

West Keizer Neighborhood Association General Meeting Minutes
Sept. 10, 2015

Keizer Civic Center
Submitted by Carolyn Homan, WKNA secretary

Call to order – President Rhonda Rich called the meeting to order at 7 p.m. at Keizer Civic Center and welcomed approximately 20 people attending, including guest speaker Fire Chief Jeff Cowan and Keizer Fire Board member Betty Hart and Keizer Fire District budget committee member Colleen Bush. Introductions were made around the room and Rhonda encouraged everyone to sign in.

Approval of Minutes for May 2015 – Ron Freeman moved for approval and Clint Holland seconded. Motion carried.

Budget for 2014-15 – Rhonda reported expenditures of \$890.07 from the \$900 budget, which ended June 30. Expenses included \$89.21 for the website, \$499.45 for brochure stands and yard signs, and \$301.41 for printing. For 2015-16, WKNA asked for and received \$500 from the city, with \$100 budgeted for the web, \$200 for printing and \$200 for a WKNA logo design and more signage.

Presentations:

Bond Measure for Keizer Fire District – Rhonda introduced Chief Cowan to present details of the KFD bond measure that's on the November ballot. KFD is staffed by 30 career firefighters/paramedics and 40 volunteer members. He said the district's strategic plan of 2010 mapped out funding, staffing and equipment needs for the next 5 years. The district received two federal grants for personnel, with 6 more firemen to be on board by January.

The new 20-year bond measure will help the district replace aging equipment. KFD seeks funds for 3 new engines, 5 ambulances, emergency medical equipment such as an EKG monitor, a replacement for KFD's 25-year-old Jaws of Life apparatus, other rescue equipment and communications equipment that will mesh with that of other area police and fire agencies. The measure also would provide funds to refurbish the ladder truck, at a cost of about \$500,000, compared with \$1.7 million for a new truck.

Cowan said the district workload is growing by 6% a year. Fires now comprise less than 2% of the workload, thanks to alarms, smoke detectors and other advances. KFD makes 62 to 64 fire calls a year but 4,100 emergency services calls. The number of emergency medical calls is expected to increase due to new care facilities in Keizer, including the Emerald Pointe expansion and the new Avamere and Bonaventure facilities.

The new bond measure will replace the 20-year measure approved in 1996 to build the KFD headquarters station. That measure will be paid off in February 2016. The 1996 measure started at 20 cents/thousand of assessed value and then dropped, averaging 14 cents/thousand over the 20-year life. The new bond measure will start at 14 cents/thousand, Cowan said. The district looks to raise about \$6.2 million.

Cowan was asked if the district has a back-up plan. He said KFD would come back to voters again because there's no other choice. He also was asked if the fire station is good for another 20 years. He said it was designed as a 30-year facility. The district already plans to remodel the board room into more staff quarters to accommodate the new personnel and interns.

As a KFD Board member, Betty Hart said she could ask for support for the bond measure. She cited the goal of responding to calls within 6 minutes and the need for the equipment that will allow personnel to continue to do the job. One ambulance recently broke down during a call and had to be towed back to the station. With the increase in emergency medical calls, three operating ambulances are needed to support the 24-hours-a-day, 7-days-a-week schedule. Chief Cowan noted that the fire truck responds along with an ambulance because it requires up to 6 personnel to handle something like cardiac arrest.

Chief Cowan said the district is always recruiting volunteers, starting with Explorer Scout programs and then paying tuition for interns who want to pursue a career in firefighting through the training program at Chemeketa Community College. He and Hart both praised the professionalism of the district's volunteers and staff firefighters.

Chief Cowan invited anyone with questions about the Emergency Equipment Bond or any other KFD subject, he is happy to help. He likes to remind people that he works for you. For more information contact Chief Cowan at 503-390-9111.

Keizer Rapids Park Big Toy update -- Ron Freeman reported on the Big Toy dedication held 2 weeks ago, which recognized volunteers. He said use numbers for the play structure are good. Grass has been planted and the next steps include plans to plant some shade trees and add picnic tables, which are being built by a Boy Scout troop.

He said the large community build task force has morphed into a smaller group that will raise money for a pour and play, rubberized surface to replace the wood chips in place now. The group will seek grants to pay for the new surface, which is ADA compliant. The wood chips will be recycled for use elsewhere. He said they hope to piggyback the addition of ADA compliant restrooms with work to change the surface.

He said the Big Toy's Facebook page will be used to sign up volunteers for various upkeep projects that will be necessary going forward. He also urged people to visit the

kiosk at the Big Toy, which recognizes volunteers, and he reminded everyone that commemorative pickets still can be purchased.

Rhonda thanked Ron for being the WKNA representative to the Big Toy project planning process and also thanked Ron and Kim for managing volunteers for the Big Toy build.

West Keizer Parks update – WKNA Parks representative Clint Holland said tennis court resurfacing at Willamette Manor Park is not done but is planned. He said the Parks Advisory Board will meet on Monday for a tour of Keizer parks, starting at KRP. City council members will join the advisory board for the tour, which starts at 6 p.m. The public is invited.

Irrigation is in for the Big Toy grass and irrigation is planned behind the Charge House, he said. He thinks grass will be added from the amphitheater to the new volleyball courts, south of the dog park. He said the new sand volleyball courts will be hosting tournaments. The last KRP concert will be Saturday, Sept. 12.

City Council update – Kim Freeman started with a thank you to Rhonda for her hard work to keep the West Keizer residents informed. She said resurfacing of Keizer streets is nearly complete. In answer to a question as to why the Chemawa road section east of River Road needed repaving, she said that was a question for Bill Lawyer. She urged people to check out the new City of Keizer website, which currently lists some upcoming volunteer opportunities.

Other business – Clint said that the Charge House committee is looking at uses for this property. One idea is to create a glass amphitheater structure that would serve as a facility for Home-Grown Theater. Others favor a less ambitious remodel for the property. He urged anyone with ideas for uses to contact him.

Upcoming meetings and activities – WKNA's quarterly Adopt-A-Street cleanup of Chemawa Road west of River Road is planned for Saturday, Sept. 12, at 10 a.m. The WKNA/Salem Audubon Society birding field trip is planned for Wednesday, Sept. 16, at Keizer Rapids Park. Participants should dress for the weather and meet at the boat ramp parking lot at 7:30 a.m.

The next WKNA board meeting is at 6 p.m. Thursday, Oct. 1, at Rhonda's house. The next WKNA general meeting is 7 p.m. Thursday, Oct. 8. For the October meeting, Rhonda is pursuing a presentation by Keizer's new code enforcement officer, Ben Crosby, along with Deputy Fire Marshal Rod Conway to talk about code enforcement efforts. Rhonda also hopes to have an update on Palma Ciega Park in October.

WKNA Board member Sarah Head asked how new attendees found out about the meeting. Facebook, Rhonda's email and signs all were mentioned. One attendee volunteered to put a sign up on her street to help notify neighbors of meeting times.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 8:25 p.m.