

**Highland Neighborhood Association
Meeting Minutes
December 12, 2019**

The meeting was called to order by Co-Chair Geoff Darling at 7:00 p.m. with a quorum of Board of Directors present. Introductions were made by all and there were 16 neighbors in attendance.

Meeting Minutes Approval – Approval of minutes by acclamation with no changes.

Police Officer Report – Officer Hodges was present and stated that people still need to be alert regarding car clouts and once again reminded people to report anything suspicious no matter how minor it may seem. As everyone is aware there have been some issues at the Pine Street Pub and the owners have been very helpful and Salem POP has been communicating on a regular basis and they are working together.

Officer Hodges also stated that most stolen cars are the older ones such as those made in the mid-90's due to the lack of security such as those that are in the newer vehicles. Once again, he reminded people to please not leave their gun in the vehicle. Statistics show that most stolen guns usually end up being used in some type of criminal activity. If you are having packages sent to you it is suggested that you consider having them sent to place with lockers so as not to entice porch pirates.

One neighbor was concerned with the increase in foot traffic at the end of Locust and Cherry and that they noticed most of those people are now going into the storage business rather than on Pine Street etc. Officer Hodges will be contacting the storage facility and talking with them about the concerns.

City Councilor Comments – Councilors Cara Kaser and Matt Ausec – Councilor Kaser was in attendance and Councilor Ausec was not able to attend.

The first item that Councilor Kaser covered was the camping ban. City Council passed a bill banning camping on the public right of way or public property within the City of Salem and it will go into effect on Monday, December 16th. It also includes unattended personal property. The “sit and lie” part of the original ordinance did not pass but transients can still have a blanket to cover themselves but does not allow for any structures to be erected such as tents or cardboard structures.

On Monday, December 9th, City Council directed the city to allocate \$ 200,000.00 to open and maintain warming centers between January 1 and March 30, 2020 every night. It would help people that have no shelter through the wintertime and this should make an additional 140 beds available.

The City of Salem has two “Exclusion Zones”, one located in the downtown part of Salem and the second is located between Portland Road and Silverton Road area. The exclusion zones were designed to crack down on some crimes that were being committed repeatedly such as prostitution, open air drug dealing, and a variety of other crimes. Anyone that is caught in these areas committing the same offense repeatedly can be excluded from the area permanently.

There was a concern about all the RVs and Trailers that are parked throughout neighborhoods and whether the city council will be discussing that. A motion was passed by City Council for city staff to prepare a report or recommendations to allow designated vehicle camping. The only enforcement now is through Code Enforcement and Parking Services.

Vehicles can be in an area for up to 72 hours without moving. This could possibly work if the city can convince private property owners or non-profits to open their parking lots. The one issue with that is the liability they would have to take on and most aren't willing to do it.

There was an Operations Fee vote passed through City Council and it is a separate fee that would help to continue to provide existing emergency, library, park maintenance, social, and other essential services. The flat fee will be collected through City utility bills based on the type of account not based on property value.

City of Salem Police Chief, Jerry Moore and City of Salem, IT Director, Krishna Namburi – Salem Revenue Options – Our community is growing, but the funding isn't enough to keep up. To keep pace, there needs to be a more balanced way to pay for services. Without more funding the city will struggle to provide services that our community has come to expect. The Council has referred a proposed employee-paid payroll tax to the voters in the May 2020 election. The fee will be based on a percentage of total wages and will be paid by all employees in Salem's private and public sectors, with the exception of minimum wage earners. If approved, funds would be available as early as July 2022.

Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) – Lola Hackett – The CERT program, under the auspices of the City of Salem Fire Department, trains community members in basic disaster preparedness and response skills. These classes offer hands-on-training designed to offer students decision-making and practical skills needed to prepare for disasters. These skills can help people safely assist their families, neighbors, and coworkers in the event of an emergency or natural disaster.

There is no cost for the class and the next training sessions are Feb 3 thru Feb 22 and March 11 through April 22, 2020. Due to space limitations, registration is required in advance. To register, contact Lola Hackett at lolahackett@yahoo.com or (503) 566-3697.

A discussion came up about whether the Highland Neighborhood Association Board Members should be mandated to be CERT Certified. The agreement was not a mandate but can be voluntary.

Neighbor Concerns and Announcements – Issues not on agenda or previously discussed – A neighbor had a concern regarding all the questionable vehicles that are being parked and staying around the Salvation Army headquarters. He stated he felt uncomfortable and feels there is too much suspicious activity happening and wanted to know what could be done. It was stated that he should contact Code Enforcement about these issues as well as to contact Officer Hodges for District 2 for assistance or questions and both would lead him in the right direction.

Meeting was adjourned at 8:30 p.m. and minutes were written by Mary Harp.

Next Neighborhood Association Meeting: January 9, 2020 at 7:00 p.m.