

Westwood Civic Association
MINUTES – General Meeting – November 18, 2014

1. Call to Order, by President Jim McNulty, at 7:00 pm. Meeting was held in the Conference Room of the Westwood Town Hall, 3017 Harrison Avenue, Cincinnati, OH 45211. (Joel Kimmet – Secretary).
2. Pledge of Allegiance was led by Mary Jenkins.
3. Roll Call of Board Members: 14 Present, 1 Excused. Present were: Jim McNulty, Mary Kuhl, Michelle Conda, Joel Kimmet, Irene McNulty, Becky Weber, Mary Jenkins, Karen Strasser, Joe Corso, Melva Gweyn, Valerie Baumann, Emily Miller Reynolds, Shawntee Stallworth, Trinetta Zawadzki. Excused was Ken Tarvin.
4. Police Department Report. Officer Rich Minella gave the Police Report, which began on a sad note of the passing of Sgt. Eric Sierra, which occurred in Cincinnati on 11/8/2014. Sgt. Sierra was another neighborhood officer for District 3, and had attended many WCA meetings and events in the past, and was a strong supporter of the Westwood neighborhood. The funeral was held on 11/13/14 at St. John the Baptist Church in Harrison, Ohio. Sgt. Sierra will be missed by all in the neighborhood. Officer Minella also discussed the monthly crime stats, and left copies for those who are interested. Officer Minella spoke about residents starting more Neighborhood Watch and Crime Watch groups in the neighborhood, and how they really make a difference. A recent arrest occurred in the Robbery case on Prosperity Avenue, because a customer immediately called 9-1-1, and the suspect was arrested.
5. Fire Department Report. Lt. C. Nieman gave the Fire Department report, which included the stats for October, 2014. A total of 421 responses, for Station 35, most of them medical responses. A topic that was discussed: please change your batteries in all smoke detectors. And replace the smoke detectors every 10 years. Lt. Nieman went on to talk about having an emergency plan in your home, for fires and other emergencies, and to have fire extinguishers and alarms tested, and in working order.
6. Town Hall Report. Ms. Sharon Montavon from WTH spoke about the Winter Quarter Programs at WTH, and that WTH memberships are down this quarter. WTH is trying to boost up memberships so the City will support WTH programs more. Memberships are \$25 for adults, and \$10 for Seniors (50+) and last for the entire year, and can be used at any City Recreation Center. The WTH can also assist with collecting donations for WCA for the Sgt. Eric Sierra Children's Fund. The WTH also assisted with collecting donations for WCA for Zainabou Drame who was attacked by pitbulls on Aquadale Lane in Westwood. Ms. Sharon Montavon stated that WTH would like to start a Westwood Adult Advisory Board, to help with WTH events and activities. See Ms. Sharon Montavon if you are interested in helping out.
7. Guests. Two Eagle Scouts, Erich Wagner, and Cody Wadzick, are attending the meeting this evening, taking notes, because they are working for their Community Leadership requirement of the Eagle Scout Award. President McNulty welcomed both boys, and thanked them for picking WCA to attend tonight.
8. Paint-The-Town Presentation. Ms. Lauren Doyle was present to discuss "Paint-The-Town" Event, scheduled for Saturday, June 13th, 2015, in "Westwood". A Power-Point Presentation was shown to the group, as Ms. Doyle described the event and preparations for the event. Overview: Basically, the "Paint-The-Town" organization picks a new neighborhood each year. Westwood was picked for 2015. This is a

“one-day” event, where 40 – 50 houses are painted in one single day. This is done totally by volunteers. 10 – 35 volunteers per house. Total of 400 – 1200 volunteers are needed for the one day project. Corporate sponsors are obtained to cover the financial support needed for this project. All the homes identified by the neighborhood are painted “free-of-charge” to the homeowner. All homes that are picked for this event have to be “owner-occupied”. Applications are filled out by the neighborhood from January 1st thru March 31st. “Paint-The-Town” volunteers then interview all applicants, by conducting home interviews during March. The homeowners are notified in April if their home was chosen to be part of the event. The 1200 volunteers are divided up for each location, depending on the size and needs of each house chosen. On Saturday May 16, 2015, the “Prep-The-Town” event kicks off, which is where volunteers prep each house for painting, and get everything ready at each house. Then on June 13, 2015, all the houses get painted. Volunteers are needed to prep the houses, to deliver ladders and paint and brushes/ supplies to each house, as well as painters and helpers for the actual painting event. Volunteers are also needed to transport lunches to all the locations on the day of the painting event. Please spread the word, and help out! Contact information: Lauren.Doyle@givebackcincinnati.org, and www.paintthetowncincinnati.org, to get an application online.

9. WCA Bylaws Changes and Voting. President McNulty introduced the WCA newly proposed Bylaws changes to the group. President McNulty identified the Bylaws Committee, and described the work they had done over the previous 3 to 4 months. It has been discussed for several years that Bylaws changes and amendments needed to be done, so during the summer of 2014, the decision was made to create the Committee, and to start on the revisions and changes. The Committee has worked very hard. Mary Kuhl was introduced to explain the changes one at a time, and a Power-Point Presentation was used to describe the different sections for all in attendance to view. It was explained that samples of Bylaws were used from Invest-In-Neighborhoods, as well as several other Community Councils around Cincinnati. Copies of the 7-page “Proposal” dated October 28, 2014 was distributed around the room for all to view and read. A copy of this Proposal is being scanned and kept with these Minutes. Articles 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, and 10, as proposed, was shown on the Power-Point Presentation and discussed. Mary Kuhl went on to say that the following items were addressed in the new proposed Bylaws:

- a. “Problem Absences” by Board Members, to include Board Members taking up a “spot” on the Board.
- b. What will make sense 5 – 10, or even 20 years from now, when new Board Members are present.
- c. In the Elections Section, the language needed to be clearer.
- d. The Committee worked on these changes for the past 3 months.

