

## **West Keizer Neighborhood Association General Meeting Minutes**

**May 9, 2019**

**Keizer Civic Center**

**Submitted by Carolyn Homan, WKNA secretary**

**Call to order** – President Carol Doerfler called the meeting to order at 7 p.m. and welcomed about 25 attendees.

**Approval of Minutes for April 11, 2019** – Davis Dyer made a motion to approve the minutes from the April meeting, as submitted and posted on WKNA's website. Carol Phipps seconded. Motion carried.

### **Budget Report:**

**FY2018-19, Rhonda Rich** –

**Budget for 2018-19, Rhonda** – Of the \$500 budget, WKNA has spent \$480 on printing, the website, signage and more door hangers. The door hangers are used to distribute Iris Fest run/walk information to neighbors in West Keizer along the event route and to neighbors around Willamette Manor Park to alert them to tonight's meeting and discussion of park improvements. WKNA Board members attended the May 2 Keizer Budget Committee meeting and Carol D. presented the 2019-20 budget request for \$550. The extra funding was requested because of increased costs, including the website.

### **Announcements:**

**Keizer Iris Fest, Carol D.** – She noted that the Iris Fest is coming up May 16-19. Information flyers are printed each year by the Chamber for distribution by the WKNA Board to West Keizer neighbors along Manbrin and Shoreline.

### **Guest Speakers** –

**Salem Keizer School Board candidates to represent Zone 6** – Carol D. introduced Danielle Bethell and Chuck Lee to present information on why they are running for the School Board in the May 21 election.

**Danielle Bethell** – She said she is the mother of three Salem-Keizer students and also is a graduate of Salem-Keizer schools. She's running to be a voice for parents across the district. She also would like to see more collaboration with community partnerships. She currently is executive director of Keizer Chamber of Commerce and previously was president of the Booster Club at McNary High School. She said she was asked to run by parents at Clear Lake Elementary and she wants to encourage parents to come forward with ideas. She said she would bring a new voice and new energy to the school board.

**Chuck Lee** – He is the incumbent Zone 6 representative and has spent 12 years on the Board. Throughout his 40-year career in education, he said he has maintained a commitment to community service. He came to Salem to help start Blanchett School in 1997. In 2013, he was asked to lead Salem-Keizer's new Career Technical Education Center. Although he is proud of the accomplishments, which have drawn interest from across the country, he believes there is unfinished business and wants to see completion of the agriculture and culinary arts programs at CTEC.

**Dana Schell, Center for Hope and Safety** – He is a supporter of this nonprofit and introduced Jayne Downing, its executive director, to talk about the programs it offers to survivors of domestic violence, sexual assault, stalking and human trafficking. She has been with the nonprofit for 28 of its 46 years. They operate a 24-hour crisis line that can offer assistance in 140 different languages. They operate a 365-day shelter that offers confidential emergency assistance. Victims are met in a safe place and brought to the shelter, which they strive to make homelike, rather than institutional. Everything is provided – food, clothing, hygiene products, etc. There is no time limit for stays. The Center also offers support groups which serve 900+ people. A youth advocate works with the schools to educate students on the dangers of sexting and other issues. Other Center representatives work in state Department of Human Service offices where they can meet confidentially with victims. The Center's downtown drop-in center welcomed 7,500 people

through its doors last year.

New efforts in the works: Safe Paws – They are building kennels to house the pets of victims. The Center has always welcomed service animals but now can handle pets as well.

Hope Plaza – A project to convert the former Greyhound Bus Station site, which is adjacent to the downtown drop-in Center, into a facility providing retail space for businesses on the bottom floor and housing on the upper floors. The businesses will offer job training opportunities and/or services to survivors of domestic and sexual violence. The upper 2 floors will provide 20 units of housing for those served by the Center.

Downing said donations of all kinds are accepted, from furniture to hygiene products to food and clothing. Dana Schell said he is happy to pick up donations. He can be reached at [dana@realtordana.com](mailto:dana@realtordana.com). The Center can be reached at 503-378-1572 or [info@hopeandsafety.org](mailto:info@hopeandsafety.org)

**City updates** – Mayor Cathy Clark attended, along with Councilor Dan Kohler. She reported that Budget Committee meetings had wrapped up last week. Two highlights: The city will increase funding to the Chamber this cycle and continue its support to the Keizer United group. She said the Parks fee continues to deliver a lot of improvements across the city.

She gave a heads up on two major road projects under way or to come. Information on both is on the city and the chamber websites. I-5 is to be repaved between Keizer and Woodburn. Most of the work will be done at night. Also, ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act) sidewalk ramps are being brought up to code on River Road, this in advance of repaving of River Road this summer. A third project will install a right turn lane from Lockhaven into the Gubser neighborhood at 14<sup>th</sup>, just west of Whitaker Middle School.

