

Westwood Civic Association General Meeting August 20, 2013
submitted by Karen Strasser, Recording Secretary

Present: I. McNulty, J. McNulty, V. Baumann, B. Weber, J. Corso, M. Jenkins, M. Conda, K. Strasser, J. Kimmet, M. Kuhl, T. Hodges, L. Rich, J. Minor,
Excused: M. Gweyn, T. Minor

Cincinnati Police Department Report – Officer Darrell Beavers

Officer Darrell Beavers gave the CPD report and encouraged all attendees to continue to call in for service. More officers will be sent to the area if there are more calls for service in that area. Calls for service can include something as simple as noise or more seriously, a crime taking place or a crime that has taken place.

(Attendee) A resident of Westwood questioned police response time and Officer Beavers said that the problem is the fact that the police runs are prioritized. Some runs are low priority if they are after the fact.

(Beavers) Officers are out driving around. Officers hang out in certain areas for visibility. D3 has 3 times the amount of radio runs as the other areas. We service 14 different neighborhoods. That is a lot of area.

(Attendee) If an officer is not on a call, and one is in their yard, and one flags the officer down, should the officer stop?

(Beavers) Yes, the officer should stop. A police officer should stop to see what the concern is, even if he/she is going to another run.

(Jenkins) Regarding Next Door, a meeting was set up on 8/28 at 7p.m. with Officer Minella to discuss crime issues that are cropping up.

(Beavers) Next Door is a program very similar to Facebook. Instead of a “like” button it has a “thank” button. There are many people who have no idea what is going on in their own neighborhoods. We need to have some form of communication with our neighbors. People want to be anonymous. 911 has caller ID, but the non violent crime number does not have caller id. Private messages to police officers on Next door, go straight to the neighborhood officers cell phone.

Go to www.Nextdoor.com to sign up.

(Beavers) Next Door will make neighbors aware of crime trends in our neighborhoods.

(Baumann) Is the police department still looking at redistricting?

(Beavers) No they are not. CPD is still kind of looking at changing D3 geographically, but the priority right now is to hire a new Police Chief.

(Westwood resident) Please give an example of call priorities.

(Beavers) If a physical assault is in progress, they immediately go to that run. An immediate run would also be made for a rape or bank robbery. For example, shots fired, with no victims, is a priority 2. If somebody is in your house, this is a priority 1, if you come home and somebody is no longer in your house, it is now priority 7. Alarm drops – CPD responds to auto accidents and does not do an accident report if there is only property damage. We don't determine who is at fault anymore. Insurance companies don't take our word for it so we don't take the time. The police will show up to determine if anyone is injured and determine if the drivers are both valid drivers at which time the drivers will exchange information. If an alarm goes off in a home, we will not respond. CPD will respond if multiple drops are happening or multiple motion detectors are being set off. Thirty minutes is the standard response time for an alarm sounding. A very loud audible alarm is your best line of defense because, if nothing else, your neighbors will go there to investigate a loud audible alarm.

(Sharon Lewis) We had a problem with a van in our neighborhood for two weeks. The responding officer was polite and came and spoke to our neighbors and was very, very kind.

(Beavers) Please write a letter to the City for the officer. He will get a commendation. Officer Seta is that officer.

(Sharon Lewis) Our street wanted to commend the officers in general because of extra efforts from the CPD.

(Beavers) The Captain's Impact Team is now in place with a few officers set aside to go out and be proactive.

(Weber) Last month we prioritized our safety concerns to City council. Please let City Hall know that we need help in our neighborhood.

(Beavers) If they just reallocate officers, it would really help Westwood.

(Kuhl) At 2376 Harrison Ave, for the past month, there has been a daily yard sale. It is a cottage business. To whom do I report this activity?

(Beavers) I will look into this.

Fire Report – Captain Freel, Engine 35

Our firehouse is the busiest engine company in the City, with last month being the busiest month of the year. Effective 8/27/13, if you have rental property and

own less than 12 units, the new photo electric smoke detectors are now required. This will alert occupants to a fire more quickly.

(Conda) We will put these rules on the WCA website so that landlords can look up the information.

(Freel) Tenants must be responsible to keep working batteries in their smoke alarms.

