 Waco Community Watch Meeting

Thursday November 3, 2022

6:30 pm

Minutes:

* J. Barrett opened the meeting at 6:30 pm and welcomed all members present. Meeting turnout again was good. We will continue to encourage members to attend the meetings via Facebook and email. Barrett reported that he had again included all the email addresses that were provided by people attending the Block Party on August 27th in a group email announcing the meeting.
* J. Barrett stated that window stickers remain available to members of the community at no cost.
* Barrett asked the members present to pay attention to the Neighborhood Watch signs throughout town and to notify him or a Watch Captain if any are found to be missing or damaged. Signs were placed on all town streets and there are still a few available. At the last meeting it was noted that there isn’t one on the “Waco City Limit” sign as you enter on North Main St. Barrett states he has placed a sign there now.
* J. Barrett reported that the Waco Community Watch Facebook Group page membership continues to grow and is currently has over 100 participants. Participation in sharing of news and crime stories is active on the page. Stories and other information are being shared on the page on a regular basis. Barrett reported that the page continues to get several request to join the page from people from the Waco Texas area. Those request are being referred to a community watch group in Texas. Group members are encouraged to continue to post to the page.
* The email chain group also continues to grow and remains active in sharing of information. Information shared on the Facebook page is also being shared via email. Barrett apologized for not posting more to the email group and promised to be more active.
* J. Barrett presented the November 2022 financial statements for the Community Watch program. To date donations have been received totaling $1,250.15. Expenses (window stickers, signs, the logo, postage supplies, the brochure, etc) total $1,046.07. The current balance is $204.08. The Town of Waco did pick up the cost of the hardware to install the Community Watch signs.
* The meeting with the Washington Elementary staff to discuss their participation in the program has not been set up to date. Flavio Hallais has expressed interest in speaking with the Washington Elementary staff. Barrett will also ask Tracy Chichester to join them. The group will be notified when the meeting is scheduled.
* Barrett said that he would follow up with Burns Middle and Burns High School is still pending.
* Community Watch brochures remain available and members are encouraged to hand out brochures to others in their neighborhoods. Brochures have been placed at the Waco Post office and in other establishments in the community.
* Watch Captains for the program are currently Tracy Chichester who volunteered to serve as the South Main St. Captain. Barrett and Flavio Hallais volunteered to serve as the North Main St. Captain. The names of members in the other parts of town were mentioned for other positions. We will continue to discuss this issue at the next meeting. Anyone interested in volunteering can contact John Barrett, Tracy Chichester or Flavio Hallais.
* Specific Community Watch issues that have been discussed include:
* Identifying street lights that are blocked or partially blocked by tree limbs. This has been taken to the Town Board to be addressed*.* ***(Duke Energy is currently working to cut trees off power lines in Waco and the problem with the trees surrounding street lights may be addressed. Will continue to watch this issue)***
* Illegal dumping of construction waste on Moss St. Will continue to watch. ***(We are continuing to watch this issue. It hasn’t happened but could be an issues on Devenny Rd. at the Duke Energy power station. Need to follow up on this issue)***
* Speeding continues to be a problem on Cherryville Rd., North and South Main St., and on Jess Hord Rd. Barrett will see if he can get the speed trailer from the Sheriff’s Dept. to help with the speeding problem. ***(The speed trailer was placed on Jess Hord Rd. following the last meeting by the Sheriff’s Department per a request from the Mayor.)***
* There have been some post on the Facebook page about loose dogs and cats in town and in the community. Barrett will provide the number to Animal Control to group members. ***(Cleveland County Animal Services number is 704-481-9884 ext # 5)***
* Suspicious vehicles have been reported on the page and members are encouraged to contact the Sheriff’s Department to report these**. *(The non-emergency Sheriff’s Department number is 704-484-4822)***

There were two new concerns that had been brought to the attention of the Community Watch group. It is suspected that there are possibly a homeless man and woman sleeping in the Waco Post Office lobby at night after dark. The Post Master has seen evidence of people being in there at night. This concern was passed on to the Sheriff’s Department and they will be watching this closely.

The other concern is cars pulling to the back of the Post Office at night and possibly doing some illegal activities. This was also passed along to the Sheriff’s Department. Watch members are asked to pay attention to any suspicious activity around the Post Office and to notify the police is they see anything that is out of place.

* Barrett reported that he has spoken with Joe Wybiral, Woodworking/Carpentry from Burns High School about the “Neighborhood Book Library” and “Neighborhood Blessing Box” project. The idea is to have both structures build and placed in the area of the new playground behind the Community Center.

Mr. Wybiryl has said that these projects are definitely something that his classes can do. He said that next semester he will have level 3 classes where groups can focus on group and individual projects. In that class they come up with the plans, find the materials and make the projects. He said that both the Blessing Box and Book Library would fit nicely in that class. Barrett will continue to work with Mr. Wybiryl on the project and keep the group informed.

* At the October meeting Barrett mentioned that the Holiday season was coming up fast and asked if anyone with the Community Watch program wanted to assist in hanging or adding holiday decorations. The group expanded on this discussion and several members of the Watch program offered to assist with hanging of decorations and putting up and decorating trees in the Community Center and Town Hall.

Barrett will follow up with members on dates and times. He did state that the pole mount lights were to be hung on Thursday November 17th by Carl Grigg Electric and that the lights are to be turned on Thanksgiving night.

* Barrett also discussed the “Waco Light’s Up for Christmas” home decorating contest. Letters announcing the contest have been sent to each household in Waco. The Cleveland County Chamber of Commerce Executive Director and her staff will be doing the judging and the home chosen as the “Most Festive Home in Waco” will receive a check for $250.00. More information on this contest will be posted on the town website and social media pages.
* Barrett informed the group that Elite Play Equipment was scheduled to install the playground equipment at the beginning of next week.
* Minutes of the meeting will be completed and shared via Facebook and email to members.
* The next meeting is Thursday December 1st at 6:30 pm. Please attend and bring a friend.
* Meeting adjourned at 7:30 pm.