

JANUARY 20TH COMSTOCK NEIGHBORHOOD COUNCIL Meeting Notes

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Interim Police Chief Rick Dobrow-Captain David Richards, Tim Ottmar, Neighborhood Conditions Officer

Interim Police Chief Rick Dobrow took questions from the floor

Questions about property crimes- There is a problem in Spokane with property crime and Chief Rick Dobrow is seeking to work with neighboring communities with similar issues. Through working together perhaps some solutions can be achieved. We have a high number of persons in Spokane who need medical and mental health assistance. Drug abuse has led to property crime in Spokane there are for example many Methamphetamine users in Spokane. It is a real problem as many people have turned to drugs for several reasons and addiction has become a problem. We are fortunate that we do not have the number of violent crimes that similar cities of our size might experience but we need work on property crime.

Chief Dobrow has his own experience with property crime. His car is an older model and thieves have targeted older vehicles since they can open those doors easier with shaved devices. They entered his vehicle he suspects using some device and his motion sensors did not light the street area. He has a remedy for the future with better higher intensity lighting. He also now utilizes a bar that extends from the brake to the steering wheel as a deterrent.

Spokane has been a target for auto theft not for resale or parts but for transportation. There is also a problem with people who start their vehicles in winter and go inside but leave the keys in to warm the vehicle. This action invites theft.

Chief Dobrow has invested in brighter lighting and uses LED lights that produce a large amount of light but do not increase electric usage.. He had not found an increase in his electric bill but operates his lights from dusk to morning. Good lighting is a crime deterrent and he recommends that citizens use LED lights and light up their property and street area. Motion sensor lights might help but may not light an area adequately. He recommended that citizens get LED lights and use them for their entire property limits and have good street lighting.

Police must respond to priority calls based on the severity of the situation. If an officer is pulled to a minor incident such as someone finding a syringe in a park from a drug user then that officer might be pulled from a much more important call. Citizen volunteers are needed to do some of these duties that are minor and can be handled by citizen volunteers rather than the police officer. They can come and take a report and properly dispose of such items. The Police get many calls each day and many of them are not of a serious nature that would affect life and if they answered all these calls then they would not be effective.

Chief Dobrow was asked when the Police Chief would be chosen. He did not have information about the selection and it is ongoing.

Captain Richards also addressed the attendees. We do not have an adequate number of police to do what needs to be done to patrol as citizens would like. There are 300 Spokane Police but some are in the training process and it takes several months of training before a policeman is ready to patrol. Also the officers are divided into where the priority of need is with about 60% going to cover Northern Spokane and 40% to the Southern areas. People feel assured if they see a patrol car in their

neighborhood but is not the best way to fight crime as there need to be an identification of hot spots. Each day there is an analysis of where crimes have taken place based on reading of the daily reports. Data can be plotted to establish areas of highest crime and “hot spots” can be identified. Also there can be observations of patterns and these are also studied. If there is a repetition of activity then Police can patrol and take action. Also patrols can be sent to those areas when they are between calls or there are lulls. It is proven that these studies are more effective in reduction of crime then just sending out patrols to random complaints. Spokane Police have been effective in quelling some actions by sending patrols to hot spots. Hot spots change over time and the Police department attempts to study why there are shifts and is the cause of these “hot spots”.

Neighborhood Conditions Officer (NCO) Ottmar has visited some homes in Comstock area to provide information. There are still actions that he is not aware of. Citizens need to contact him at his office if they are having problems. His phone number is 509-625-3383. NCO Ottmar passed out information pamphlets about security of personal property.

Bob Scarfo- Presentation Comstock Park Master Plan

Bob Scarfo presented what transpired for the Browne’s Addition Coeur d’Alene Park master plan development.- That is a unique park and Comstock differs greatly in design and use. Mr Scarfo will be working with Comstock and Spokane Parks to develop a master plan for Comstock Park in the next few months.

The Browne’s addition folks collaborated for almost on year to develop their master plan with several concepts and designs to include entry way, park gazebo and replication of historical structures. There was also a children’s collaborative group that submitted drawings of what they wanted in park playground equipment. Included was a zip line and other activities that were accessible to all age groups. Some of the designs of benches were artistic and resembled statues. Browne’s Addition will be posting their Master Plan on their webpage shortly.

