

West Keizer Neighborhood Association General Meeting Minutes

March 14, 2019

Keizer Civic Center

Submitted by Carolyn Homan, WKNA secretary

Call to order – Vice President Carol Phipps called the meeting to order at 7 p.m. and welcomed about 9 attendees. Introductions were made around the room. Guest David Proffitt invited everyone to an informational open house 4-7 p.m. Friday, March 15, hosted by Integrated Supports for Living Inc. at their property at 693 Glynbrook St. N. This is part of IS Living's Therapeutic Community Living Program, focused on supporting the autonomy of brain injury survivors by creating a long-term, therapeutic home environment. Mr. Proffitt, who is the home's Program Manager, said their client will move into the home Monday, March 18. The mission is to create opportunities for clients to live and work in a way that maximizes their independence.

Approval of Minutes for Feb. 14, 2019 – Kim Freeman made a motion to approve the minutes from the Feb. 14 meeting, as submitted and posted on WKNA's website. Dennis Phipps seconded. Motion carried.

Budget for 2018-19, Rhonda – Of the the 2018-19 budget, WKNA has spent \$77 on printing, \$144 for the website (Go Daddy) and \$60 on signage. The \$220 remaining will be spent on sturdier sign stands and/or more brochures. The Board last week approved a request of \$550 for the 2019-20 year, which begins July 1. Of that, \$150 is budgeted for the website fee, \$75 for printing, \$75 for signs and \$250 for brochures. Rhonda said she will submit the request on Monday. The budget request to Budget Committee is to be made April 30 or May 2.

Guest Speaker – Carol introduced Keizer Mayor Cathy Clark to report on the state of the city, following her annual address to the Keizer Chamber earlier in the week. She said she would like to address topics members of the group would like to know more about.

The building request for an In & Out Burger restaurant set for Keizer Station is in to Marion County. Cascade Farm and Outdoor, an affiliate of Bi Mart, will be moving into the old Roth's space in Schoolhouse Square as soon as the space can be made suitable.

Many questions surrounded Keizer's Urban Growth Boundary issues and the possibility of a "divorce" from the shared UGB with Salem. She said it's a complex issue, given the various districts that would be affected, including transit, fire and the school districts. "It's going to be tough," she said, but not acting also will pose difficult issues. The community has to have a conversation about how people want the city to grow. Because of the complexities, incremental changes are likely.

A possible third bridge across the Willamette River to ease traffic congestion to West Salem, especially during commute hours, was brought up. She detailed the process that led up to Salem Council's recent decision not to pursue a third bridge and some of the possibilities moving forward.

She said Keizer Council would like to add to the city's staff in order to keep pace with the growing population but there is no money right now and the city's tax base cannot be raised because of Measure 5, the property tax measure passed in 1990. Keizer's new police and parks fees have allowed the city to add staff there and the "parks are thriving" as a result. A lot of maintenance has been handled and several projects are on tap, including work at the skate park, replacement of the Willamette Manor tennis courts, a new truck for the Parks department and a play structure at Northview Park. The police department added five officers but continues to have retirements. She said they've been fortunate to hire qualified replacements.

She said staffing issues are complicated by the city's long-term unfunded mandates for PERS and the 911 service. The PERS cost is not expected to level off and start declining for 12 more years. The city continues to look for ways to reallocate personnel. They recently moved a person from billing to another function because more and more residents are using autopay for their water bills.

The number one staffing request is for another Code Enforcement officer. Additional help also is needed in legal, she said. City Attorney Shannon Johnson spent a lot of time in the past year dealing with the shooting incidents from across the river in Polk County into Keizer parks and the Bauer home on Rafael. It was “worth it but time-consuming. We need to hire someone who can start learning from him” as part of a succession plan for the department.

If Keizer's UGB can be expanded, the city needs “employment land,” she said, because residential doesn't yield enough money to adequately fund city services. Rezoning could be discussed, as well as raising Keizer's Systems Development Charges, which are historically low. That would decrease Keizer's affordability, but the issue should be discussed along with the results of the major studies being funded including the Buildable Lands, River Road Revitalization and Transportation Growth Management studies.

She also said the “cow pasture” property at Verda between Chemawa and Dearborn is approved for apartments. The project is in the hands of the family and can move forward once they select a developer. The parcel at the Keizer Station entrance where a theater was to go is available for lease and the city is actively seeking a partner.

Rhonda thanked Cathy, City Council, Shannon Johnson and others for all the work that has been done in response to the shooting incidents, including pursuit of legislation in cooperation with Sen. Thatcher and Rep. Post. Rhonda said Kim Thatcher's office had no word yet on a rewrite of the original proposal, which is still in draft, unnumbered form.

Reports –

Annual WKNA Report, Carolyn – This has been prepared and will be presented to Council by WKNA President Carol Doerfler or Vice President Carol Phipps April 1. Rhonda prepared a timeline for the Bauer shooting (copies available at the meeting) as an addendum to the Annual Report.

Delight St. update, Kathy Lincoln – Kathy said Bill is trying to get funding in the budget for a path from Cummings Elementary to Chemawa along the west side of Delight to improve safety for children walking to and from the school. Kathy Lincoln will advocate for the project at the Budget Committee. Rhonda said the Board can discuss writing a letter in support at its April 4 Board meeting, when we should be able to get Carol Doerfler's input.

Kathy also said hiring a Safe Routes to Schools coordinator for the Keizer area is in the works, to be funded by Council of Governments, the school district and others.

Upcoming Events, Carol P. – The Monster Cookie Metric Century Bicycle Ride, sponsored by Salem Bicycle Club, is coming up April 28. She also noted the Iris Fest, which will happen again in mid-May. Kim Freeman noted that the annual City Hall Clean-up will be held this coming Saturday.

Upcoming Meetings:

WKNA Report to City Council – April 1

Next WKNA Board meeting – Thursday, April 4, 7 p.m.

Next WKNA General meeting – Thursday, April 4, 7 p.m., at Keizer Community Center. Speakers will be Galen McAllister, Garten Foundation and a representative from Loren's Sanitation; Britni Davidson-Cruickshank, Salem Electric, with a brief update on an upcoming vote.

Meeting adjourned at 8:30 p.m.