

Westwood Civic Association: 10/27/14 Special Public Safety Committee Meeting Minutes

Attendees in order of sign-in: *Note: Please add in who is missing anyone who attended.*

C.Ross, A.Morand, M.Jenkins, M.Fichter, K.Tarvin, V.Baumann, M.Fisher, K.Strasser, J.Sess, J.McNulty, I.McNulty.

Note: these interested parties could or did not attend and would like to be kept in the loop:

From C.Ross outreaches via Nextdoor.com:

10/27/14 Public Safety Meeting notice - D. Patten, R.Rothhass (COPS), K. Crowell, S.Penn

T. Zawadzki, who submitted tips for community based crime prevention actions.

10/21/14 WCA Meeting notice: J. Greenway, K. Kearney, M. Volrath, R.Danemeyer, M.E. Drury

J.Sess brought the meeting to order and set 3 goals

1. Give people an opportunity to vent their frustrations, share ideas and paths on crime prevention
2. Discuss resources regarding crime prevention that we could share on the WCA site and other places
3. Come up with a list of what we want from the City of Cincinnati/Police Department with a specific timeline with measurable results.

Those attending broke up into two groups to have the discussion outlined above. Last we came together to summarize our thoughts, which follows.

The results are broken into two areas:

1. Goals for the Westwood Civic Association – i.e. show the City and Police Department that as a community “we have skin in the game”.
2. What WCA want to ask the City/Police to do

Goals for the WCA – to show that we are a community committed to addressing crime in a meaningful way

- Educate the public with a [tips on preventing/reporting/protecting yourself and community from crime page](#) (pages) on the WCA website. This was put into place 10/28/14 and suggested updates resubmitted with these minutes.
- Double the number of active Block Watch Programs in Westwood from 12 to 24 in the next 12 months.
- Reactivate Good Guy Loitering during the clement weather months Spring-Fall, 2015.
- Reactivate Court Watch
- Run 12 (once a month) paid promoted post on the WCA Facebook page rolling through invitations to
 - Check out the WCA webpage on crime prevention
 - Become of member WCA’s Public Safety Committee
 - Join Good Guy Loitering
 - Start a Block Watch
 - Lead the Westwood Court Watch program
 - Proper use of 591.6000.com to report non police neighborhood issues
 - Etc. TBD such as Get trained to be a Citizen on Patrol

M. Jenkins mentioned that running just one such advertisement doubled the Likes/follows of a FB page she administers

What Westwood Civic wants the City of Cincinnati/Police to Commit

- Use technology to help citizens and police
 - Within 2 years, i.e. by 10/2016, create a publically accessible system for tracking crime.
 - The model for this system (with appropriate modifications), is the City of Cincinnati Request for (non-police) Services <http://cagisperm.hamilton-co.org/cincsr/search/address.aspx> tracking
 - One suggestion was that, similar to a “neighborhood parking system” individuals would be able to track crime by specific address within X miles of their home.
 - Others felt the previous suggestion was too limiting and everyone should be able to look at any given address/street/area, similar to the model app above.
 - Some even went so far as to suggest the tracking be by miles within a given address.
 - The victim of a crime will receive a private tracking number for their particular incident. That way interested victims can at will keep them in the loop without the need to depend on busy police officers. This idea came out of a report that an individual had no idea where her burglary case was post an arrest being made.
 - Use text messages to alert citizens who are interested of pursuits in progress; similar to the missing child system
 - Add a city webpage (similar to the one Westwood is developing) as a one source for crime prevention.
 - Once any of these systems complete ensure that neighborhoods, Block Watches, Community Councils of are appraised of these resources through flyers, brochures, post cards, media outreach.
- Within 6 months of every citizens call to police to report an incident get a follow up call/post card/ letter with basic information on what Police have done to follow up on the report
- In 2015, and periodically after that date (12-18 months?) hold a city wide Neighborhood Summit on Crime Prevention
 - Make this invitation available to individuals and representatives of various neighborhood groups/efforts
- Create an atmosphere that encourages people to report crimes and improve citizen perceptions of police courtesy shown in phone calls and when incidents reported
 - Measure improvement with customer satisfaction surveys
 - NOTE on crime statistics - there is a concern that crime statistics are being manipulated in a number of ways including citizens being discouraged from reporting incidents that “are small” such as a stroller being stolen off a porch or a bike taken from a garage, a car in violation of the parking laws. Our police must be more respectful of these types of reports as these “minor incidents” impact the quality of life in our city. This concern lead to the preceding recommendation
- Create a parole/probation office in Westwood
- Increase of and/or redeployment of police manpower (per capita/ per crime incidents/per square mile to cover) to allow Westwood to enjoy a police force that address issues other than crimes in progress e.g. follow up on
 - Focus on truancy/youth mischief / curfew enforcement
 - Many of the crimes spoken of at our meeting are being committed by kids who should be in school

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- Lax enforcement on criminal mischief gives kids a sense that there are no consequences to bad behavior
- oversight patrols
- patrols in hot spots
- arrest reporting to victims
- enforcement of Chronic Nuisance Ordinance
- participation in Good Guy Loitering

Westwood residents have observed a greater police patrol presence in other neighborhoods in which they work or frequent. Walnut Hills was one such neighborhood mentioned.

- City to better address overgrown properties
 - Maintain the public right of ways around neighborhood Cat Walks. Their current overgrown nature encourages places for criminals to congregate, hide out (depositories of stolen mail in recent incidents) do drugs (syringes observed) and other illicit activities (condoms observed)
 - Better enforcement, follow up and funding of the Tall Grass and Weeds ordinance (added post meeting)
 - Overgrown properties invite the criminal element
 - A Westwood resident assigned as Westwood's point person for tall grass and weed violations updated and analysis based on the CAGIS reporting system YTD through 10/29/14. As in an earlier analysis dated 7/14/14 this report confirmed that "we have met the enemy and they is us"
 - Of 46 complaints in Civil Court for violations on private property 41 are overdue for resolution.
 - Of 132 complaints on private property 51% were marked Closed – No violation.
 - Of 73 complaints assigned to publicly owned property
 - only 4 are reported as resolved
 - Of the 69 remaining, 61 are reported as overdue for
 - It is acknowledged that it is *possible* that reporting of actions taken *might not* being done appropriately by city departments. In that case we request the City to rectify that situation.

Next Steps:

1. Share these results in an in person meeting with C.Smittherman, Chair City of Cincinnati Law & Public Safety Committee and J.Blackwell, Chief of Police
2. As appropriate share past Westwood Civic Association prioritized public safety reports at the same meeting.
3. J.Sess is attempting to get buy in from other neighborhoods on the requests for actions

Submitted for approval at the Westwood Civic Association 11/18/14 by C.Ross

These minutes are based on notes made by M.Jenkins during the meeting, compiled and supplemented by C.Ross, further review by M.Jenkins and editing by C.Ross. Any errors are unintended and the sole responsibility of compiler.