

WKNA General Meeting

Sept. 10, 2020

At Keizer Civic Center, 930 Chemawa Road NE, Keizer, OR

Submitted by Carolyn Homan, WKNA Secretary

Call to Order: Carol Doerfler called the meeting to order at 7:10 p.m. and welcomed 14 attendees, including guest speaker Bill Lawyer. Carol noted that City Council Covid protocols would be followed: Masks required if you get up and move around. Masks not required while sitting. Introductions were made.

Approval of minutes – Kathy Lincoln moved to approve the minutes of the Feb. 13 meeting and Art Mauer seconded. Minutes were approved.

2019-20 Budget – Rhonda Rich reported that \$55 had been spent to “wrap” the second donation barrel WKNA is sponsoring to collect food for Keizer Community Food Bank. A location is being sought. The first barrel is located at Copper Creek Mercantile.

Guest speaker: Carol D. introduced the guest speaker Bill Lawyer, Keizer Public Works director, with an update on his department's activities around Keizer. A multi-use pathway from Dearborn to Chemawa is complete and Salem-Keizer School District built a walkway from Dearborn to Cummings School. There still are issues with the walkway's ADA ramp at Dearborn but he said the district will correct it. These two projects have been a priority of his and for WKNA for year to improve safety for children walking to and from Cummings as well as McNary High. He is monitoring the issue of people parking on the multi-use pathway. Once kids are back in school in-person, parking restrictions can be pursued if necessary to ensure kids don't have to walk out into traffic to get around parked cars.

ADA ramps were replaced on River Road this summer and that project went well, as did storm drain replacement at Shoreline and Rafael/Cummings.

For Parks, the city is very happy with the cleanout of the lower area at Wallace House. The contractor had the right equipment and achieved an amazing amount of brush removal, opening up the area so there's no cover for homeless camps. He said the ground is very flat and usable and the river is visible from the upper bank now. He said it will have to be maintained but they will let things grow back to see what issues arise in terms of ongoing maintenance. They plan to plant grass seed this fall and will mow the area in future. He said he had not heard of any plans to plant native shrubs, which had been mentioned to WKNA by Matt Lawyer, who is with Claggett Creek Watershed Council. There are no plans for formal park development in the lower area because it is a flood plain that is often under water in winter.

The major upcoming Parks issue is an update of the Master Plan. Five proposals have been received and a consultant will be selected from among those to coordinate the update. Public input will be sought, including from youth sports organizations, the Chamber, neighborhood associations, citizens and others. With Covid restrictions, input may have to be virtual but he prefers in-person if possible. The update is to be finished by the end of April. The Little League park is one issue. He said he has no interest in operating that park because it's a different type of operation from a typical city park.

Improvements are under way at Claggett Creek Park, including a new play structure.

Plans for next year are on hold until the revenue picture clears. He said Parks and Stormwater are fine but other divisions depend on water fees and water usage is down and the city opted for no rate increase because of Covid. Also gas tax revenues distributed by the state are way down – \$250,000 less in the April-June quarter. The annual total is usually \$2.8 million.

He said plans for street resurfacing are on hold until the revenue picture clears up. There are federal funds for some things – changes to Verda from Dearborn to the Parkway, a realignment of Claxter and switching some stop lights to fiber optics. Those funds have to be spent.

He also said Keizer has offered Keizer Rapids Park as a “last resort” site for placement of evacuees from the forest fires. Concerns were raised about that being a fire hazard for the West Keizer neighborhood. KRP has previously experienced grass fires. He emphasized that the site is a “last resort.”

REPORTS

Keizer Council – Councilor Laura Reid reported that the Master Plan update for Area D at Keizer Station is ready – this is the area owned by the Grand Ronde and Siletz tribes. Some prep work is under way. The Council's main issue recently has been to amend the city charter by eliminating Section 44 which allowed discrimination against people for their sexual orientation. This issue will be on the November ballot and the change has been endorsed by all City councilors and all candidates for seats on the Council. The issue of inclusivity will be on the Sept. 24 Council work session agenda. She said they have been doing homework on how some other cities have handled this.

Recent Council declarations have been made regarding the U.S. Constitution and Emergency Preparedness. Next week has been declared Constitution Week, urging people to read up on this important document that's often cited in debates about various freedoms. As for emergency preparedness, the forest fires have put a spotlight on this issue and she urged people to do a home inventory so you know what you have in case you need to file an insurance claim. Having emergency supplies on hand and a “go” kit are important for everyone.-- water, food, clothing, medicines, important papers are among the items to consider.

As a teacher at McNary, she also gave an update on school happenings and urged people to pay attention to the school website for schedule changes. She said there will be more calls by teachers, as well as home visits this year, to make sure students have what they need.

Parks – Dennis reported good use of the new pickle ball/tennis court at Willamette Manor. Also, the exercise platforms are going in at Wallace House and Keizer Rapids parks.

Parole/Probation – Eric Bandonis, Marion County parole/probation officer, didn't respond to a request for his quarterly report. Carol will contact him for a future meeting. Evangelical church.

Little Free Library – Carol D. said the new library is up, stocked and open again.

DISCUSSION

Traffic, speeding in neighborhoods – Carol D. said the Board has agreed that this is an ongoing issue that needs to be pursued. WKNA will start with the Traffic Safety/Bikeways Pedestrian Committee.

Food donation barrels – Carol D. is seeking a location for the new barrel. Sherwin Williams and Mommy and Maddy's are two possibilities. Food collections have been strong – Dennis said he picked up 190 more pounds recently and the total is over 1,000 pounds.

WKNA newsletter – In light of Covid, the Board talked about a newsletter as an alternative to in-person meetings. Carol Phillips said a quarterly newsletter is a possibility and a plus is that it could be mailed to every household in West Keizer -- 3,200 households – to let people know what we are doing. It's a big cost and a funder is being sought to cover printing and mailing. As of now, WKNA is planning to meet in person again in October but planning will continue for a newsletter in case this option become more necessary. Anyone with ideas of what to include or how to reach young people is invited to contact the Board.

Cummings School Clean-up – Carol D. read an update sent her by Magda Romero, Cummings Principal. She said construction at the school should be done by Sept. 18. The cafeteria has been expanded, among other things. One issue is a support post added because of the construction that blocks part of the Cummings Cougar mural at the school entrance. They are looking at ways to incorporate the post in the

design. Carol D. said she would contact the Keizer Arts Commission and/or McNary's art department to see if they have ideas about how to handle this.

WKNA's annual clean-up did not happen because of Covid restrictions. Discussion centered around whether to do something before school kids come back Nov. 16. Carol P. said she could plant the two pots by the door.

Upcoming meetings – City Council parks tour, 6 p.m., Monday Sept. 14

VCC meeting Sept. 17 canceled

City Council meeting, Monday Sept. 21

Keizer Points of Interest Committee meeting Thursday Sept. 24

City Council Work Session, 6 p.m. Monday, Sept. 28 Topic: Inclusivity Resolution. Some testimony will be taken; email comments can be submitted ahead

WKNA Board meeting – Oct. 5, time/place TBD but Kathy Lincoln offered to hold it at her house.