

061520 West Salem Neighborhood Association Meeting Minutes

Monday, June 15, 2020 7:00 PM

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VIRTUAL ZOOM MEETING:

Chair–Kevin Chambers (chambers.kevin@outlook) (503)586-8188

Vice-Chair–Mark Coutis (mark.coutis@gmail.com) (503)991-8431

Secretary–Tammy Goad (txenia70@gmail.com) (559)909-9941

Attendees: 34 attendees

Recording:

Meeting Called to Order by Kevin Chambers at 7:00 PM

AGENDA

Pledge of Allegiance

Introductions

Virginia Stapleton - introduction and listening to hear West Salem information and feedback.

Additions to agenda from the body - none

Approval of minutes from May 18, 2020 - meetings motioned by Mark, seconded. No discussion.

Approved

VOTE to oppose defunding the police and to dedicate additional funding to police resources in West Salem

Discussion:

Some concerns about potentially defunding police and issues with no response to issues in West Salem. Mark Coutis motioned/Bill Goad seconded

Defunding police would put schools and community at risk. Mark mentioned friend visited 7-11 on Saturday night and it was being robbed by multiple persons. Police did not respond to call; 7-11 manager reported many issues (crime in parking lot, etc.).

Keith asked why there is urgency to voting for this motion.

Mark advised our job is to keep Salem safe and with movement across country to defund police along with high cost of new police station, we need safety services for community members and businesses. We want a safe community.

Keith suggests we want to communicate the value of a safe community for West Salem, rather than specifically calling to fund/defund police department. Can we convey a more specific message?

EM supports Keith's suggestion; this gets message across without using specific language around fiscal requirements.

Amendment to change language of voting subject by Keith. Mark agrees. Further discussion;

New verbiage - WSNA supports police and public safety and would like allocation of additional resources

to West Salem.

Jason Staats request stats on crime in West Salem, so we can properly request the right services/dollars for those services based on data. Would absolutely like to see more police presence (as an Edgewater business owner). Jason hasn't seen an increase in crime on Edgewater for the past couple of years.

Kevin would like to leave discussion of police in schools at school board level.

Micki stated this is a good discussion; perhaps pause vote until we receive the city, council and parks reports.

NEW VERBIAGE

West Salem NA supports continuance of Salem police department in West Salem and adjacent areas.

Mark motioned; EM Easterly seconded.

Sara Campos asked if this was a response to homelessness or a larger position for WSNA to take on policing in general. Mark confirmed it is related to policing and services for West Salem.

Steven Van Zelt speaks in opposition to the motion. He would like to see more pre-emptive services to promote prevention of crime rather than addressing symptoms.

Fay speaks in support of motion; we do need more training and support services, but the term "defunding" means less funding to support policing and she feels we do not want to remove these services.

Molly suggests we need to show support for people of color, etc. Kevin advised this was brought up previously (Salem is more "civic minded" historically). Kevin would be happy to form a committee to support this. If someone would like to head a committee to do this, he would be happy to form the committee. New committee is called the inclusivity committee. No member volunteered to chair this committee during the meeting.

Sara opposes motion. Believes defunding police means adding funds to support services other than policing.

Jason opposes motion. Approves of having enforcement and safety in our community, but doesn't think this motion speaks to inclusion and equity for all members of community (people of color, LGBTQ, etc.). Would like WSNA statement to be more specific of task force in neighborhoods, what they would do, how they would be trained.

Paula would like to see more neighbors in attendance before we vote. A statement in support only of the police does not include all the other concerns shared in this meeting.

VOTE: Motion passed 14 for/13 opposed/4 abstained - tie broken by Kevin Chambers in favor of motion

PRESENTATIONS None

Reports:

•Salem Police

None

•City Councilors

Jim Lewis - willing to answer any questions.

City has launched a small business grant program; federal gov't. has opened funding. Have until

WEDNESDAY this week to apply.

There is also mortgage assistance - contact City Manager's office for more information.

City Council meeting is Monday, June 22. New budget vote scheduled for 6/22.

Wallace Road going to start seeing traffic interruption in the fall.

Steve Anderson - question on budget. Would like to hear more details regarding priorities, specifically regarding police and homelessness objectives. Jim advised he would provide this information. Jim said that homelessness is a big priority, but the City is also waiting for support from the State of Oregon.

Virginia - offered to answer any questions

Improve cleanliness of transition over bridge to West Salem

Feel free to email Virginia anytime at electvirginiastapleton@gmail.com

•Land Use - Steve Anderson

Unable to speak at land use (City) hearing; will continue to work to make sure we can speak on these issues at the meetings/hearings

4300 block of Eagle's view - City has asked for comments by Thursday. Subdivision of 39 lots (redevelopment issues); Steve taking comments. There is a huge swale and we are concerned about storm water control. Also issues with right of ways for properties, entrance, etc.

Please submit comments to Land Use team (facebook

page <https://www.facebook.com/groups/1920123584965094/>

Please include Tammy on emails so she can email neighbors and post on facebook page

•Parks - Micki Varney

At board meeting last Thursday, addressing issue of homeless for unsheltered camping in parks. This has been brought up regularly. City is addressing in several ways.

