

January 18, 2017 - Minutes

Comstock Neighborhood Council Meeting

Introductions of Comstock Officers and attendees

Lt. Joe Walker – Neighborhood Resource Officer

He reads all crime reports. Doesn't have crime numbers for our area at this time. There has been a sharp increase in car prowling. Particularly in Lincoln Heights. After purses, guns, laptops. 2 detectives for property crime on S. Hill. One more officer being added. Thieves are going straight to Walmart and stores to use charge cards. They keep it in a small range so as not to trigger an alert. Stores are giving video and police are trying to identify criminals. Everyone must lock up and be aware. Call if you see something is amiss. 50th a Regal has been hit hard. Michelle lady has been taking things from people on S. Hill. Discussion followed about the crime in the neighborhood. Phone Number to report anything suspicious is 509-835-4529.

Councilmember Lori Kinnear –

Thanked Steve for working to get an interpreter. She is working on an ordinance that allows people to be charged with a misdemeanor if they are caught inside a car but haven't stolen it yet. Also partnering with the West side to get supervision for property crime convicts. At this point, working with Councilman Beggs on property crime reform. Also working on demolition ordinances. They are weak and want to protect historic structures. Also working on Parklets. Businesses will take up parking spots to create places for people to sit. Davenport wants to extend restaurant outside. Wants to add a parklet. Snow is on everyone's mind right now. Trying to work with Mayor for better snow removal. Question followed about cars plowed in and blocking neighbors. People should call code enforcement. Question about Spokane being a Sanctuary City. Councilmember Kinnear says it is not. Police cannot target people to question their citizenship. Can ask about citizenship if a crime is committed. Immigration enforcement is a Federal duty, not a City. S. Hill is getting two additional Neighborhood Resource Officers, not one.

Councilmember Breean Beggs –

Lives on 17th. Gets broken into frequently. Police do not target people if they don't look like citizens. Police will not do immigration enforcement, just crime enforcement. Sidewalk maintenance and repair. City does not spend much. Left to property owners. Sidewalks have been deteriorating. He is working on plan to add a property tax of 50-60 dollars a year to pool money for sidewalk work for 10 years. Survey showed most people want repairs and will pay for it. Council will build this out and hopefully put it on the ballot in November. Current proposal calls for 25% for new sidewalks, 75% for repairs. The \$20.00 license fund is for roads. 10% for sidewalks. Not enough. Red light funds go into fund for traffic calming. About 1M a year. School zone camera money goes for 2 years to fund Neighborhood Resource Officers (NRO's) and school safety. Some going to sidewalks for safe passage to schools. Question about money for Riverfront Park but not enough for neighborhoods. Councilmember Beggs said the vote was passed by the people for the park. He wants to give people a choice to set aside a fund for sidewalks. He also wants to come up with choices for funding crime prevention and police. Want to add tax to sugared drinks, or property tax, or sales tax. When taxes are on ballot are scheduled. Some in Spring, some in Fall. Question about sick leave...why wasn't it on ballot? Will discuss later outside of formal meeting. Please call Councilmember Beggs if want to discuss further.

Caris O'Malley – Deputy Director for Spokane Public Library Levy.

The measure will be on the ballot in Spring to renew property taxes for library support. 7 cents per one thousand dollars of property valuation already on tax roll. Want to renew for another 7 years. Will keep current level of service and add hours to S. Hill. Money is for operations only. Not capital. Capital improvements will be in a bond vote. If it does not pass, will see closure of libraries, reduced hours. Libraries have become integral part of community. .

Bob Scarfo – Landscape Architect.

Hired to create plan for Comstock Park. Has held workshops to get input for improvements. Consulted students, residents. Can email Bob if have suggestions. Question about what is wrong with the current park. Master plan for city in the works. Hopefully there will be some money to start. Bob can send a pdf to anyone who wants to make suggestions. Question about parks in poorer parts of city. Bob does not know about their status.

Melissa Wittstruck, Liason to Comstock NC.

Comes to meetings to improve communication between Neighborhood Councils and the City Council. Helps answer questions about grants available, help with neighborhood issues. Also works in code enforcement. Substandard buildings. Squatters. Complaints must be submitted, they don't look for problems. When fill out complaint, can check box not to reveal complainant. Won't reveal unless legal case moves forward.

Sidewalks. Call and complain. Cannot take anonymous complaints. If one marks the box saying don't reveal, neighbor will not be told who complained. Complaints about snow – call the Myspokane line: 755-CITY. Please complain to stores if sidewalks aren't shoveled.

Traffic Calming – Training tomorrow night at W. Central Community Center to learn how to apply for funds for traffic calming. Funds coming from red light cameras. Comstock has submitted projects that have not been successful. Would like to help get projects funded. There is a toolbox online at the Office of Neighborhood Services website to apply for projects. Comstock should be working with the South Hill Coalition. Applications are due April 24. If anyone wants to suggest projects, need to step up and head the committee and make it happen. Discussion about potential projects. Steve wants people to send emails to Comstock neighborhood email which is he and John. Next month we will be compiling ideas for projects. Then we need to find people to plan and put together the best proposals. We can submit 3 proposals, 1 arterial and 2 residential. Monetary cap has been lifted. Need to utilize John, Elaine, people with experience in the neighborhood.

Compliment to Steve for being so responsive.

Steve Smith –

Wash. Trust bank rep will attend February meeting to talk about improvements on Grand, between 31st and 33th.

Albertsons – He has been in touch with headquarters. Waiting to hear what their plan is.

A BIG thank you to Elaine for everything she has done and all the help she gives Steve.

Meeting adjourned.