

WKNA General meeting  
Feb 10, 2022 7 p.m., Keizer Civic Center  
Submitted by Carolyn Homan, Secretary

**Call to Order:** 7 p.m., Rhonda Rich, vice president

**Welcome** – Rhonda welcomed about 22 attendees, including City Council liaison Laura Reid and City Councilor Roland Herrera; guest speakers Keizer Police Chief John Teague and Marion Co. Parole and Probation Officer Eric Bandonis; and guests Jamie Davis and Mike DeBlasi, of the Traffic Safety, Bikeways, Pedestrian Committee. Introductions were made around the room.

**Minutes from Jan. 13, 2022** – Art moved approval as submitted; Robb Witters seconded. Motion carried.

**Budget** – Rhonda Rich reported expenditures of \$186.35 since July 1 from the city-approved \$550 budget. Another \$252.16 will be spent in March for the annual website fee. The remainder will be spent on replenishing the stock of WKNA brochures.

**Getting the Word Out** – Rhonda urged everyone to check the West Keizer Neighborhood Facebook page for updates on neighborhood news and city meetings and activities. Police and Fire information will be posted as available as well.

**Parole/Probation update, Eric Bandonis** – He shared information on a new project through Marion Co. Sheriff's Office and the Pathfinder Network called the Resilience and Recovery Project. It's a peer mentor program for parole and probation clients. Peer Support Specialists are trained to act as mentors to help parole and probation clients with basics like getting a driver's license, providing transportation to appointments and other supports to help the clients successfully complete supervision and reintegrate into the community. The project is relationship focused so that clients know the mentors are there for them. The project starts March 1.

**Guest speaker, Keizer Police Chief John Teague** – Rhonda introduced Chief Teague, who was invited to respond to comments gathered from residents at the January General meeting on traffic safety issues in Keizer and to discuss possible solutions. He threw the discussion open for questions. Issues raised included:

**Placement of traffic monitor devices** (the lighted signs that display "your speed"): Often, it's driven by request from residents. But the Police Department has some obvious spots – Dearborn, Verda, Cummings, Shoreline, Windsor Island, Sunset, Wheatland Road for example – to locate these monitors, he said.

**Does KPD recognize speeding as a problem?** He said you first have to define speeding. The "average" concept is anything 7 mph over the posted speed. While a speeder may get pulled over, ticketing basically doesn't occur until speed is recorded at 8+ mph over the posted limit. That is not a rule or a department policy, however; it's a reflection of human nature. But police pay special attention to where crashes occur. They divide Keizer into 5 sections. West Keizer has fewer crashes than any other section – 10 crashes in the past 3 years. The most problems in West Keizer occur on River Road and Chemawa Road N. If there's a crash at River Road and Sunset, for example, or on River Road in the southbound lane, that's counted as West Keizer.

He singled out Cummings Lane where adding curbs and sidewalks has been suggested. It's a double-edged sword because it would be safe for pedestrians but drivers would turn it into a drag

strip. He said nationally, during the pandemic, speeding has skyrocketed. With cuts to policing in many areas and fewer commuters, drivers are “flying.” His suggestion: create a speed “table” at the crosswalk at Delight and Cummings. The drawback for neighbors is the extra noise from braking before the speed table and then acceleration after that a speed table would create, but he noted that vehicles are already stopping at and starting again at the stop signs on Delight.

**What about creating a 4-way stop at Dearborn and Shoreline** to slow traffic on that stretch of Shoreline from Cummings up to Chemawa? He said he would endorse that. The decision would be up to Public Works but “they probably wouldn’t object.” He said KPD has little input on “engineering” issues related to traffic, such as installation of stop signs and creation of speed tables. Enforcement is KPD’s area.

**What about red-light cameras?** The cost is high to install but the main issue is that, by statute, a law officer is required to review every violation before a ticket can be issued. It takes hours to review the recordings. The cameras are “guaranteed effective” in reducing speeds and dummy cameras work, too.

**Isn’t speeding getting worse in Keizer?** His gut feeling is that it’s not worse. He said there are not enough crashes in W. Keizer to warrant “draconian” measures to limit speeding or other infractions. He said there’s an “acceptable” level of crime vs. police staffing – that is, people will only pay for or tolerate a certain level of policing. It’s the difference between having a cop on every corner and something less than that. But to noticeably increase traffic monitoring in Keizer, he would have to have a lot more police officers.

**Are GPS apps like Google Maps a factor?** Yes definitely. They will direct drivers through neighborhoods any time there’s a slowing on the “main” arterials. Drivers choose the fastest route.

**How often do police patrol W. Keizer?** Despite the low level of crashes, police like to have a presence in W. Keizer. Taxpayers expect it and he believes police touch every street in Keizer at least every other day.

**Is speed or red-light running a major crash factor?** Most Keizer crashes are what they call “in-line” crashes, like rear-enders or between a moving vehicle and a parked one.

**Are rolling stops ticketed?** The threshold is “walk speed.” Most drivers who roll through at walk speed did use their brakes and will argue that they stopped completely, even believing that they stopped completely. If the car rolls through faster than walk speed (thus potentially endangering pedestrians) it could net a ticket.

