

West Keizer Neighborhood Association Meeting Minutes

Jan. 12, 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 18 attendees, including guest speaker Bill Lawyer, Keizer Director of Public Works. Introductions were made around the room.

Budget for 2016-17 – Gary reported that \$43.98 had been spent from the \$500 budget. Expenses include paper and printing of new sign inserts for the Adopt-A-Street advertising signs, to note the new 9 a.m. Starting time.

WKNA annual report – Gary announced that he would deliver the association's annual report to City Council on Feb. 6. The report is posted on the WKNA website and comments are welcome. He urged people to attend the meeting.

Budget for 2016-17 – Rhonda said we spent \$43.98 for replacement inserts for the signs advertising the Adopt-A-Street cleanups in order to reflect the new 9 a.m. starting time and also for printer paper.

Approval of Minutes for Nov. 10, 2016 (posted at www.westkizerna.org) – Gary called for approval of the minutes. Davis Dyer moved approval and Tom Homan seconded. Motion carried.

Thank yous to Clint Holland for three years of service on the WKNA Board and to Sarah Head for two years of service on the WKNA Board – Gary presented a certificate of thanks, prepared by Rhonda Rich, to Sarah Head for her contributions to the association board. Gary also presented a certificate of thanks to Clint Holland a bit later in the meeting, upon Clint's arrival.

Election of Board of Directors at January meeting – Gary noted that nominations were open for Board officer positions and director positions of West Keizer Neighborhood Association. There are three officer positions and seven total Board positions. Gary said he was interested in seeking re-election. Sarah Head and Clint Holland both declined to seek re-election.

For the 2017-18 Board, Sarah Head nominated Gary to be president. Carolyn Homan nominated Rhonda Rich as vice president. Rhonda nominated Carolyn as secretary.

For board positions, Carolyn nominated Art Mauer; Carol Phipps nominated her husband, Dennis Phipps; Gary nominated Carol Doerfler. There were no other nominations. There being only one nominee per office and Board seat, Gary asked for a vote of affirmation for the slate put forward. Motion carried.

Guest speaker, Bill Lawyer, Director of Public Works for City of Salem – Gary introduced Bill, who said he had been on the city staff since 1989 and director of the department since 2011. He described the departments five divisions – Water, Stormwater, Streets, Parks and Environmental/Technical. He said the latter is important, but more “behind the scenes.”

Water – Safe drinking water is the single most important thing a city can do. Keizer's water is all groundwater, supplied through 16 wells. As groundwater, it basically needs no treatment, except for a settler to remove some of the manganese and iron. The minerals are what stain fixtures in homes, he said, and it's worse in some areas of the city than others. To cut down on the problem, limit use of bleach, including cutting back on dishwasher detergent, which has a lot of bleach. He said there are products to help, including one called Afresh. He's also been told water softeners can help. Pumice stone will remove the deposits, but also can harm the coating on your fixtures, making staining worse.

He said there will be water main replacement in southeast Keizer this year as part of the city's systematic plan to renew the system so pipes don't fail.

In answer to a question, he said the fibrous residue found in some water heaters again is due to the groundwater minerals, which react with the heat. Flushing water heaters yearly can help avoid this. He said it's especially important in electric water heaters because the heating unit is inside and the residue can cause the unit to fail.

Stormwater – A main project this year will be stormwater system repairs along River Road to deal with some broken pipes in preparation for paving of River Road next year.

The city is in the process of getting its Phase II NPDES (National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System) permit, which they applied for six years ago. NPDES regulates so-called “point sources,” including treated wastewater and stormwater, that discharge pollutants into waters of the United States (i.e., streams rivers, lakes). Officials are saying the permit may come in March. There are big changes with the new permit, he said. The first permits went to individual cities; this time, the Department of Environmental Quality is issuing general permits. It's complicated because different cities face different issues. He said Keizer has been planning for anticipated rules, but they won't be sure until the permit is here and the requirements are definite.

Streets – Major street projects this year including bidding on ADA ramps on Shoreline. They also hope to replace the bridge across Claggett Creek on Dearborn Ave., beginning in June. He said there is still some uncertainty about the timing.

