

Westwood Civic Association
General Meeting Minutes
May 20, 2014

Attendees: Jim McNulty, Irene McNulty, Becky Weber, Karen Strasser, Michelle Conda, Joe Corso, Mary Kuhl, Mary Jenkins, Emily Miller, Shawntee Stallworth Schramm, Melva Gweyn, Valerie Baumann, Ken Tarvin, Westwood students and their families, with approximately 50 residents in attendance
Excused: Joel Kimmet, Leslie Rich

J. McNulty called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m. and led attendees in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Police Report

Officers Neudigate, Sierra, and Dawson presented the police report on behalf of District 3. They noted that violent crimes are down 10% district-wide year-to-date. While there has been an uptick in violent crime in the past few weeks, it is down significantly from the prior year. Strategies to combat it include deploying officers into high crime areas and extra visibility. Several recent arrests for breaking and entering in the past few weeks have included nine juvenile arrests. The police representatives noted that crimes pick up in warmer weather, so they encouraged attendees to start block watches, keep reports, hold front yard fiestas, keep up the good work, and get involved in Citizens on Patrol and in the local community council. The police officers responded to a number of attendee questions:

Q: What happens to suspects after they're arrested?

A: An arraignment date is set, followed by a court date, hopefully conviction, and jail time.

Q: What should people do about door-to-door solicitation and requests for help or money?

A: If you did not call a company, say no and shut your door, don't feel intimidated; there are many scams. Make sure your back door is locked, windows are shut and locked, and be cognizant of risks.

Q: We have been trying to get patrols on our street, Hanna, given speeding on residential streets.

A: Give details to Officer Dawson

Q: Are District 3 police on NextDoor?

A: Yes, but please contact us directly. Next Door is for neighbors communicating with neighbors.

Q: If a video is taken of suspicious action, is there anything you can do about it?

A: For minor misdemeanors, no, typically only for major issues.

Q: There is an ongoing Harrison Ave yard sale around the 2300 block.

A. Police will talk to the property owner again.

Fire Department

No report

Citizens on Patrol

Ron Rothhaus, civilian coordinator of Westwood COPP, noted that there are 30,000 people in Westwood with 20 people involved currently in COPP. He remarked that COPP and citizen engagement is very effective but more participants are needed as eyes and ears for police and helping neighbors. He encouraged anyone interested to email westwoodcop@aol.com. J. McNulty noted that at the June general meeting, Police Captain Gerard will engage in a more lengthy police discussion.

Recreation Center at Westwood Town Hall

Andrea McCarthy, community center director, highlighted the July 19 Giant Yard Sale at Town Hall and pointed out summer program brochures. Summer day camp is full, but there are lots of other activities.

Student of the Year Ceremony

J. McNulty introduced Mayor John Cranley as a friend of Westwood to serve as Master of Ceremonies. Mayor Cranley noted his excitement about Madcap Puppets and Westwood Square and went on to describe his experience with youth theater and the theater tradition at Town Hall. He commented on plans for a May 21 press conference tomorrow about police overtime and crime reduction, the hire of 23 new officers, lateral hires with 60 more in the winter, and working with CIRV to use evidence-based model. Next, Mayor Cranley commented on his experience with bad landlord issues in Price Hill as a concern for long term residents who are the fabric of community. The Mayor said that help is on the way; that the City intends to keep fighting and making a difference with code enforcement, litter patrol, police on the street. He remarked that COPP are volunteers who make our neighborhood safer and cleaner, and that government can't do everything.

Next, Mayor Cranley turned his attention to the student awards, commenting on the students' spirit, their community service activity, and the leadership they will show in the future. He said that volunteerism is an American trait, a defining positive element of our American character. He concluded by saying, "You are students who go above and beyond. As your mayor, I'm proud of you." The Mayor and WCA board member K. Strasser then presented the awards. The meeting was in recess briefly for photos of student award recipients.

Recipients of the 2014 WCA Wayne Brickman Student Leadership Awards:

Taylor Preston (Gilbert A. Dater High School), Marin Berlon (St. Catharine of Siena), Patricia Cavanaugh (Mother of Mercy High School), Keyshone Gardner (Midway School), Zachery Cothron (Westwood Elementary School), Jana Twitty (Gamble Montessori High School), Sierra Soward (Dater Montessori), and Elon Coleman (Western Hills University High School).

Bridgetown Beer Works

Following the recess, J. McNulty called the meeting back to order and introduced Jim Gunnarson, who hopes to do something for the community and identify a location for a brewery. Mr. Gunnarson noted that he is working with KS DeSigns and Jeff Baker on plans for a farmers market and a brewery, given the revitalization of the business district. He anticipates 15,000 people per year for the brewery alone and plans to give back 5% to area charitable organizations. Mr. Gunnarson noted that he wants to tie his plans to the area's revitalization, focus on building renovation, and to get it up to code for his intended uses. He thinks that the renovation, permitting, and legal issues will probably take six months and up to \$175,000 for the brewery and up to \$350,000 for the whole effort. He is also working with the City of Cincinnati Trade & Development department and with WestCURC. J. McNulty commented that it is an exciting concept and asked attendees to help create buzz.