**What about pedestrian safety in W. Keizer, where there are a lot of dog-walkers and others and many places lack sidewalks so people are forced to walk in the street. Speeding drivers are especially dangerous in these situations.** The Chief acknowledged W. Keizer is a very walkable neighborhood but said more people walk in southeast Keizer because many people there don’t have cars. In his memory of the last 10 years, every pedestrian fatality in Keizer except one was the fault of a pedestrian not appropriately moving into a crosswalk into the path of a moving vehicle. Pedestrians will lose every time they demand their right of way in a crosswalk and step in front of a moving vehicle; by law, pedestrians are still required to walk safely.

**Are vehicle break-ins a major issue?** He said the frequency is high and the locations are unpredictable. They tend to go in spurts. And many times, there’s no “break in” because a door

was unlocked. His advice: LOCK YOUR CAR and don't leave items such as laptops, purses and other valuables visible in your vehicle.

**Are there streets in West Keizer where more tickets are given?** Chemawa and Cummings are both sites for ticketing, Sunset too, and most are given to drivers headed toward River Road.

Asked to comment, Mike De Blasi, with the Traffic Safety, Bikeways, Pedestrian Committee, said street design is the key to slowing traffic but it's expensive and involves a lot of infrastructure changes. Speed tables are more expensive and take longer to achieve. Painting narrow traffic lanes is cheaper. Cameras and radar are expensive -- \$3,000 for the monitor signs, for instance, and two are needed on a street. A suggestion from the audience on residential streets is to park a car or two, which narrows the travel area and slows traffic.

Rhonda thanked the Chief for attending and sharing his thoughts on this important neighborhood issue. She also thanked Mike DeBlasi and TSBP Committee chairperson Jamie Davis for attending.

## REPORTS

**City Council Liaison, Councilor Laura Reid** – She said the council's biggest issue is upcoming interviews for a permanent City Manager next week. A Forum for citizens to meet the three candidates will be held at 6 p.m. Feb. 15 in Council chambers.

The annual Community Center cleanup will be held March 12. The Soggy Day in the Park event will be held April 23.

She said Keizer Homegrown Theater will present Constellation this weekend and Steel Magnolias is planned in March.

The youth art show currently at Keizer Heritage Center will move to the Community Center soon. She said the Heritage Museum is doing oral histories of Keizer.

Councilor Roland Herrera also reported on the Latino Action Committee scholarship and recognition event May 12 at the Civic Center, being held outdoors again this year. He said donations toward scholarships are being accepted.

**Keizer Community Library, Kris Adams** – Kris, WKNA's liaison to the Library Board, reported that the newly remodeled library is moving forward on some major initiatives. The Library Board hopes to join the Chemeketa Regional Library system, which would be a big assist to patrons, and they also want to become a public library. To do that, they need a certain level of assistance from the City of Keizer. She said Mayor Clark has expressed support but nothing is formalized as yet. Councilor Reid added that of the list of 10 things needed to become a public library, all have been accomplished except the needed level of public funding. (Currently the City covers only the library's rent for space at the Heritage Center.) Council hopes to use federal American Recovery Plan Act funding for that piece, Councilor Reid said.

The Library has a slate of upcoming events, starting with a "meet the author" event in March. They plan to hold book sales in May and November (with 3 sales planned in 2023) and will have a booth at Keizer Fest this summer. They also are writing a grant to support more Latino outreach and books in Spanish. Library cards are free and she invited everyone to come check it out in the

lower level of the Heritage Center

**Food barrels, Dennis Phipps** – He said food and cash donations are needed. WKNA sponsors collection barrels year-round at Bi Mart and Copper Creek. Judy Leichty, assistant manager of Keizer Community Food Bank, said donations of canned meats (tuna, chicken, chili, beef stew etc.) are especially needed right now.

**Cummings School, Carol Phipps** – Care of the various planter beds is on winter hiatus but she's looking to start things up again in April. Egan Gardens sponsors a pansy give-away in spring and neighbors are invited to donate their free pansy to help revamp the Cummings reader board planter and the other planter pots at the school's entrances. Carol said it may be possible to schedule a work day in April to spread bark dust and do some weeding. Watch for details on WKNA's Facebook page and at [www.westkeizerna.org](http://www.westkeizerna.org)

**Parks** – Rhonda reported that the Parks Master Plan update was approved by City Council on Monday. WKNA had opposed the consultant's recommendation to the City to divest itself of Palma Ciega Park. In the end, Palma Ciega Park was saved and thanks go to the Parks Board and City Council for keeping it as part of the city park system. Rhonda said Gary Blake is planning a work party to help clean up leaves and debris at Palma Ciega in the near future. Details will be shared as soon as a date is set.

**Upcoming meetings;**

Feb. 15, 6 p.m., Council Chambers – Public forum for citizens to meet City Manager candidates

Feb. 17, 6 p.m., Traffic Safety Bikeways Pedestrian Committee

Feb. 22, 7 p.m., Keizer City Council

March 3, 7 p.m. WKNA Board meeting

March 8, 6 p.m., Parks Advisory Board meeting

March 10, 7 p.m., WKNA General meeting with guest speaker Mayor Cathy Clark, State of the City

March 12, 9 a.m. to noon, Keizer Community Center cleanup

**Meeting adjourned at 8:35 p.m.**