Mr Scarfo will work with Comstock over the next few months to develop a park concept that fits the needs of the Comstock neighborhood and the unique park that we have in our neighborhood. He gave out business cards to those interested in learning more about the Comstock Master Plan Project.

Larry Horton- Discussion of access for everyone to parks- Access 4 All provides support for all residents with a variety of needs.

Mr Roger Waller—Community Broadband Initiative- Mr Waller explained that he had some ideas and posted them on Nextdoor. He discovered that several people were very interested in a Community Broadband that would provide faster and cheaper service then their current provider. There were several broad band citizen initiative meetings and fairly well attended. The majority of citizens that have spoken up were discouraged by the slow service of their internet or the expense of the service compared to what other cities are experiencing. Some that work from their homes require faster and better internet service. Our many hospitals and colleges of the area also require internet service that is reliable and fast and affordable. The Comcast Contract will be up for renewal in about 1 and ½ years and alternatives are being sought.

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Example of Chattanooga, Tennessee one of the first US cities to have a community broadband.
Discussion of how the city of Spokane could make a profit and thrive with new business drawn to the broadband availability- discussion of the speed of service and Gigabits of service at reasonable price for more ability than we would require or ever need.

Discussion of Fiber optic cable and that ideally it should be buried - We are behind in many things as above ground power lines when European countries have these below ground. Would this be a problem in Spokane to bury the cable ? a brief discussion followed---

More information and updates and details:

<https://groups.google.com/forum/#!forum/spokane-broadband-initiative>

Traffic Calming Applications Due March ---

Brief discussion of Comstock 2015 Traffic Calming projects-

Approved for Tekoa sidewalks and crossing to Jefferson School

Approval at city level for flashing lights at 29th and Lincoln sign --needs a signature reported Jackie Caro from the residents by the stop sign for a go ahead from the city

Traffic Calming Workshop open to all interested on February 27th at South Side Senior Center- Jackie Caro from Neighborhood Services passed out flyers about the workshop

Clean and Green Statistics for 2015- Power Point Slide shown that Comstock had 45.64 tons waste hauled from Passes, curbside pickup and Clean and Green day

Event	Date (2015)	Cost	Tons
Passes	6/13-6/28	\$25.63	0.53
Passes	8/15-8/30	\$25.00	0.34
Curbside Pickup	October 16	\$4,904.98	20.12
Drop off Clean and Green	October 31	\$3,427.91	46.64
TOTAL		\$8,383.52	46.64

By Laws –copies handed out and a brief discussion that next meeting we will amend the Comstock Neighborhood Council by-laws as the last by-laws were from 2000. There have been many changes and the by-laws need to reflect these changes- we will discuss specifics at the

next meeting and then vote on by-laws. Some attendees already saw things they might contest but we will discuss the by laws in depth next meeting in February prior to voting.

Comstock Officers 2016 –nominations and elections

Clean and Green Chair- John Schram (current chair) nominated by Elaine Thorne seconded by Linda Beal unopposed– Unanimous voted into office

Pedestrian Traffic and Transportation Chair- Whitney Welch (current chair) nominated by Elaine Thorne seconded by Linda Beal -unopposed–unanimous voted into office

Safety Chair- Linda Beal- Nominated by Gretchen McDevitt- seconded by?? Unanimously voted into office

Community Assembly Representative Tim Williams (current Officer) nominated by Elaine Thorne Seconded by Gretchen McDevitt- -unopposed- voted unanimously into office

Alternate Community Assembly Representative- John Stolz-nominated by Elaine Thorne- seconded by Linda Beal- unopposed-voted unanimously into office

Comstock Neighborhood Council Chair- Elaine Thorne (current officer) nominated by Raymond Thorne seconded by John Stolz- unopposed- voted unanimously into office

Comstock Neighborhood Council Vice Chair- Roger Waller-nominated by Gretchen McDevitt and seconded by Louise Lamp- unopposed- unanimously voted into office

Secretary- no nominations at this time- this office is open- will continue to ask for candidates

Attendees could stay for questions – next meeting would be February 17th Sacajawea Cafeteria 6PM

Meeting adjourned—we had gone overtime and needed to quickly clean up