

## **West Keizer Neighborhood Association Meeting Minutes**

**March 9, 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 19 attendees, including guest speakers Keizer Police Chief John Teague and Keizer Police Community Outreach Specialist Dorothy Diehl. Gary encouraged everyone to sign in and introductions were made around the room.

**Approval of Minutes for Feb. 9, 2017** – Gary called for a motion to approve the minutes as submitted. Art Mauer moved to approve and Dennis Phipps seconded. Motion carried.

**Board opening** – Gary said there is an unfilled opening on the WKNA Board and asked for anyone interested to let the Board know. Attendee Kris Adams announced that she is interested. Rhonda asked if she could attend the April Board meeting and Kris said she could. The Board will vote at that time. Kris also is a member of the Keizer Points of Interest Committee.

**Budget for 2016-17** – Rhonda reported that \$134.03 has been spent from the \$500 budget. The Board has approved spending another \$250 for 500 brochures (WKNA has 100 left), \$30 for more signage and \$50 for miscellaneous printing, for approximate spending of \$465. The new budget cycle starts July 1. The WKNA Board has approved asking for \$500 again for 2017-18, with the same main budget categories: printing, signage and website. Council will hold budget meetings beginning in May. Rhonda also shared, for comparison, budget amounts for the past nine cycles. The largest amounts were \$2,000 in 2009-10 and \$1,500 in 2008-09 and 2007-08. Those years were high because WKNA was mailing post cards to alert membership to meetings. We have now switched to yard signs and social media and budgets have dropped.

### **Presentations –**

**Chief John Teague, Keizer Police Chief:** Gary introduced Chief Teague to discuss policing priorities. The chief said he would avoid presenting a lot of data in favor of overarching themes.

He said the main crime in Oregon, just like – but more so -- than other areas of the country, is property crime. Currently, Keizer has seen a rash of thieves stealing property from cars, especially in the Gubser area and southeast Keizer. The thieves have been focusing on '90s Hondas. Crooks are opportunists, he said, and when people leave items in their cars and leave the doors unlocked, it's an open invitation. He urged everyone to lock their doors.

He said many had anticipated a major increase in crime related to the legalization of marijuana but police did not expect it and have not seen it. There has been an increase in DUI citations, but he said there's no scientific way to identify when a person has smoked too much marijuana. Officers administer the field sobriety test and base an arrest on that. It's the same as using too much Nyquil, he said. You can get arrested for that, too.

Race relations have become acute for police forces across the country, but KPD has very good relations with minorities in Keizer, he said. Chief Teague attends local NAACP meetings regularly. He's also done outreach to the Latino community and said the "hill you climb as a minority" is significant. He said having good relations with minorities is very helpful to KPD.

He is a member of the Oregon Law Enforcement Profiling Task Force and there is a bill coming out to address this issue. Another bill to come would reduce Possession of a Controlled Substance (PCS) from a felony to a misdemeanor. He said he's glad to have been a part of these efforts and is happy

law enforcement was at the table with ACLU and others, calling it a “very collegial” working group.

Regarding the PCS law, he said they deal with lots of “residue” cases, citing an issue arising from programs that distribute free needles to drug users to prevent health issues that arise from use of dirty needles. Then, a person gets stopped by police and they are hit with a felony charge under the current PCS law because they have a needle with residue of a controlled substance. The proposed bill would drop that to a misdemeanor for non-felons, which could make a big difference. Once a person is convicted of a felony, life gets very complicated, he said, affecting a person's chances for employment, housing and other major factors. It's not good to have people get arrested and go to jail. He said KPD is trying to make Oregon and Keizer a better place to live. Other proposed bills, that the chiefs and sheriffs oppose, he added, would completely decriminalize some PCS.

He talked about problems with vagrants moving into empty, foreclosed homes. They have made arrests, even though the only charge was trespass. He said it's a significant problem in Oregon, complicated by the fact that banks that now own the homes are frequently located out of state and don't care about the local problem.

He cited neighborhood associations as good for the city. The new Southeast Keizer Neighborhood Association is a sign of an area that was on a downward trajectory but no more. He said one factor for improvement was new schools that have come in to the area.

He also said there has been talk of forming a police auxiliary, an organization to speak for KPD and be an additional conduit to the public when needed.

Gary praised KPD's response in relation to Palma Ciega Park, saying they have made a difference there just by showing up. Some arrests were made and the word got out, cutting down on problems. Chief Teague said KPD is moving toward evidence-based policing and said studies show that having a policeman appear for just 12 minutes in a high crime area suppresses crime for four hours.

In short, he said, Keizer is a safe place. Recent shootings all have involved drugs or alcohol and people with high-risk lifestyles or a person related to someone with a high-risk lifestyle. And the department has tools to help them work more efficiently. In relation to the recent thefts from cars, KPD's crime analyst found hot spots and times of incidents and officers have made an arrest based on that information.

