

**North Lancaster Neighborhood Association Meeting  
February 2, 2022 at 6:30 PM  
Salem, Oregon & via Zoom**

**1. Call to Order / Introductions**

The meeting was called to order at 6:31PM, followed by introductions of all present (both in-person attendees and those on the Zoom call).

<b>Board Member</b>	<b>Position</b>	<b>Attendance</b>
Deanna Garcia	Chair	Present
Doug Rogers	Vice-Chair	Present
Pamela Blake	Treasurer	Present
Shirlene Gonzalez	Parks Chair	Excused absence
Dennis Will	Land Use Chair	Excused absence
Carl Engstrom	Member at large	Present
Sandi Drumm	Member at large	Absent without excuse
Denise Currey	Member at large	Present
Kim Currey	Member at large	Present

In person: John & Neneeh Forgard, Broc Thorud, Liz Veysey, Linda Stout, Officer Chris Russell  
On Zoom: Councilor Chris Hoy, Trina Coleman, Courtney Knox-Busch, Priscilla, Sergeant Mike Baskett

**2. Approval of Minutes**

Minutes from the September and October meetings were not available for review. Kim motioned, Pamela seconded to approve the December meeting minutes as written. The Board voted unanimously to approve.

**3. Police Report City - Sergeant Baskett from Salem Police Department**

Sergeant Baskett shared some details about the recent toy drive being a success and serving so many children in the community this past holiday season. A recent attempt to cut a catalytic converter out of a training squad car, additional details about his incident weren't audible due to a poor connection on the zoom call. There have been stricter regulations implemented on metal yards prohibiting cash sales for catalytic converters without proof of ownership/receipts.

Community assessment audit & update: an audit was conducted by private firm (Hilliard Hines) on SPD operations. The audit included staffing analysis. SPD is understaffed especially in the area of patrol. Population increase has affected the ratio of officers per 1k residents. The audit recommended adding 27-83 additional officers, community engagement along with patrol and proactive policing. The un-obligated patrol time which includes the community engagement would be achievable with the high end of that staffing number. Violent crimes have shifted officer focus which puts SPD behind the curve on call response. The study says to continue limiting caller response and move to online reporting. It is hard to keep up pace with in-person/phone contact. Currently, there are community response officers (wearing light blue shirts) who are a valuable asset to the department. They respond to non-injury crashes, burglaries and stolen car calls collecting evidence. They are a critical part of service delivery. The Chief is acutely aware of staffing shortage and moving forward with ideas.

Doug asked whether the “defund the police” movement has played a role in the staffing shortages. SPD has high approval rate despite the national issues. This movement is not a factor in staff shortages; however, it did play a small role in morale & support.

Brief discussion about the homeless encampment on Lancaster. It is being “addressed”. Evictions notices have been issued; and some campers have left. Owner and law enforcement to iron out a date to have the campers towed and place barriers to block future vehicles from accessing the lot.

Broc (ELNA) asked if the rise in crime is correlated to the increase of the homeless population. There has been an uptick in crimes specific to this population (i.e. trespasses, disorderly conduct, public indecency, etc. Not necessarily the burglaries or property crimes. The rise in violent crimes, such as shootings, have been more gang related.

Why aren't they being prosecuted, put in jail or prison? Removing criminals from the public is increasingly more difficult due to the continued covid limitations in jails. The Sheriff's Office would like to bring people in, but can't at the rate they could prior to pandemic. The penalty phase is delayed and unfortunately has emboldened their criminality.

Trina - who do we need to reach out to regarding this increase in criminal activity. Now, almost 2 years post-pandemic, what is the worse evil? Risk of covid or Salem citizens being victimized? The decision to house/jail offenders and prosecute them is beyond the control of SPD. Reach out to the Marion County Jail to address concerns about lodging offenders directly with the Jail Commander, Tad Larsen 503-588-1183. Reach out to Marion County Courthouse to direct concerns/complaints about prosecution of criminals with the District Attorney's Office 503-588-5222.

Sergeant Baskett can be reached for additional questions or follow-up on anything discussed this evening by email: [mbaskett@cityofsalem.net](mailto:mbaskett@cityofsalem.net)

#### **4. Code Enforcement - Officer Chris Russell**

Reviewing a report drawn from 8/1/21 - 2/2/22, there have been 51ish vehicle complaints, towing approximately one per day. These are vehicles sitting in excess of 5 days or abandoned/stripped down. Areas like Wolverine & Coral Avenues get daily visits due to complaints about parked RV/trailer along the road sides. There are changes coming - in general across the city, but those changes will take time to implement. Right now is a difficult to tow due to tow yards being at capacity.

John asked about vehicles abandoned on private property. Right now, the private property owner is the one who has to deal with it, so secure your property to avoid vehicles being abandoned.

There are seven active property cases throughout NOLA's boundaries. Currently investigating a home-based occupation, which has some limitations in a residential zone. No more than 1 commercial vehicle allowed for a home-based occupation and no more than 5% of the home can be used for business purposes.

A report was received near Chavez School regarding vehicles blocking driveways. A suggestion was made to paint driveway wings white to give a visual to stop blocking. Officer Russell recommends talking to public works to explore that option.