(Freel) There are only 12 ambulances for the entire City. We assess the situation and if the patient doesn't need to go to the hospital, we don't take them. Call takers prioritize based on the severity of the call and it is determined whether or not to send just the engine or the engine and the ambulance.

Captain Freel can be emailed at randal.freel2@cincinnati-oh.gov

Port Authority

Guests Laura Brunner, Port Authority CEO and Julie Banner, Port Authority Development Associate

Discussion led by Laura Brunner -

(Brunner) A decision has been made to have all of the neighborhood parking meter hours stop at 6p.m. based on a number of conversations with many residents of the City. We are an economic development organization with five Board members appointed by the City and five by the County. We want to increase the number of residents in the county. We want neighborhoods to be thriving and we want people moving to the City. We have entered into a lease with the City. We are a steward 30 years for the meters and 50 years for the garages. The rate decisions are all made locally, Certain things can't change unless the City manager signs off. Included in this is increasing rates more than 3%.

(Brunner) Rates in the neighborhood are going to 75 cents per hour. It will take 30 years for the rate to get to \$2.00 with downtown rates staying the same. The plan originally proposed has hours til 9p.m. Now, neighborhood meter hours and Over the Rhine meter hours will end at 6p.m. People will be ticketed enough that they put money into the meters. We don't want to be nuisance ticketers. Right now, meters are paid for 29% of the time. Meters are used 60-70% of the time. The number of enforcement personell has decreased. People are less likely to put money in their meter if they won't be ticketed. We are going to increase the ticketing enough that the paid utilization goes up. Parking garages downtown are not in good shape. We are going to keep the garages in good shape. The profit from the system will stay here. The city will make more money increasing the meter hours downtown. It is good to have meter revenue downtown where our downtown is busy. We will get more people to pay for their meters. The city

gets everything back in better condition than what the conditions are now. The plan is to invest 98 million dollars in the meters and in the garages. The Port Authority has fought hard to make sure that we can be flexible in meeting individual neighborhood needs. Many businesses were concerned. We can make changes over time. If you get a ticket and don't pay it, right now the City can tow your car if you have three unpaid tickets. The car will be booted if you have two or more tickets. There are parts of downtown and Over the Rhine where the meters will stop at 6p.m. to allow people at sporting events and those who live downtown to park, etc. Currently, the ten minute meters are only downtown. We will be looking to strategically place more of those meters downtown. The current ticket price is \$45.00. That price is set by City Council. A schedule has been set for over the next 10 years. The state limits say that the ticket fine can't go over \$100.00.

(Brunner) People are worried that there will be meters places where there are no meters. We have no plans to just put up extra meters. There are many broken meters. There are channels through the department of transportation for a neighborhood if a neighborhood wants meters or additional meters. We will not be managing the meters in Cheviot. Whether or not a valet company gets to set up a valet stand has to go to a Board. This Valet Board will determine the fees and number of spaces associated with this. Presently, 50% of the meters in the City are broken. Xerox will be able to repair broken meter in 5 hours. The expense of repairing the meters is built into the budget already.

(Dina Hanks) Will you have the authority to determine if there is a handicap meter, 30 or 60 minute meter, etc.

(Brunner) Downtown at 5p.m., one can pay until 9p.m. paying extended time after 5p.m. to go to the ballgame, etc. We are also responsible for handicapped meters. This is in ongoing review.

(Dina Hanks) How heavy are the boots? Can a person lift the boot and/or remove the boot.

(Brunner) That is a good point and we will look into this. There will also be an app for smart phones to pay. One will get a tex message and will be able to add time up to 2 hours. Meter patrons can't add more than 2 hours.

(Kuhl) Since you are going to get 27 million dollars from this, for what is the money going to be used?

(Brunner) Whether or not we get money up front, City Council is going to vote on how money will be allocated. How the City is going to spend the 19 million is up to the City.

(Sharon Lewis) How much will parking be per hour downtown?

(Brunner) \$2.00 per hour downtown and the price will stay that way. Additionally, good old fashioned coins will still be accepted.

Liz Kisell, Westwood Historical Society

We encourage everyone to come and use a coupon for Fridays on Thursday, 8/12 and WHS will get up to 20%.