He said they are ready to start installation of sidewalks on Chemawa near Keizer Station, from Lucinda (just past the round-about) to Keizer Station Area C. The goal is to be done by the end of June.

The Keizer Station Boulevard/Transit Center traffic signal is scheduled for August 2018 completion. This project includes another left turn lane east to the freeway for buses turning onto Lockhaven. The median on Keizer Station Boulevard will be removed to facilitate a left turn for buses coming out of the transit center. He said a movie theater is a possibility on the parcel across from the transit center. It's in negotiations but would take a master plan change.

Street resurfacing projects are planned this summer in the Northeast/Gubser area, including Stonehenge, Manzanita (14th to Trail) and McLeod to Woodlawn, Lockhaven (14th to R/R tracks), and Verda (Dearborn to Parkway).

Parks – There are big developments ahead in Parks. The city received a state grant to build permanent bathrooms, install a pour/play surface and build new pathways to the Big Toy. The pathways and play surface will be done this summer, he said, but the bathrooms are delayed by a technical issue.

He said two rows of trees, one row in some areas, will be removed on the east side of KRP to accommodate the new pathway and allow a 25-foot buffer between the path and properties just east of the park. The path will run from Chemawa to the existing path, plus a connection to the Big Toy.

In addition, the Parks Board has worked for a year to create a survey to gauge community support for a fee to support parks maintenance and improvements. The survey is online now and at Facebook and hard copies are available at City Hall. Funding is challenging, he said, but the city is at a point where cuts are going to have to be made. There's no money to replace aging play structures, make

repairs, increase maintenance or other activities. He cited the recent vandalism to the Wallace House play structure. That cost \$3,500 to repair, only some covered by warranty. A bill like that seems small, he said, but the entire budget is \$30,000. With that one repair, there's little left to cover any other emergency that might arise.

Funding options for parks include creating a parks district, which would be a separate taxing district like the fire district. A district can put forward operating levies, but these go to a vote every 5 years and aren't a secure, long-term solution. If people are hired, and the next levy fails, the city faces layoffs, he said.

A fee-based option could be set by City Council, but the preferred option is to put a fee to a public vote. He encouraged everyone to take the survey. There are five options: the status quo or fees of \$2, \$4, \$6 or \$8 per month. If a fee is OK'd, it could be put on the water bill as the most efficient way of collection. But he said that has not been decided.

He encouraged anyone with questions to call him. He said he's hard to get hold of but he does return calls or emails. He will get back to you. Contact him at: LawyerB@keizer.org

Eclipse Plans – Clint Holland briefed the group on plans being made to accommodate campers (tent and RV) at Keizer Rapids Park for four days leading up to the total eclipse on Aug 21, 2017. Keizer is in the center of the total eclipse path and thousands of visitors are expected, he said. Area hotels already are sold out. He said plans include creating 150 tent and RV sites in the area between the two orchard blocks and in the lower open field next to the river. He has planned free concerts at the amphitheater for Friday, Saturday and Monday and a paid concert on Sunday. Extra portable toilets will be brought in and wash stations will be available, but no showers. Plans also are to serve meals at the amphitheater. Other Keizer-area plans include events at Volcanoes Stadium and an Eclipse Tournament planned by Keizer Little League. He said all proceeds will benefit the Parks Foundation and the goal is \$20,000.

Council Liaison report – Roland Herrera sat in for Kim Freeman, who was away. He reported on the council's recent work session with the Parks Board regarding the parks support survey. He said he is a long-time booster of parks and cited the benefits to kids, the ecosystem, clean air and water. He said having good parks to keep kids busy saves on policing, graffiti clean-up, etc., and provides great places for families to recreate and get exercise. He urged everyone to fill out a survey.

The Keizer First Citizen dinner is January 21. He said it's not a "Who's Who" event but a chance to celebrate the community and recognize hard-working citizens who are giving back "under the radar."

Upcoming meetings: The next WKNA general meeting is 7 p.m. Thursday, Feb. 9. There will be a presentation on and general discussion of the proposed Keizer parks fee. Eric Bandonis, Marion County parole and probation officer, also will report.

The next Adopt-A-Street is 9 a.m. Feb. 11.

Meeting adjourned at 8:35 p.m.