

West Keizer Neighborhood Association General Meeting

7 p.m., Sept. 11, 2014, at Keizer Civic Center
Minutes submitted by Carolyn Homan, secretary

Introduction of members -- WKNA President Rhonda Rich called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m., with about 16 people attending. Rhonda welcomed everyone, urged attendees to sign in and asked for suggestions for future meeting topics as introductions were made around the room. Attendees included guests Aaron and Randi Enbree, representing Keizer Grange; Roland Herrera, candidate for City Council and Keizer Parks Advisory Board member, and Craig Murphy, Keizertimes. The Enbrees said they were interested in learning ways the Grange could be helpful to the community. Roland invited everyone to a "meet and greet" event supporting his candidacy next week at the home of Mike McGann.

Approval of Minutes for May 8, 2014 – Rhonda asked for approval of minutes. Clint Holland moved approval and Kim Freeman seconded. The motion passed and minutes were approved.

WKNA Budget for 2013-14 – Rhonda reported that WKNA has a \$900 budget for 2014-15 and has spent \$83.49 so far for printing.

WKNA Website Manager – Barbara Smith Henke is the new manager, replacing Davis Dyer

Facebook Manager – Carol Doerfler, WKNA vice president, updates the WKNA Facebook page. Rhonda invited people to "like" the page and check it for neighborhood news.

West Keizer Parks report –

Update on KRP community build play structure: Ron Freeman, WKNA Board's representative to the Big Toy Task Force, reported on the group's most recent meeting, Wednesday, Sept. 3. He said they received basic updates and noted that they are trying to finish the website so it will go live Oct. 1. They want the capability to fundraise, enlist volunteers and provide project updates through the website.

The Keizer Rapids Park Master Plan design charette will be from 10 a.m. to noon Sept. 27 at City Hall. This will update the park's master plan and hopefully decide a site for the Big Toy. Rhonda clarified that charette participation is by invitation, although others are welcome to come and observe. Representatives of the two neighborhood association, as well as a variety of other community and sport groups, have been invited.

Richard Walsh, Parks Advisory Board member, explained that charette participation was limited because some interested groups, such as sports associations, have hundreds of members. If everyone had attended, the group would have been unwieldy. This way, each group has a representative and equal voice.

Update from Parks Board member – Clint Holland reported that Sunset Park has a new sprinkler system, installed this summer. The Parks Advisory Board and City Council toured parks this week.

Councilor Kim Freeman reported that she had received a request from Keizer Police Dept.'s Lt. Copeland, asking WKNA for help in cleaning up Wallace House Park. There have been issues with transients camping in the park's lower area. Police have dispersed the camps, but need help removing the trash and debris left behind. The city will bring in trash receptacles, provide protective gloves and other necessary gear. They would like a cleanup soon, so that trash doesn't end up washed into the Willamette River as fall rains arrive.

Rhonda said Sept. 20 might be a possibility or Oct. 11. WKNA also needs to schedule an **Adopt-A-Street cleanup** for Chemawa Road. The Enbrees said they would raise the issue of the Grange helping out, although they noted that most Grange members are elderly. Rhonda suggested the street cleanup might be a possibility for them.

Improvements on Delight Street – Rhonda said this project is in the pre-planning stages with City Public Works Manager Bill Lawyer looking at possibilities.

Tow Truck Parking in the City of Keizer – Rhonda reported the City Council's unanimous vote on Aug. 18 to retain the city's ban on tow truck parking on city streets.

Dim Sum Restaurant Liquor License Application – Rhonda shared copies of a letter received from the City seeking WKNA input on the liquor license application for this establishment, located in the building formerly operating as Blooming Cuisine. Rhonda noted this is fir first time WKNA has been contacted for such input. No one posted any objections or comment on the application.

Discussion: Master Planning for Keizer Rapids Park – Rhonda reviewed the history so far, including the list of preferred amenities developed at the special June WKNA meeting. That list was presented to the Parks Advisory Board July 8 and on Aug. 12 the KPAB used input from both West Keizer and Gubser neighborhood associations, and others, to develop a list of their top 15 choices. Six of those were in the top 13 of the WKNA list and five others received some votes from WKNA.