Officers are trying to do more than just make arrests, he said, they are trying to help people. In many places, traffic tickets are a revenue source. But a \$250 ticket can have a generational effect, he said, representing a major expense that can have ripple effects on other family members.

He also cited the immigration issue. The area has many unlawful immigrants, but these people are raising kids, they have jobs. The immigration issue is an “existential problem” that police don't want to add to, he said.

Turning to the budget, he said KPD “has it good – I won't complain.” But he shared an “Investing in Police Services” informational sheet that shows what the department could do with 12 cents/day, or about \$44 a year, from each dwelling and commercial location: Two night shift patrol officers, one traffic safety officer, one burglary and property crimes detective and one community response unit officer.

He said KPD has 30 property crime investigations going at any one time, which is too many. As a result, every burglary is investigated, but a lot of other property crime is not. If these officers were added, KPD would have 42 total, giving them one officer per thousand population. By comparison,

Connecticut has the most in the U.S. – 2.6 officers/thousand. Oregon has the least at 1.65/thousand.

“We’re not looking for luxury,” he said, adding that with the current urban growth boundary, five more officers would be sufficient for the next 20 years. He said that is the proposal gets to the budget committee, KPD may ask for public testimony.

He then introduced **Dorothy Diehl, KPD's new Community Outreach Specialist** – She joined the department in January and is focusing on crime prevention and other ways to be of service through public outreach. She worked for Keizer Public Works from 2009-15 and did community outreach with them regarding water quality, among other things.

Her position is half-time and she devotes ¼ of her time to monitoring the KPD vehicle fleet. One target for her is to facilitate Neighborhood Watch groups. She's also helping coordinate the department's Blast camps for kids entering grades 3-6, with the aim of connecting law enforcement with kids.

She will be sharing crime prevention tips and help keep the city informed about KPD activities, seeing herself as a liaison between the community and KPD. She's learning all she can about the department, their issues and messages they want to get out and is also meeting with community groups to find out what they need.

She is planning to use Nextdoor.com, Facebook, email, the web and groups in the community to disseminate information. She will do department tours for children's groups, nursing homes and others and is looking for any opportunity to share KPD's messages.

Crimereports.com is a place to go for information about any particular neighborhood, she said. In answer to a question about Nextdoor, she said it will be used to share things like the carjackings trend. Asked about communicating with older residents who might not be computer literate, she said she would like feedback on ways to do that. Senior centers and Neighborhood Watch groups were suggested as possibilities.

Asked whether anyone in KPD overlaps with counselors when it comes to dealing with those with mental health issues, Chief Teague said there is no mental health professional in the building but there are Department of Human Services caseworkers and they have been great to work with. He said KPD is becoming better at not making mental health situations worse.

#### **Other business:**

##### **Keizer City Council liaison, Kim Freeman –**

- She mentioned the parks survey underway and said they are due in by March 15. There have been 1,000 responses so far but the city would like more. She said Council is grappling with the parks/police funding debate as the two biggest budget questions.
- Council will start budget deliberations the first two weeks in May and there will be opportunity for open testimony each night.
- She said council has a new youth councilor and another student serves on the Parks board. She said there are other openings if anyone knows of an interested student.
- Council will hold a work session on March 13 to talk about goals for the year. April 10 is the long-range planning session pre-budget. The Homeless Initiative Task Force will report at a council work session at 5:45 p.m. April 24.
- The annual City Hall clean-up day will be held at 9 am. March 18, rain or shine.

#### **New Business –**

**Willamette Manor tennis courts** – The city is aware of problems with last year's repairs and is in

touch with the company that did the work to handle new repairs.

**Cummings Elementary School beautification** – Carol Doerfler has collected pansies to plant (Egan Gardens has a pansy give-away each spring). Rhonda said anyone who wants to donate plants to let Carol know. Cummings principal Martina Mangan asked to be notified when the planting is scheduled because she would like to involve parents and students in other campus cleanup. Her goal is to get kids to have more ownership to help keep the campus clean. Community Officer Diehl said she also would like to be notified. Rhonda said she would let Carol know.

**40 Ways to Live in a Better Neighborhood** – Rhonda shared copies of this flyer of “fun information,” which the WKNA Board decided to have printed.

**Upcoming meetings:** The next WKNA general meeting is 7 p.m. Thursday, April 13, speaker TBA.

The Monster Cookie bicycle ride, which goes through West Keizer neighborhood, will be April 30.

Colleen Busch, who is on the Salem-Keizer transit board, said March 17 is an “Appreciate a Transportation officer” event. Thank you cards will be available at the transit mall for riders to fill out. She also said Cherriots “Pokemon Go” ad campaign has won a national award.

Colleen also is involved with the new Southeast Keizer Neighborhood Association. She said they will meet Friday, March 17.

Meeting adjourned at 8:30 p.m.