

Comstock Neighborhood Council
Meeting Notes for April 19, 2023
6:00 PM –7:30 PM

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MEETING AGENDA:

- **Welcome/Call to Order**
- **Public Safety Report by the Neighborhood Resource Officer**
- **Mayor's Office report**
- **Updates from City Council**
- **Office of Neighborhood Services**
- **Report by Comstock Chairperson**
- **Public Comments**

Welcome/Call to order

- Call to order at 6 PM
- Approve minutes from previous meeting.
 - Clarification of March notes: during the March meeting a motion was made to include Bernard as a location for the mobile unit speed signs. The March meeting notes will be duly updated to reflect the Bernard Street discussion.
- Call for a volunteer to take minutes: Phil Svoboda and Sharon Genung will take notes.

Spokane PD report: Sergeant Bryan Tafoya

- Monitored traffic here in the neighborhood. Not a lot of violations. Did it mostly on 29th in the vicinity of Comstock Park.
- Bryan asked citizens what we need as a neighborhood.
- Question: what happened at Lincoln and 33rd. There was a home break-in. There was a concern about the criminal being out and back on the streets. The sergeant explained that if a criminal can make bail they are released until the trial.
- Question: A resident voiced concern about Comstock Park juvenile incidences usually on Friday and Saturday evenings. It was asked if the police can at least show up to encourage the juveniles to move along. It was explained that Friday and Saturday nights are a busy time in the downtown area. It was suggested that C.O.P.S. shop may be able to help with this problem. A possible solution is the use of a city car closely resembling a police car and manned by volunteers to be present as a deterrent.
- It was noted that staffing is a great concern: it is difficult to get new people and people are retiring at a greater rate than they can be replaced. In addition, the growth of the police department has not kept pace with the growth of the city population.

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- There was discussion about funding for police and the current negotiations between the city and the police guild. Not much was stated due to the sensitivity of the negotiations.
- City Council members are working with the police department to support the department in various ways. Funding for things like E-bikes and police cars are two items that have been procured for the PD.
- Question about crime calls: Call 911 if in the crime is in progress. Call crime check if the crime has already been committed. Call 911 when in doubt.
- Discussion about patrols and officers assigned to neighborhoods. There are 120 total officers on patrol dispersed throughout the city. The force is spread thin across multiple neighborhoods. It was noted that the NRO program was discontinued in order to provide more resources for the patrol division.

Mayor's Office report:

City Administrator: Johnnie Perkins:

- Johnnie Introduced himself: He moved here about 2 years ago and loves Spokane. He is from California and has been a football referee there. He shared a story about refereeing a snow game. It is now off his bucket list....
- Talking points: He is proud of our police force. PD Needs are: better presence in neighbors; Faster response times; Increased number of officers on street.
- Comments about Community Policing. The number of officers downtown has been doubled by reorganizing shifts and reassigning officers from other department functions such as the elimination of an assigned neighborhood Resource Officer. Johnnie is working on enhanced communications with citizens. One statistic of note is that there has been a 60 percent reduction in vehicle prowling downtown. A top priority is the safety of citizens.
- A Task Force for violent crimes has been implemented with a focused effort to keep violent individuals off the streets.
- It was mentioned that recovered monies and other paraphernalia from the criminals are being utilized.
- Stolen Property Enforcement and Recovery (SPEAR) was mentioned.
- Drug calls: vs cannabis and alcohol: More calls for drugs than cannabis and alcohol.
- An Abandoned Vehicle Unit was formed. Johnnie is passionate about getting the vehicles off the streets.
- Construction season is coming up.
- Brief mention that homelessness: it is a continual concern.
- Question about fluoridation in our water; a study is being done and then it must be voted on by the citizens.
- Statistics: Johnnie apparently likes statistics and shared many stats kept by the police department. Editor's Note: One place to view police statistics is at:
<https://my.spokanecity.org/police/prevention/compstat/>