Welcome Home to Westwood

J. McNulty discussed a potential realtor event that WCA is considering holding, to promote Westwood housing stock and to bring attention city-wide to Westwood. He commented on low prices, quality houses, disincentives for potential buyers, and misinformation. He said that WCA is working to change the perception of Westwood. An attendee noted that the City's public services are limited, and gateways are littered. A board member suggested that residents contact city council members and report issues through 5916000.com. There was interest in more consequences for littering, more Sheriff's work details, and more citizen participation in organized litter pick up. J. McNulty noted that the realtor event would probably happen on a Sunday, with an event at Town Hall to showcase Westwood market for prospective buyers and an earlier bus tour for realtors. He said that WCA will need ambassadors and community involvement.

Westwood Town Hall Clean Up Event and Annual Funds

During a recent grounds clean up at Town Hall, there was a cost of \$30 to keep Town Hall open with staff. MOTION by I. McNulty to reimburse the Recreation Center \$30 for staffing during the grounds clean up.

SECONDED by V. Baumann
PASSED unanimously

Peg Rhein, volunteer coordinator of the grounds beautification, spoke to the ongoing need for material for the Westwood Town Hall grounds and a volunteer effort by residents in cooperation with the Parks department. J. McNulty noted that this is a significant effort by Peg Rhein and other community volunteers. MOTION by M. Conda to allot up to \$400 for planting materials for Westwood Town Hall grounds
SECONDED by K. Tarvin
PASSED unanimously

Community Priority Requests Meeting

V. Baumann reported that she and M. Jenkins received paperwork and information about the CPR application process. Board members have been forwarded the information, which will be discussed soon.

June 17 Event to Honor LaRosa's Founder Buddy LaRosa

J. McNulty announced a June 17 WCA event to honor Buddy LaRosa for 60 years of business in Westwood. There will be a proclamation and presentation. MOTION by M. Kuhl to allot not more than \$100 for a plaque and related material
SECONDED by M. Conda
PASSED unanimously

MOTION by K. Strasser to allot up to an additional \$200 on food, décor, and related material for the event
SECONDED by I. McNulty
PASSED unanimously

US Market Discussion

WCA previously opposed the liquor license transfer for the US Market at Harrison & McHenry. An attendee noted that a recent Health Department inspection was positive and other attendees noted that trash is being picked up. The owner made another appeal. There were no objections except for WCA. M. Conda reported that the parking lot, side yard, and flower pots continue to have issues of concern. Bruce McClung reported that COPP has written up the store for issues. B. Weber pointed out that the permit is likely to be approved. Sharon Lewis reported that she spoke with the city's Health Department. She encouraged people with concerns to contact Barry Rice, sanitary inspector for 513.564.1761 for city of Cincinnati. The owner previously told WCA that he intended to set up a restaurant, insufficient licensing for food and beverage preparation and sales. No further action was taken at this time.

Chronic Nuisance Hearing

B. Weber reported that a Chronic Nuisance hearing will be held on May 27, 10:00 a.m. Council member Christopher Smitherman will be there wants to hear details from neighborhoods. She noted that forms are in the works to facilitate reporting and further reported that the same properties are still an issue, despite the chronic nuisance law. Several board members expect to attend the meeting. Further, B. Weber welcomed comments on more prostitution in Westwood as a result of the closing of McMickin.

Town Hall Building Condition

J. McNulty spoke to the deferred maintenance issues on the town hall building. He will write to city officials to request a thorough audit of building on behalf of the community.

Yard of the Month

S. Stallworth Schramm is working on the WCA Yard of the Month program and is soliciting nominations.

Westwood School LSDMC and Magnet School Status

The Westwood School LSDMC and status will be discussed at the next steering meeting

Art Show

As discussed at the steering meeting, V. Baumann reviewed past spending on the Art Show before transferring the approved \$932 Art Show funds to WestCURC. She found that there were two unreimbursed items from 2012: \$100 for an upgraded liquor permit (which was a WCA expense to cover the sale of margaritas) and \$678 for event liability insurance, not reimbursed out of proceeds from the Art Show.

MOTION by I. McNulty to reconsider the prior decision that \$932 be transferred to WestCURC for the Art Show and to instead transfer \$254 to WestCURC as the remaining balance after the reimbursement of the insurance payment.

SECONDED by M. Kuhl

YES: I. McNulty B. Weber, M. Conda, M. Kuhl, M. Gweyn, M. Jenkins, V. Baumann, K. Tarvin

NO: K. Strasser, S. Schramm, J. Corso, E. Miller

One abstention

MOTION passes 8-4

J. Corso and K. Strasser suggested that the Art Show coordinator be allowed an opportunity to rebut or provide additional information. At the last meeting, Jessica Thayer agreed to the Treasurer’s review. M. Kuhl and others spoke in favor of writing a check as soon as possible for the balance. Ann Ambler suggested that instead a donation be made of a flat amount to invest in the Art Show’s future. J. McNulty noted that discussion of a donation could happen at an upcoming meeting.

Recording Secretary

The recording secretary position is still open. J. Kimmet will cover the duties at the next meeting.

Westwood Coalition

M. Jenkins announced that the Coalition will hold a community meeting about the Westwood Square on June 12 in the auditorium at Westwood School.

CMHA

B. Weber reported that CMHA’s strategic plan will be unveiled on May 27 at Xavier University.

Other Business

WCA representatives will participate in zoning discussions with the Planning department in its public meetings.

There being no other business before the Board, Mr. McNulty adjourned the meeting at 9:05 p.m.

Minutes respectfully submitted,



Mary Jenkins