Werkastle/Eugenie “WE Campaign” - Shawn Hennessey, resident

We are bottling this WE Campaign for other streets to model. We are losing our cops and we need to help ourselves. Eugenie is a great little street. We are asking to close off the street at Lafeuille. This would be a loop with an entry point at Werkastle and an entry point at Eugenie. We see constant drug activity on these streets. With this closure, crime will immediately be reduced 40% and more awareness will be created improving outlying areas, as well. The cul de sac/ loop image will raise property values. The numbers of cars on our street have quadrupled in recent years with cars coming down our street at 40,50, 60 mph.

In the past few years, 6-8 urban professionals have moved to our street. If they don't feel that they are getting support from the police and the community, they may not stay.

(Joe Corso) How does this work for the Fire Department?

(Hennessey) We don't see the Fire Department very much through there.

(I. McNulty) It has been an open street forever. About ten years ago, representative from the street came here to ask this Board for the nod and the whole board said no.

(Hennessey) We are begging the City to help us.

(Hodges) I live near you. I don't look at this as making where I live worse. I look at this as taking away a place that really should not be a cut through anyway. If this is going to make this area stronger, there is lots to be said that they have almost 100% community involvement here. I don't see a reason why these streets need to be a cut through. I support this initiative.

(Resident of Eugenie) This is a safety issue too. We are having this problem in our neighborhood and we are doing something about it. If you had the same problem in your neighborhood, you would do something about it.

(I. McNulty) On my street, they wanted to do something like this ten years ago and we could not get everyone to agree to it. What if all of the streets want to be closed off? There is lots of crime on cul de sac streets.

(Jenkins) What percentage of the streets immediately being affected are supportive?

(Hennessey) 98% supportive.

(Jenkins) Regarding public safety approaches that have been taken so far, what are the incremental steps that you have taken to date?

(Shawn) Over four months, I haven't seen a difference, but the WE campaign has created a great bond in our neighborhood.

(Bruce ? From COPPS) I understand that the property value will increase once the streets become a loop through. The people on LaFuille are stake holders because our property values will go down. Nobody will want to buy a house looking at a guard rail.

(Shawn) The WE campaign is an initiative that we are taking out relating to unification on streets teaching streets how to fend on their own.

(Kimmett) We will take this under advisement for next month's steering meeting.

Westwood Coalition Report – Mary Jenkins

I am one of WCA representative to the Westwood Coalition. We are coordinating a series of public meetings. The next meeting is this Thursday, 8/22. We will be reporting on findings from the last meeting and then diving into formed based codes and its applications for the revitalization of the Business District.

The Coalition website is www.revitalizewestwood.com.

(Kimmett) The MSD will be here at the September general meeting on 9/17 to discuss the Lick Run Water Project

(Dina Hanks) Please let me know if you need the auditorium.

WestwoodTown Hall Report – Dina Hanks

I will be out part of September for knee surgery.
Registration starts on Thursday for all of our programs.

Happenings at Westwood Town Hall include the following:

- Girls on the Run along with other great programs will be offered.
- Irish Dance classes begin on Monday afternoons.
- Spotlight Productions has changed their name to Queen City Productions.

- “Camp In” will be the first Friday in October for ages 10 – 14.
- November 1st we will host the Haunted Building Tour.
- We will host a holiday event the first Friday in December.

WCA Media Policy

(Kimmet) A press and media policy has been proposed by a few members of the Board. I spoke to a few Public Information Officers that I know.

Motion by Michelle Conda that we adopt a proposed media policy, seconded by Joe Corso. Discussion followed:

(Corso) Any place that I have ever worked has had a strict media policy.

(Weber) I will talk to the media as a Westwood resident.

(Weber) Some of us are contacted by the media. Even if we tell the media and press that we are not there as a WCA, but rather a private resident of Westwood, we can't always control what is said by the press and media.

(Jenkins) How we interact with the media when we are talking to them about a Westwood situation needs to have a guide. We need guidelines in place so that every Board member knows what their guidelines should be.

Michelle Conda withdrew her motion.

The meeting was adjourned by Joel Kimmet