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- Question about trash cans on High Drive: Who to talk to about getting more trash cans. Email Johnnie Perkins to get trash cans.
- There was a discussion about 311 and the performance of this service. There is an effort to make it more responsive and quicker.
- Johnnie encouraged people to contact him or his administrative assistant for any help. He welcomes requests, concerns, and suggestions, which can be sent to him directly at 509.625.6502 or jperkins@spokanecity.org or via his administrative assistant, Liz Van Den Berg. Her contact info: evandenberg@spokanecity.org and TN = 509.625.6774

Office of Neighborhood Services report: Patrick Striker:

- Traffic: Workshops start in May. The workshop for Comstock is the same day and time as our May 17 meeting.
- Friday June 16 is the deadline for the community engagement grant.
- May 26 deadline for clean and green: can do curbside or the rollout.
- Banners: Patrick will help us get the banners get banners hung. Avista helps the neighborhoods with hanging banners.
- City map for council members has been updated. The map can be viewed at: <https://my.spokanecity.org/opendata/gis/council-districts/>
- The library is a resource we can use for print outs for Comstock business. It seems to be available for all citizens.
- There is a one-day conference/summit for leadership seminar on neighborhood leaders being planned. It will occur in the fall.
- Question: Traffic calming priorities: Votes will occur at the workshop. There was an ensuing conversation about priorities and voting on our neighborhood preferences.
Comstock

District 2 City Council Members report Legislative Assistant to Councilperson Wilkerson Mark Carlos provided an update:

- Mark Carlos contact information: 509-625-6269; marcos@spokanecity.org
- Mark noted that the city council is working closely with the police department to provide needed resources such as new equipment, etc.
- Initiative: business improvement district: Local businesses are to benefit.
- There is a planned meeting at MLK center April 26: 5:30 to 7 with the intent of a listening session to learn about the small business concerns and how to best utilize the funds from the American Rescue Act which has funds to help small businesses.
- A WSDOT seminar on May 10 at the Hive from 5 to 7:30 to discuss problems involving I-395 and I-90 connection.
- Discussion about business association groups
- The newly remodeled Concourse C is opening at the airport.
- Working on a CONDO bill with state senator Patten.
- A question was asked about the council district maps.

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- A Question was asked regarding the South Precinct Station; it was noted that Wilkerson is trying to add in space for non-profit organizations.

Community Assembly Report

- No report for the CA Meeting recap or the workshop from 4/15.

Community Engagement Grant report (if Jeff Klein has a report)

Jeff Klein: He is working on getting the application filled out.

Discussed how to handle the funds:

April: get some ideas:

- One suggestion was refurbishment of dog poop bag containers and adding something to beautify the park.
- Another suggestion: Party in the Park in September.
- At the May meeting we can vote on the ideas so that the application can be submitted for the June deadline.

Summer Parkways report by John Schram

- The event takes place on Wednesday June 21 from 6 to 9 PM.
- Go to <https://spokaneparksfoundation.org/summer-parkways/> for more information.
- The Comstock Council Booth will be located on the corner of Manito and Division. There will be a target practice booth for children.

Announcements

- South Hill library reopened in late March
- \$25 Disposal Passes are available to residents:
<https://my.spokanecity.org/neighborhoods/programs/clean-up/> or email cleanup@spokanecity.org
- Mobile Speed Feedback Trailer applications submitted. Locations:
 - High Drive between 37th and 33rd, northbound
 - High Drive between 37th and 33rd, southbound
 - 805 W 29th Avenue, eastbound
 - 805 W 29th Avenue, westbound * **
 - 29th and Manito intersection, eastbound*
 - 29th and Manito intersection, westbound* **

*alternate locations that were challenged by ONS this time, may not be placed 2023

**located in Manito/Cannon Hill NC area and may not be placed in 2023

Status of SB5536 (Gretchen)

- Bill passed in the house and senate; it is still being negotiated and not yet to the governor.
- SB 5352, concerning vehicle pursuits. Last year the legislature passed laws that greatly limited when the police could pursue. Law enforcement said that has greatly hampered

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their abilities to enforce our laws. SB 5352 has expanded law enforcement ability to pursue and set the standard as "reasonable suspicion" rather than requiring "probable cause" in certain suspected offenses.