She reported that gunshots were heard Saturday night from Polk County. Police investigated and found that the shots came from people at a farm, safely target practicing. There was no shooting from the gravel pit, which had caused earlier problems with shots entering West Keizer. She said people do need to call in if they hear shots but don't assume it is from the gravel pit. Senate Bill 1040, which addresses the gravel pit shooting, is still working its way through the Legislature. It will provide some enforcement teeth, although it has been weakened and isn't as much as people wanted, she said. The city is an intervener in the lawsuit brought against the gravel pit owner by the Bauers. A possible settlement is still being negotiated. She also commended West Keizer Neighborhood Association for making a powerful impression in presentations to Polk County Commission regarding the errant gunshots.

In other events, she noted the Iris Fest coming up; construction to start June 6 on the In and Out Burger at Keizer Station; and work under way on the Cascade Outdoor store in the old Roth's building, with a possible opening by August.

**Robert Johnson, Parks Division Manager, Keizer Public Works** – He said improvements are set for Willamette Manor Park. Starting after July 1, workers will be rebuilding the tennis courts. Some repairs were made a few years ago, which developed cracks. Those were repaired but the work did not hold. Plans now are to pour a concrete slab over the 45-year-old asphalt slab and redo the chain link fence.

He said the court currently is marked for tennis, pickle ball and basketball and the plan is to put back what is there. Meeting participants agreed. There was a question about reorienting the basketball hoop, because missed shots now go into the playground area. But he said moving the hoop to the south would mean that people shooting baskets would be looking into the sun most of the day. He said they plan to put a tall fence behind the hoop, which should better contain basketballs. After some discussion, meeting participants agree that the tether ball should stay.

There also was a question about adding lights, but he said that lighting in parks encourages after-hours use. If a path is a travelway from one park to another, they add lighting for safety but otherwise, not.

Another concern raised was about the newly installed asphalt pathways, which have a big dropoff. He said crews are doing some dirt work this week to lessen the dropoff. Fixes were delayed by spring rains, as well as needed work at the Keizer Rapids boat ramp, where full-size trees were pushed in by the high waters earlier this year.

He said the tennis court repair should take about two months. They don't plan to close the park during construction, although they may have to close for a day or two during concrete pouring. Concerns were raised about a July 27<sup>th</sup> swim meet at Holiday Pool, which draws a big crowd. He said they can't change the construction schedule, but could fence off the court area. He said he will discuss it with the contractor.

Another question concerned the recent "No Smoking in Parks" ordinance passed by city council. A neighbor has seen kids smoking in the park and there is no signage. Robert said signs have been printed and they are in the process of installing them throughout the city's parks – signs at each entrance, in English and Spanish.

**Wallace House Park cleanup** – Carol D. mentioned that Matt Lawyer, with Claggett Creek Watershed Council, had approached WKNA about a possible cleanup at Wallace House. She said neighbors did this at Palma Ciega a few years ago and the city would not commit to maintaining it or spraying to keep weed and vines under control. There is little enthusiasm to take on another such cleanup. Another concern is the possibility of encountering needles and other hazardous materials in the lower area of Wallace House where homeless camps have multiplied.

Robert said Parks was approached by some neighbors who wanted to get involved and Claggett Creek is willing to help if everyone's on board. He said about 30 people are needed to do some work in the lower area. The goal is to limb up the trees in that area and cut some underbrush to create more visibility, eliminate hiding places and make it less inviting for homeless campers.

He said Claggett Creek is happy to take the lead. WKNA should contact Matt Lawyer about WKNA's interest and from there to set a date. Robert said a future goal is to improve the pathway so the city can get equipment down there to mow.

## **Reports –**

**WKNA brochures, Dennis Phipps**– He said we are getting 1,000 more printed July 1.

**Senate Bill 1040 update, Rhonda** – She said the bill is in the House Judiciary Committee and there is hope there will be another hearing where people can testify. The deadline is May 10 for hearings. The bill currently only holds the land owner responsible – city and county liability was removed. She shared an email from the Polk County Sheriff, sent after several West Keizer residents called in regarding hearing gunshots on Saturday, May 4. He expressed some frustration that callers mistakenly identified the source of the shots as the gravel pit, which was not the case. Residents were urged to call the non-emergency number at Keizer Police to report shots heard. This avoids an overload for 911 operators. There is no non-emergency number for Polk County. Carol D. thanked Rhonda for tracking this issue, ever since the Sunset Park incident in 2017. WKNA will keep neighbors posted on developments throughout the summer.

**Keizer Rapids Park caretaker** – Rhonda will write a letter of support on behalf of WKNA to be sent to City Council supporting the idea of reinstating a caretaker/host at Keizer Rapids Park.

**Upcoming Meetings: Next WKNA Board meeting** – Thursday, Sept. 5, 7 p.m., Carol Doerfler's home

**Next WKNA General meeting** – Thursday, Sept. 12, 7 p.m., Keizer Community Center. Speaker TBA

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