

Highland Neighborhood Association
Meeting Minutes
June 14, 2018

The meeting was called to order by Geoff Darling with a quorum of Board of Directors present. Introductions were made by all and there were 18 neighbors in attendance.

Meeting Minutes from May 10, 2018 –No additions, corrections or deletions to the minutes and they were approved by acclimation.

Police Officer Report – Officer Hibbler stated that there is an influx of homeless persons in the area and for neighbors to make sure to not leave anything out that they do not want stolen. If there are problems with homeless camps etc, it needs to be decided who owns the property first by checking to see whether it is city, state or county. Once that has been established, then the appropriate action can be taken.

Code Enforcement – Coe Enforcement Officer Stephanie Wyle explained what probable cause was and that for code enforcement to deal with a problem, they need to be able to see that actual violation their selves and not just the word of a neighbor. If it can not be seen from the property of the person making the complaint, code enforcement is unable to do anything as they need to see it.

Officer Wyle stated that she currently has 162 new cases and of those 91 have been closed, 12 cars have been towed, and 31 cases are still open. Most of the complaints have been dealing with junk or abandoned vehicles. There is still one case open at 1922 Commercial St. SE which is considered a derelict building. Another case at 2000 Liberty St. N.E. has to do with public nuisance and those owners are being very cooperative.

A neighbor did ask about who was responsible for garbage cleanup around the railroad tracks as they have noticed an increase in garbage being dumped in the area. The answer to that question is dependent on who owns the property. Also, another concern dealt with how many vehicles could be parked on a property and Officer Wyle stated that it is illegal to have a home occupation with junk or abandoned vehicles.

City Councilor Comments – Councilors Cara Kaser and Matt Ausec– Councilor Kaser stated that the last City Council meeting included voting on whether to include the Maple/Winter bikeway speed bumps in the budget and it was approved for this year’s budget.

The fifth meeting of the Downtown Homelessness Task Force was held which had about an hours’ worth of public testimony. The last and final meeting should be held sometime in July and they will be recommending the following issues:

- A. Recommend that more downtown toilets be provided.
- B. Provide storage facilities for those that have appointments etc.
- C. Simplifying the 2-1-1 list of resources so that it is easier for businesses to find resources quicker.
- D. Recommending that the city review codes and ordinances and whether the right tools are available for dealing with issues and how to enforce them.
- E. Exploring a Good Neighbor Policy to include adopting a set of behavioral expectations in the downtown area by all citizens.
- F. Finding ways that the public, private and religious organizations can work better together.

Councilor Kaser stated that several months ago she was part of a conversation that involved the quiet zones involving the railroads. It was explained to her that we can't have a quiet zone if one crossing is within one quarter mile of another crossing. She plans to explore this issue more and see what needs to be done to possibly get a waiver for the quiet zone.

Councilor Ausec stated that there will be another police facility meeting coming up shortly but did not know the date at this time. Also, he wanted to encourage more people to check the city website for any job or volunteer opportunities and encouraged neighbors to become more involved. He also mentioned that there will be another Pedestrian Safety campaign on Broadway and was posted on the city's website. The city wants to educate more people on the rules of the road when it comes to pedestrian crossings.

City of Salem – Water Advisory Update – Steve Powers - Steve Powers with the City of Salem explained that the city currently has water tests results posted on their website for anyone that was interested. He stated that the city is not required to test for toxins but that it has been for some time. They are adding a treatment process that will get the toxins out of the water or at least drop the danger level below the EPA guidelines. They will be adding carbon to the treatment facility which uses a sand filtration process and that it should be operational around the week of June 25th. The water advisory was still in effect as of this meeting. The Oregon Health Advisory did advise people to clean out their water lines to rid them of any lingering toxins.

Neighbor Concerns and Announcements – Issues not on agenda or previously discussed – It was announced, and an invitation was passed on to all that the Tamarac Neighborhood would be having a pot luck so that they could bring their neighbors together and get to know them better. It was suggested that this be done on August 7th during National Night Out and the Neighborhood Association has offered to help with anything needed.

Other Business/Announcements - Geoff Darling and Mary Harp attended a meeting in May that was held by the city for neighborhood association chairs and board members to provide more info about land use and code enforcement. He explained the following priorities that the Code Compliance Department uses when they go out on calls. They are as follows:

- Priority # 1 Response – any complaint that involves an imminent risk to the public such as in-progress criminal offenses and reports of new, or imminently Dangerous Buildings where public safety is at risk. Other calls would include health hazards, derelict buildings, drug lab abatement, fire investigations and dangerous excavations.
- Priority # 2 Response – Any complaint that involves an immediate threat to the livability of the community. These calls would include junk and debris, RV occupancy, housing code violation, pest infestations, abandoned vehicles, multi-unit inspections, and small accumulation garbage.
- Priority # 3 Response – Any complaint that involves a code violation that has been in existence for some time and response would depend upon availability of resources. These would include licensing enforcement, tall grass and weeds, chicken/duck/other animal violations, and licensing inspections.

Other topics of discussion included the Blight and Bright Program which refers to condemned property and the program has twenty-nine steps that need to be followed in the notification to get the property down to ground level. Blight is often defined as the physical decay of a home, neighborhood or city that is caused by neglect and economic distress. There is a list of policy recommendations for local governments aimed at addressing this problem. Blight to Bright Program has a line item in the budget of \$100,000.

The city will look at getting a property and improving on it and will target properties that are on the Properties of Interest on the Dangerous and Derelict list. The goal is to transfer the cost to the property owner and then to use that money to seed the next project.

Also, the city now has a Park Ranger at Minto Brown, Riverfront, Marion Square and Wallace Marine parks and he is assigned to address issues such as with dogs off leash and smoking in parks.

Board Member Elections – Geoff Darling made the following motion:

“To reelect all board members to the positions which they currently hold”.

Motion seconded by Mary Harp and approved by acclamation. The following are the continuing board members:

Geoff Darling – Co-Chairman
Steve Emerson – Co-Chairman
Mary Harp – Secretary
Gary Obery – Board Member – Land Use
Darlene Strozut – Board Member

The board is currently considering combining the Secretary and Treasurer positions into one position and are currently looking at guidelines for the Treasurer position.

Upcoming Events for September 2018 – Sept 22 – Open Streets Salem Celebration – 11 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Meeting was adjourned at 8:22 p.m. and minutes were recorded by Mary Harp.

Next Neighborhood Association Meeting: September 13, 2018 at 7:00 p.m.

REMINDER: Highland Neighborhood Association does not meet during the months of July and August.