

Westwood Civic General Meeting Minutes February 18, 2014
submitted by Karen Strasser, Recording Secretary

Present; Joe Corso, Melva Gweyn, Karen Strasser, Mary Kuhl, Michelle Conda, Becky Weber, Joel Kimmet, Mary Jenkins, Leslie Rich, Valerie Baumann, Tom Hodges, Tom Minor, Jim McNulty, Irene McNulty

Excused: Jill Minor

Police Report

CPD report given by Officer Rich Minella. He provided a D3 Newsletter and an arrest and crime report, announced the Tire Amnesty Program and discussed RENEW – Regional Narcotic Enforcement Unit. This unit recently seized 156 pot plants (30 lbs) on McKinley. RENEW also recently executed a search warrant on Cavanaugh. Other investigations are ongoing on McKinley.

(Weber) Good to hear that RENEW did something. The neighbors have been giving lots of information regarding drug activity on the street.

Contact information for Officer Minella: 513-263-8385

Richminella@cincinnati-oh.gov

(Minella) Our new captain, Dan Gerrard, is selecting neighborhoods to target and Westwood is number one on his list. He will concentrate on the corridor of Harrison Avenue. He is very numbers driven and will focus efforts in Westwood once the weather breaks.

NSP - Joel Kimmet

Tonight is the annual NSP vote.

NSP has been around since the late 80's to help Civic Associations with their projects. Certain projects can be NSP funded. There is a maximum of \$3000 that can be used for the newsletter and the process is reimbursement driven. It always runs two or three months behind. Tshirts, projects at the community gardens, Welcome to Westwood sign, etc. all are done with NSP dollars. We get a total of \$5000.00. The newsletter can only be reimbursed for a maximum of \$3000.00. The newsletter costs us about \$4500.00 and this includes printing, postage and mailing.

We are taking nominations this evening for our proposal.

I would propose funding the newsletter for \$3000.00, \$1000.00 for the Westwood Community Gardens and \$1000.00 for the Neighborhood Improvement Category.

(Conda) Can any of the money be kept over for the next year?

(Kimmet) No. Fiscal year goes August 30.

(Baumann) We usually earmark \$500.00 for Town Hall grounds.

(Residen) Can we save money by opting to receive the newsletter electronically?

(Kimmet) That is a discussion that this Board needs to have. Historically we have mailed the WCA newsletter.

(Kuhl) There is grant money available for the WCG so I won't vote for the \$1000.00.

(Weber) We bring in about \$1200.00 per year in advertising for the newsletter. We've had many people voice their concern about those in our community that don't have computers.

(Kimmet) We found the retaining wall, shed, buying dirt, building beds, etc. at the WCG to be very expensive. WCA is the main sponsor for the WCG and we did not ask WCA for money in 2013. There are still projects there that require construction. We won't be coming back year after year asking for money for the gardens.

(Baumann) Is there a plan to put up a gazebo at the WCG?

(Jenkins) We would look for a gift of money for the gazebo.

(Kuhl) I'm not against or for the gardens. I believe that Westwood Town Hall is the heart of our neighborhood.

(Kimmet) I have contacted a City official regarding the land that a gentleman wants to sell us for \$1.00 for community garden space and she is checking to see if the insurance would be paid. We are one of the first Community Councils to go down this road.

(Peg Rhein) One of the great things is that the Cincinnati Parks owns the Town Hall property. There is not a budget for plants for Town Hall at the Park Board. Whenever there is a show at Krohn and there are leftover plants, etc, they are given to us. I would rather see the WCG get the NSP funds because this is such a positive thing for Westwood. I would be in favor of giving the WCG \$1000.00 from the NSP funds.

(Kimmet)

Another Proposal –

Reduce newsletter to 1500.00, WCG 1000.00, Neighborhood improvements \$2500.00

(Resident) Is there a florist or nursery in Westwood that we could approach about flower pot donations?

(I. McNulty) Give Spring Grove a call and check on free plants that they give away. Between Keep Cincinnati Beautiful, Hamilton County Parks and Environmental Services, thousands of dollars are given away. Government agencies give away lots of money to neighborhoods.