Richard Walsh noted that there is no time line associated with any of the amenities, encouraging participants to take a long-term vision in placing elements. The Indoor Recreational Facility included on the Parks Board list, for instance, arose several years ago with the “Something Special” Task Force. He said including a variety of sports fields is related to a “Tournament Town” concept that arose at a separate visioning conference in the past.

Clint Holland said an indoor facility was at one time talked about adjacent to the Volcanoes Stadium. He said he favors an indoor facility that would accommodate a variety of sports activities and provide meeting space backup for City Hall.

WKNA member Jim Hansen asked people to think about what KRP is going to be. He said he had no problem with an indoor facility but when KRP was originally planned, the main theme “was our connection to the river.” He said he felt that “Tournament Town” and similar ideas were at odds with a park right on the river and that Volcanoes stadium would be more appropriate and offer more amenities nearby for people that would use an indoor facility or sport fields.

Tate Avenue resident Cindy Hunt also felt that an indoor facility would change the character of the park and that the size might rule out some other amenities. Rhonda added that her feeling is that “we would like to keep it (KRP) as natural as possible.” The issue of how parking will be handled also came up.

Rhonda reiterated that she would be the WKNA representative at the design charette and wants to reflect membership desires for the park. The charette is to produce three options and on Oct. 14, the Parks Advisory Board will pick their favored option to present to City Council Nov. 3. Council will then decide.

The Oct. 9 WKNA general meeting will look at the Parks Advisory Board’s choice. Neighbors are encouraged to attend that meeting and the Nov. 3 Council meeting to make their opinions known.

Rhonda said that placement of the Big Toy is driving some of the master planning effort. She then asked the group to break into three sections to brainstorm where amenities might be placed. Lists of the amenities lists were provided, along with maps of KRP and smaller maps of the three main areas of the park to be considered for amenity placement. Rhonda asked the groups to work for about 20 minutes and then come back together for discussion of the decisions.

Area 1: The open field area closest to the river.

The group’s assignment was to include amenities from the June 12th meeting: connection to the river, picnic areas, playstructure, fitness stations and birdhouses.

The group added an observation deck overlooking the river, drinking fountain and a vending machine by the boat ramp, possible parking near the road, and a spray fountain in the middle of the open field. All were in agreement that this area be maintained as an open area for families to enjoy - no organized sports.

They also suggested the Big Toy in Area B, handicap parking in front of the amphitheater, and permanent bathrooms near the amphitheater.

Area 2: The section encompassing the as-yet unplanned orchard area east of the dog park over to Tate.

The group’s assignment was to include amenities from the June 12th meeting: picnic areas, multi-use playfields, playstructure, restrooms, community gardens and extension of the buffer area from the neighborhood.

The group was in agreement that if an indoor recreational facility was built that it should be in this area near Chemawa Rd. and that adequate parking should be planned. It was suggested that an indoor facility placed near I-5 on the city's property north of the Volcanoes Stadium may be a viable option, leaving Keizer Rapids Park a more natural area.

Area 3: The west section from the dog park down to the amphitheater and "big tree" area originally suggested for the Big Toy.

The group's assignment was to include amenities from the June 12th meeting: a science center, observatory, restrooms, parking, Big Toy and community gardens.

The group added a sport court, sand volleyball, covered picnic area and more parking for the dog park, north of the dog park.

In the end, Area One emphasized picnic areas and open play fields, the Big Toy in the original "big tree" site, rest rooms and drinking fountains. Area Two included an indoor facility, parking, community gardens as a buffer to Tate Ave. on the east side of the "orchard" area and a variety of sports fields. Area Three put the Big Toy in the "big tree" site, sited a science center/observatory in the Charge House, along with rest rooms, and added parking, a volleyball court and a picnic shelter south of the dog park.

Rhonda will take the maps and suggestions to the design charette Sept. 27.

In closing, Council member Kim Freeman thanked everyone for their patience regarding the Chemawa Road project. She said it's been frustrating because the city is not managing the project, Oregon Department of Transportation is. Councilor Clark added that things have improved since a new project manager was appointed by ODOT.

The meeting adjourned at 8:45 p.m.