President McNulty verified that tonight, all WCA members will be voting on Articles 1, 2, 3, 4, 6 and 10, as well as changing the name from “Constitution” to “Bylaws”.

A Discussion occurred for several minutes, with many questions from the group present.

Sr. Ann Rene McConn asked if the “Purpose” Section of the Proposal could be changed from the word “the official representative”, to “an official representative”, (page 1, Article II, Section 2.01). This was rejected by the Bylaws Committee present, and it was stated that the proposal will stand as stated.

Melva Gweyn stated that “Westwood Concern” came to WCA, as a group, from Westwood Concern, several years ago, to fix the problems the organization was having. Discussion for some time.

At 8:32 pm, **MOTION** by Joel Kimmet, **SECOND** by Karen Strasser, that voting shall begin on the Proposed Bylaws changes. It was verified that 45 total WCA members in good standing were present to vote at this time. President McNulty stated that voting will take place out in the hallway, while the WCA Meeting would continue at the same time inside the Conference Room. Membership Secretary Irene McNulty went to the hallway, to prepare the ballot box, with Joel Kimmet and Sharon Lewis as observers. While voting took place, the WCA Meeting continued, with Karen Strasser taking Minutes.

10. Public Safety Committee Report. Ms. Catherine Ross reported on a meeting of the Public Safety Committee which took place on 10/27/14 at John Sess's residence. Several reports and Minutes of that meeting were distributed to the group at this time. Two Goals of the Committee are as follows:

- a. What WCA could do to make our neighborhood safer and to promote less crime.
 - b. What the Police and City should do for the neighborhood to make it safer and promote less crime.
- Trinette Zawadzki did a good job summarizing the goals and placing them on the WCA web-site. Trinette also encouraged starting "Block-Watch" programs, and gave some examples and stories about the Block Watch Program on Eugenie Avenue, which is now posted on the WCA web-site. The report passed out to the group contains recommendations and goals for the future.

11. Chronic Nuisance Issues. Becky Weber reported that she and WCA member Chris Kearney will be meeting with Capt. Gerard at Dist. 3 Police about the chronic nuisance issues in Westwood. No date is available at this time.

12. Tall Grass Report. Ms. Catherine Ross gave a brief "Tall Grass Report" to the group. She explained that grass or weeds which are over 12 inches tall are considered a violation in the City. Tall grass can be a symptom of abandoned or vacant property. This could signify other problems at the same address. Anyone can look on the City's website, and find the Ordinance for "Tall Grass", Litter, reporting crime, reporting other violations at an abandoned or blighted building, etc., which is all listed on the City Website. 513-591-6000 is another way to report Tall Grass, Litter, or other problems for a building.

13. Bylaws Voting Closed. Membership Secretary Irene McNulty, Sharon Lewis, and Joel Kimmet returned to the Conference Room to report that the Voting was closed and tabulated for the WCA Bylaws Proposal and Changes. 45 WCA Members in good standing voted. Irene McNulty reported that **12 Votes-YES**, and **33 Votes- NO**. The **PROPOSAL WAS DEFEATED**. The current "WCA CONSTITUTION" is still in effect and is still applicable.

14. Coalition Report. Mary Jenkins gave a brief Coalition Report, and stated that a Press Release will soon be released to the media, which will announce upcoming meeting dates, upcoming report deadlines, and news from the Coalition, about the Westwood Business District.

15. President's Nominating Committee. President Jim McNulty stated that according to the WCA Constitution, the "President's Nominating Committee" was to be picked this date. Karen Strasser, Trinette Zawadzki, and Brent Hodge volunteered to be on the President's Nominating Committee.

16. Member's Nominating Committee. President McNulty stated that according to the WCA Constitution, a "Member's Nominating Committee" was also to be picked this date. Jim Strader, Joel Kimmet, and Mary Fichter volunteered to be on the Member's Nominating Committee.

MOTION by Joe Corso, **SECOND** by Joel Kimmet to accept the Member's Nominating Committee. All WCA members present came to a consensus to **Approve** this Committee.

17. Bylaws Committee Chair Mary Kuhl stated that she wanted to disband the current Bylaws Committee, and that she would not serve on another Bylaws Committee. Becky Weber, Valerie Baumann and Sharon Lewis also stated to the group that they were finished with their service on this Committee, or any new Committee.

Mary Jenkins stated that she would volunteer to write up and include the two previously approved Constitutional Amendments, that had been previously approved by WCA, "Boundaries", and "Term Limits", and include them onto the new WCA Website as approved Amendments.

This was in response to a question posed by the audience as to whether the previous two Amendments were affected by the vote that occurred this evening on the Proposed Bylaws revisions. President McNulty stated that the "Boundaries" Amendment and the "Term Limits" Amendment stays in the current Constitution, because they were previously approved by the membership at a previous meeting.

18. Secretary Kimmet stated that as the current WCA Secretary, he would volunteer to "head-up" a new "Bylaws Committee", if that was OK with everyone. There was brief silence in the room, and no one else volunteered. President McNulty approved and acknowledged the statement, and the formation of a new Committee. Secretary Kimmet intends to ask for volunteers for the Committee at a later date.

19. **MOTION** to Adjourn by Mary Kuhl, and **SECOND** by Mary Jenkins.
Meeting Adjourned by President McNulty at 9:05 pm.

Submitted by Joel Kimmet, WCA Secretary.