A discussion followed about focusing the location of pots in the Business District only and getting businesses to sponsor the watering of the pots.

(Sess) The City wants \$400.00 to handle the pots.

(J. McNulty) Is our net worth going up or down? It used to hang around \$20,000.

(Baumann) It has been going down.

(Kimmet) It has averaged about \$14,000 for the past five years.

A suggestion could be:

\$1500 for the newsletter

\$2500 for neighborhood improvement

pots, flowers, signs, tshirts, banners

\$1000 for the WCG

Motion by John Sess, seconded by Irene McNulty that \$2500.00 of NSP funds be used for the newsletter and \$2500.00 of NSP funds be used for neighborhood improvements.

Discussion followed:

(Kimmet) There is a process whereby up to \$1000.00 in funds can be moved from one category to another. The City will work with us if we run short in one category or another.

Motion restated:

**NSP 2014 categories Newsletter \$2500.00 and Neighborhood Improvement Fund \$2500.00 which will include pots, flowers, flags, gardens and banners
47 in favor
motion passed**

Motion by John Sess, seconded by Mary Jenkins that 1000.00 from the Neighborhood Improvement NSP fund, would go to the Westwood Community Garden.

(Baumann) Won't the plots at the Gardens have to be rebuilt at some point in time?

(Steward Rhein) 15 years is the approximate life of the raised beds.

(J. McNulty) We have the flexibility to use the money for the Garden if the Garden needs the money.

Motion withdrawn because John Sess is not a Board member.

Westwood Civic Association Membership List – Leslie Rich

268 households are members of WCA.

26 lapsed households – there is a 90 grace period per our constitution.

Memberships shall consist of two classes – a few of the applications are not at all in proximity. We need to define proximity.

(Baumann) My Father lived in Green Township and he was a member of WCA for several years.

(Resident) \$10.00 is per household. Five members in a house get five votes. This seems inequitable.

Motion by Mary Jenkins to interpret the Constitution, Title 3, article 1 mention of vicinity to mean communities immediately adjacent to Westwood. Seconded by Joe Corso.

Discussion followed with various interpretations of the meaning of the word “vicinity.”

(Jenkins) With regard to voting on board members and keeping in mind that a member in good standing can run for the board, it seems very important that we interpret the word “vicinity” as people who are close to Westwood.

(Jenkins) Our Constitution does not include property owners. It is highly unusual to have language like this in a constitution. It is far more common for a map to be provided.

(Strasser) How many households are in question?

(Rich) 4 households

(Jenkins) “From this date forward” added to the motion.

The question was called by Irene McNulty

Motion failed 9 to 3 with 1 abstention

No - 9

Jim mcnulty

Irene McNulty

Valerie Baumann

Becky Weber

Michelle Conda

Mary Kuhl

Tom Hodges

Tom Minor
Melva Gweyn

Yes- 3
Mary Jenkins
Karen Strasser
Leslie Rich

abstain Joe Corso

Joe Corso – Election Committee Final report

- The membership secretary and treasurer will give the election committee a verified membership list.
- Each adult member will vote for up to 5 candidates.
- Each individual ballot will be put into a ballot envelope.
- Each envelope will be signed.
- Do not sign the ballot.
- All voters will sign the envelopes so that we don't have ballot box stuffing.
- We will compare the names on the envelope to the membership list.
- Your vote will be confidential.
- There will be a PO box to mail ballots – probably at the Dalton Street Post Office
- The ballots will be taken out of the PO Box with the League of Women Voters counting and Tellers from the WCA board present.
- LWV will be given all of the materials. LWV will then assemble, stuff and mail the ballots.

Motion by Joe Corso to approve \$700.00 for the election process, seconded by Irene McNulty. This will include the process described above and copying and postage.

All in favor

Tellers may examine the election materials at any time during this process including just before they are given to the LWV for the ballot mailing.

Motion to adjourn by Valerie Baumann, seconded by Joe Corso.

