

West Keizer Neighborhood Association Meeting Minutes Sept. 14, 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 19 attendees, including guest speakers Eric Bandonis, Marion County parole and probation officer, and Mark Callier, Keizer Rotary president. Introductions were made around the room.

Approval of Minutes for May 11, 2017 – Gary called for a motion to approve the minutes as submitted and posted on WKNA's website. Carol Doerfler moved to approve and Rhonda Rich seconded. Motion carried.

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

Speakers – Eric Bandonis, Marion County parole and probation officer

His office is located within the Keizer Police Department. He handles a “general” caseload (drugs, theft, etc.), with other officers assigned to sex offenders, mental health and domestic violence. Case loads currently are relatively low – in the 40s to low 50s. The countywide average is 55 and all show a decrease from last year, with 82 fewer clients August to August. Officers are trying to cut recidivism and stop the crime cycle by working to get clients in education, jobs and a stable living situation. In answer to a question, he said he won't tolerate homelessness within his client base.

He passed on an alert from Keizer Police that car break-ins are ongoing in Keizer. Officers urge everyone to lock their cars and not leave any valuables visible in cars. Anyone with questions on the parole/probation situation can contact him at ebandonis@co.marion.or.us or 503-540-8022.

Mark Callier, Keizer Rotary president –

He reported on a challenge the local group received from Rotary International to plant a tree for each member of the club. The group decided to plant one of each variety of tree (about 70 of them) that is included on the City of Keizer's list of trees recommended for urban planting. The thought was to plant them in Keizer Rapids Park to create an “arboretum” that will in part replace the hazelnut orchard that will go away eventually anyway. The trees will be planted on the park's east side, creating a sort of sound barrier for the neighborhood, since the amphitheater is on the opposite side. Planting will begin November 4. He said not all varieties are currently available and not all plantings will occur at the same time. Irrigation will go in as well and they plan to leave space around the trees to facilitate mowing. In answer to a question, he said there will be signage to explain the project and display a map. Then there will be information at each

tree, but there will not be individual signs for each tree. They will start planting on the south side by the river, east of the walkway, and work their way north, with plantings along both sides of the new pathway to Chemawa.

Matt Lawyer, Parks Board representative, on the new parks fee and need for citizen input –

He gave background on the \$4/month parks support fee approved earlier by Council, set to go into effect in November and collected via the city utility bill. The survey conducted by the Parks Board to gauge support for a fee showed 80% of respondents in favor of a fee at some level and the highest scoring use was maintenance and operations. Launching any new project was far down on the list of “needs,” he said.

He said the city is in uncharted territory because it's never had this kind of funding for parks before (estimated at \$600,000 after funds are allowed to build up for a couple of years). He said maintenance and operations could easily use up the first couple years' funding. Parking lots need probably \$200,000 in repairs. Sports courts need a lot of work. Safety and security issues, including clearing out brush to make riverfront parks less attractive to transients, also loom large. Parks manager Robert Johnson could spend \$60,000 just on tree trimming and removal. Other priorities include restrooms, clearing ivy and removing other invasive species.

The Parks Board is seeking community input on what they most want to see happen in the city's parks once sufficient funds are available to address priorities. The Parks Board's working group is holding a meeting at 6 p.m. Sept. 22 at City Hall to talk about goals for the fee and all are invited to attend to provide input.

Butch Dunn, who lives near Wallace House Park, raised safety issues that have arisen recently in that park, mainly due to transients, and maintenance is a part of that. He said people don't feel safe going into the lower, riverside area of Wallace House because so many transients are camping there. Matt said the Parks Board really needs feedback. He invited people to email him with input: mattlawyer82@yahoo.com. He said the city needs to be responsible with the dollars and they need to have a plan that makes sense.

Rhonda said it's important for WKNA to be represented at the meeting. Butch said he plans to attend and Gary Blake also will attend.

Shirley DeShon re: Sunset Park incident – Shirley reported on a shooting incident Sunday in Sunset Park. People in the park fled when shots were fired from across the river. She said there is a gravel pit on the west side that allows people to target practice and/or shoot skeet. She said this isn't the first time shots have crossed the river and she cited this as a serious parks safety issue. Keizer Police responded quickly and called in Polk County Sheriff's deputies, since the gravel pit is located in Polk County. Officers responded but no charges were filed. She would like the City Attorney to compose a letter to the gravel pit owner re: liability issues before someone is seriously injured or

killed. Rhonda said the City Council is the best venue to address the issue. City Councilor Kim Freeman suggested alerting Police Chief Teague ahead of time so he has time to research the issue, if he isn't already aware of it.

Daryl Richardson re: RVP park at Keizer Rapids – Daryl asked Matt about creating an RV park at Keizer Rapids as a way to help fund city parks. Matt said it was on the survey and came in with the lowest support among new ideas floated. Matt also said an RV park also isn't on the Master Plan and another challenge is the water table in terms of installing proper sewage systems at the park.

Reports –

Delight Street sidewalks – WKNA has pursued this issue for several years, seeing it as a safety issue for kids going to and coming from Cummings School. Carol Doerfler, Art Mauer and Gary Blake met Aug. 28 with Bill Lawyer about the issue. Also attending was Cummings Principal Martina Mangan.

Carol said several plans were discussed, but one hopeful suggestion was installing a path inside the fence that extends from Dearborn down to the school. Children could then access that path and be out of the way of traffic and cars that park on the street side of the fence. Bill said this piece is doable, but the city needs permission from the school district to proceed. Improving pedestrian access along the rest of Delight up to Chemawa would have to be included in another budget cycle.

Kathy Lincoln, a member of Keizer's Traffic Safety, Bikeways, Pedestrian Committee, said there is a lot of money in the newly passed state transportation bill and the hope is that Keizer would put in a request for Safe Routes to School.

Carol said she's pleased to at least have the city's attention and some momentum to get the first piece done. There are good signs the rest will be included in the next budget. Gary thank Carol and Art for their work on the issue.

Keizer City Council liaison, Kim Freeman –

- She read from a text from Councilor Marlene Parsons, who helped organize the Eclipse camping effort at Keizer Rapids Park. Marlene said the event drew people from all across the country and she thanked WKNA for being patient and good neighbors to the visitors.
- She gave a shout out to Matt Lawyer for coordinating the volunteers who removed the wood chips at the Big Toy over the weekend. The chips will be reused
- There are several openings on city committees: three on the Budget Committee; one on Keizer Points of Interest; 3 on Keizer Parks; 3 on the Traffic Safety /Bikeways/Pedestrian Committee; one on the Stormwater Advisory group.
- The city also is seeking youth liaisons.

She said information is on the city website. Applications are due Nov. 8.

The next Adopt-A-Street cleanup is due in November. Kim said she would check with Bill Lawyer about the inmate cleanup crews that having been working periodically on Chemawa. Those efforts have negated the need for the Adopt-A-Street sessions.

coming 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, Oct. 12, 7 p.m. Bill Lawyer, Keizer Public Works manager, will be the speaker.
- Thursday, Nov. 9, 7 p.m., WKNA general meeting. Speaker: Jerry McGee, Keizer historian

Meeting adjourned at 8:45 p.m.