. beside the electric pole under the street light. We will need to regularly keep check on the box.

* The Town is interested in setting up a Farmers Market at the Community Center one day a week this summer. If you know of anyone that would be interested in do this, please contact a Board member.
* Tracy provided Crime Stoppers Program updated information and business cards with the group. She went over the process of turning in tips and how individuals would be paid if a tip resulted in an arrest. She also shared flyers on the program and they will be placed in the Post office and at the convenience stores. The program pays up to $1,000.00 if a tip leads to an arrest and all tips are anonymous. Tip line is 704-481-8477 / email is stoppers.c@yahoo.com / internet isp3tips.com. or [www.sheriffclevelandccounty.com/crimestoppers](http://www.sheriffclevelandccounty.com/crimestoppers)
* Tracy also reported that the Crime Stoppers program has asked to use the Community Center on Monday July 17th for a meeting. They are still looking for Board members from the community. If you are interested, contact Tracy.
* The “Waco Light’s Up for Christmas” program was discussed and members talked about ideas to increase participation in the town. Members also discussed other ideas to help the program grow. Plans to add additional lights and decorations to the bridge were discussed. Other ideas are starting back the Christmas parade and the possibility of having caroling the night of the judging with church choirs from Waco Baptist and Macedonia Baptist churches. More discussion at future meetings.
* The “Community Watch Block Party” is Saturday August 26th. Times last year were 11:00 am – 3:00 pm and the group discussed changing the time if we add music. We will finalize the time at the next meeting. We also discussed holding a raffle to help raise money. Discussed speaking with the businesses in the community and asking them for their help in hosting the event and possibly offering services or items for a raffle. The food menu will stay the same and remain free to all that attend. Menu will be Hotdogs, chips, drinks, cake or candy, Snow cones and maybe popcorn.

Activities discussed were:

* Inflatable with water feature
* Snow come machine
* Popcorn maker
* Fire Dept. smoke house
* Sheriff’s Dept. K-9 demo
* Bean bag toss
* Music
* Water activity
* Car show
* Yard sale tents
* Crime Stoppers has asked to set up a tent
* Will ask the Elections Board if they want to set up a tent

Assigning task: (Task below are not limited to just the people listed.) Volunteers accepted.

Chili – Loretta, John, Diane, Do we need more?

Slaw – Loretta, Becky, John, Do we need more?

Cupcakes - Tracy, Do we need more?

Hotdogs – Fire Department provided last year. Will check with them on this.

Food shopping – John volunteered Flavio and he to handle this

All American Bounce house rentals – John will reach out to Justin Coleman on this

Music – Diane checking on DJ, Tracy checking on band, Israel and Kim checking on music

Fire Department – John will reach out to Chief Gordon and Sandy Stroup on this

Games – Israel and Kim on bean bag toss boards, need another set Mike Scism?

Grill – The fire department loaned one last year. John to f/u with them

Tents – John (1), Tracy (1), Israel and Kim (1), others?

Coolers – Discuss at July meeting

Ice – Check with Stop & Shop and Chicken Hill, Fire Department

Banners – Tracy needs one banner to get the size of the letters to change date.

Put up banners – Chester, Israel, Flavio. We can re-use the banners from last year with just a change of the date. Banners will go up by mid-July.

We will continue to discuss activities and different ideas and discuss in July.

Anyone in the Waco Community Watch area that’s interested in helping with the Block Party is encouraged to contact us. We would appreciate any help with planning, shopping, logistics, or funding of the activities.

This event is completely free for the Waco Community and we would sincerely appreciate and accept any help anyone can offer.

* Minutes of the meeting will be completed and shared via Facebook and email to members.
* The next meeting is Thursday July 6th at 6:30 pm. Please attend and bring a friend.
* Meeting adjourned at 7:35 pm.