1. Weather getting nicer; going to increase duties of park ranger; proposal going forward to City council so ranger can enforce codes for waste management (littering, etc.), property maintenance (structures, hazards to public safety) and parking (abandoned vehicles, etc.).

Received updated report on homeless in parks; Kevin will post report on Facebook

West Salem primary concern - Wallace Marine Park - camping allowed in natural areas in specific areas. Social services providing service, food, etc. 30 cubic yards of garbage removed from abandoned camp sites. Garbage being removed 3 times per week. Campers are damaging areas by cutting down trees, brush, defecating/urinating, leaving garbage, etc.

Emergency declaration expires on 6/30/20. IT is currently unknown if camping will continue to be allowed after this.

Major goal of the city is to have expanded shelter and low income housing available in October/November 2020.

Paula asked if there is indication of how many people are living at Wallace Marine park

Campers in Wallace and Cascade (not separated) is anywhere from 100-200

Mark asked how safe Wallace Park will be for kids during the summer (referring to needles and other health hazards). Jim advised there are social services out there every day.

•Traffic and Infrastructure Transit - Nick Fortey

What can we do post-pandemic for transit. Drop in auto traffic, more bicycling/walking. How do we encourage this?

How can we improve movement of traffic on the bridge. First conversation productive. Tried to bring up to council meeting, but not allowed to discuss anything not on agenda.

Steve advised congestion task force looked at reducing traffic on bridge (using telecommuting). Now

would be a good time to discuss this again, as many are WFH due to pandemic - this can be done. Jim added that the state is looking to continue the virtual work even after pandemic is over.

•West Salem Business Association

Homeless Committee

Task force met and want to give preliminary report. Have a mandate to not allow parks to be a homeless shelter. Fay wrote a report (will post on Facebook).

On June 6, committee members met to review options to remove homeless from WMP. Plan is to propose to association a plan for the "people to the people". Would like to include folks from the park; unless there is another solution as homeless residence there presents crime and safety issues at the park, along with breakins at homes nearby.

Want to work with agencies already working with the various support orgs to expand use of funding for where/what it is needed.

What kind of fundraising do we need to help with providing other options (food, medical treatment, housing, etc.)?

It is still possible to use existing buildings, providing social distancing, for housing and services.

Arches was given money to house in various hotels and transportation to same.

Seeing humanity of support at the park, but we are not providing solutions but continuing to enable homelessness.

Task force is looking at plan to move homeless before the cold months (especially with COVID-19). Need action before mayor/council defunds the police force.

Need a plan for homeless to leave the park.

Committee offered properties to provide housing, but we hear a lot of reasons properties cannot be used, but not receiving any options that CAN be used.

Kevin asked Fay and Micki to coordinate their efforts in areas that overlap for Parks and Homeless committees.

BACK TO VOTE (see notes with amended language above)

•Edgewater

Market going well. Next one Thursday, 10:30 AM + on 6/19. Blueberry mascots coming this week. Ideas on summer foods and canning. New seafood market vendor this week. Great experience, come on down! Lyle will be there in the AM.

Steve doing weekly podcast. If there are issues you'd like to see, let Edgewater committee know.

I Support Salem Business - first week of July will be sponsoring a simple sticker campaign to generate awareness and support for local businesses. Stickers free to any business; reach out to Edgewater Partners if you would like one.

Lyle Mordhorst will be at market Thursday until noon.

•Glen-Gibson Watershed - Ian

Had an electronic meeting.

1. Council agreed with City to update MOU that watershed council has been responsible for open space behind the fire station on Orchard Heights. Area was originally designated as City owned property for new water tower. Pamphlet going out to neighbors in next few days
2. Subdivision development south of LBH church - group will be engaged to update flood management plan with City

•Chair Announcements

Reached out to city with regards to homeless camp at Wallace Marine. Gretchen at City will be overseeing the transition with City. Kevin will be forming an Inclusive Committee to help with this and develop statement for WSNA. Anyone interested, please email Kevin for inclusion in committee. Keith will chair.

Executive Committee reviewing by-laws for potential changes in wording and to review goals.

•Vice Chair Announcements

Spoke with multiple people at Public Works about bushes blocking OH and other areas. They are short-staffed. If you know of any areas unsafe (traffic wise), let Mark know and he will contact the appropriate people for maintenance.

Cascade Drive closed until September-ish.

Options for bridge are still primary for regional bridge (I5/Zena) instead of onto Edgewater. Largest stumbling block is Marion County land use. Mark having discussions with agencies.

•State Representative Report

Kevin spoke to Rep Evans and his staff - was called into late minute meeting tonight. Will be a special session in the next few weeks regarding justice/police reform and COVID-19.

Lyle Mordhorst

County frustrated regarding pause on Phase 2 reopening. Hoping for this week.

If you travel west on 22 towards coast, there is a police presence monitoring speed for work zone in a 10 mile stretch.

Doaks Ferry towards HWY 22 - Rockin' Rogers (old inn). You can only go right onto 22, no longer a left turn.

503-930-0548 is Lyle's cell phone number.

•State Senator Report

None

New Business

Old Business

None

Meeting adjourned at 8:30 PM