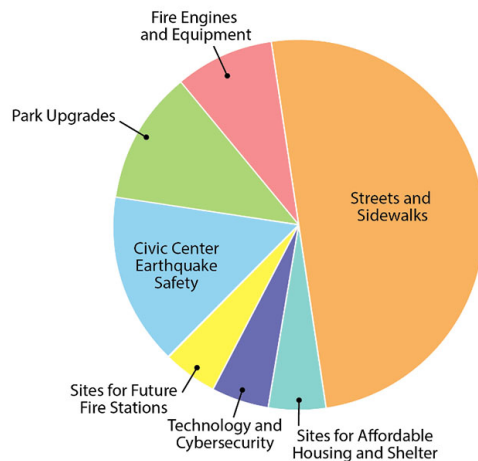
Priscilla asked how can members of the community can make it easier for enforcement regarding homelessness & criminal activity? If code enforcement needs additional resources, they ask for backup from SPD if they can't address it at the moment. Code enforcement's focus is on property and street violation.

Suggestion made to register security cameras with the city's SCRAM program. **REGISTER HERE**

**5. Salem Infrastructure Bond - 2022 November Ballot**  
**Courtney Knox-Busch, Strategic Initiatives Manager**

Salem Community Improvement Bond [WEBPAGE](#) has an active link if you want to submit a project idea. The committee believes they can keep our tax rates consistent as they are today and spend up to \$300 million over the next 10 years. The pie chart shows project areas identified including streets/sidewalks, they are working with the school district to identify areas in need. Next largest project area is Fire engines & equipment \$26m, it's a fixed amount. Park improvements is next shown in green followed by improving civic standards for structures, future fire station including moving chemeketa fire station branch, cybersecurity and affordable housing.

**Salem Community Improvements – Funding Needs**  
*Up to \$300 Million*



Liz asked how will spending \$300 million over 10 years not affect our taxes? It's hard to believe it won't impact us. This is considered a "replacement" levy that will keep the rate constant with 2018-2019 rates by replacing expiring levies already in place.

Could something be written to show what's on the chopping block so we could commit to the same rate? Recommendations will be made by a special committee who determines what from the pool of project ideas (pie chart) goes into the bond.

**6. Councilor Report: Chris Hoy**

Homeless issues - Chris reiterated that tow lots across the city are full. The firm contracted to dispose of these vehicles is at capacity as well. Council is trying to convene at a state/regional level to explore additional options to get these services out of a standstill. When vehicles are

towed, they become unclaimed property and some tow yard operators resell the vehicles at a cheap rate and the abandonment-cycle continues.

Casino - City council has received a lot of emails to encourage city council to hold a meeting. This is not a city issue whether the casino is cited here. It's a federal & state government decision. The Bureau of Indian Affairs has extended the public comment period for the Confederated Tribe of Siletz Indians Salem Casino environmental assessment from February 7 to April 8, 2022.

The recruitment process for city manager is underway - Kristen Rutherford, urban development department director is interim city manager until position is filled.

Chris' council term expires at end of December 2022, he is running for Mayor so our ward will need new representation. His appointment in legislature also expires in December & will not be running due to not living within the new district boundaries. He is just filling in behind Brian Clem, who announced retirement. Chris has introduced a bill - payment in lieu of taxes for police services \$5.1 million out of general fund that we aren't receiving because the state does not pay property taxes within the city. These funds could be reimbursed due to this bill. Tax fairness to spread the burden.

A question was asked about Micro-shelters communities- how are the groups overseeing these sites held accountable? Contract with Church at the Park, a non-profit which oversees two current micro-shelter facilities. There are rules in the managed micro-shelter communities & C@TP does a great job managing. The managed homeless are not the problem, it's the non-managed camps (i.e. fires, drug use) that are drawing negative attention.

Is the city allowing park camping - this was an attempt to get people to spread out during the pandemic (18 months or so). Currently, there is no authorized park camping. Someone asked why Marion square park looks the way it does if park camping is not authorized. Apparently this is being addressed. The best way to deal with encampments is to report immediately and repeatedly on the city's complaint portal [CLICK HERE](#)

## **7. Committee Reports & Board Business**

### **a. Transit - Doug Rogers**

Cherriots redistricting open house on Tuesday, February 8th from 6:00 - 7:00pm.

[MORE INFO HERE](#)

### **b. Traffic - Deanna Garcia - no report**

### **c. Land Use - Dennis Will - no report**

**d. Parks - Shirlene Gonzalez - Friends of Tree planting event @ McKay Park on Saturday, February 5th. [DETAILS HERE](#)**

## **8. Open Forum for any discussion**

*SCAN Resolution - Branch Libraries* - resolution calls for inclusion of two branch libraries in the November 2022 bond measure that the City Council plans to put before the voters. Branches would be in underserved communities like NE/SE Salem. NOLA encouraged to do similar in support. A member of SCAN is willing to come to future meeting if there is interest in that. NOLA would like to have someone from SCAN come out to discuss further.

## **7. Close of Meeting / Adjournment**

Motion to adjourn by Doug, seconded by Denise, unanimous agreement to close the meeting. Adjourned at 8:14 PM.