- 5770 Bill regarding taxes was introduced. This bill will grant a provision for city councils to have the option to raise taxes.
- SB 5536 concerning controlled substances, counterfeit substances, and legend drug possession and treatment which on the date of our Comstock meeting, the bill was in a conference committee of the House and Senate.

Ongoing recruitment for Neighborhood Council volunteers.

Needs:

- Vice Chair: lead meetings if the chair and take on misc. tasks (3 hours or more per month)
- Secretary: take in-person meeting minutes and provide electronically to team (~3 hours or more per month)
- Treasurer: maintain accounts (and possibly apply for grant for 2023, see below)
- Community Outreach Grant Coordinator: Grant Training may be available via a recording when available.
- Community Assembly Representative: attend monthly CA meeting and represent Comstock: report highlights from previous month to CA and report highlights to Comstock from previous CA meeting. (6 hours per month)
- Clean up (Clean Green) coordinator for 2024 (deadline has passed for 2023)

New business

- Nomination of Scott Spear as Community Assembly Rep. Vote needed. Scott was not present, so this action did not occur.
- Assignment of Jeff Klein as CE Grant Coordinator. Vote not required. Jeff has accepted the task of submitting a grant application.
- Review the voting requirements for Comstock NC. David Randall to make a case for changing bylaws to change meeting attendance requirements in Bylaws Section 4.B:

David Randall proposed a change to the bylaws as it relates to voting privileges: His proposal intention is as follows:

"In order to increase attendance and participation in Comstock Neighborhood meetings, voting rights for all who qualify for membership should be granted without qualification of previous attendance. This would allow all people living in our neighborhood to have a say and a vote in Issues that may directly affect them. To disallow a qualified person a vote would be antithetical to our mission of open and fair governance of our neighborhood. To accommodate informed participation, all issues to be voted on in an upcoming meeting should be publicized in advance. Qualified members could then choose to attend to have their voices heard and be allowed to vote."

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Discussion about the by-laws: Eliminate the 1 meeting requirement to vote at any given meeting.

Public Comments

- Points were made for and against the idea:
 - There should be some requirement in the game.
 - There should be less obstacles for people to have voting rights.

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Proposed bylaw change for Comstock Neighborhood Council

Date of proposal: Wednesday April 19th, 6:00pm - 7:30pm

Location: Sacajawea Middle School Cafeteria (Lamonte Street entrance near E 33rd)

At the regular meeting of the CNC date, time and location above, resident David Randall proposed a change to bylaws to change voting requirements.

Current Bylaws Section 4

- A. Council membership shall be open to anyone who lives, owns property, or operates a business in the neighborhood and who is at least 16 years of age.
- B. Voting membership shall be given to any individual who meets the criteria in 4.A and shall be effective at the second meeting attended within a 12 month period.
- C. To maintain voting privileges, each member shall attend one meeting annually.

A motion was made and discussion commenced where residents voiced pro and con opinions for the change. The chair distilled and read the following proposed changes to Section 4 as follows:

- A. Council membership shall be open to anyone who lives, owns property, or operates a business in the neighborhood and who is at least 16 years of age.
- B. Voting membership shall be given to any individual who meets the criteria in 4.A and shall be effective at the ~~second~~ [first] meeting ~~attended within a 12 month period.~~
- ~~C. To maintain voting privileges, each member shall attend one meeting annually.~~

Key: Strikethrough ~~font~~ indicates removal of text, square brackets “[]” indicate NEW text inserted into existing language.

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With changes fully applied Section 4 would ultimately read:

- A. Council membership shall be open to anyone who lives, owns property, or operates a business in the neighborhood and who is at least 16 years of age.
- B. Voting membership shall be given to any individual who meets the criteria in 4.A and shall be effective at the first meeting.

This change above was verbally discussed and agreed to by residents present as representing the spirit of the proposed change.

There is a distinct process that must be followed to make changes to the bylaws, e.g. to make any change $\frac{2}{3}$ (two thirds) of voting members must vote in the affirmative. The proposed changes will be circulated for review prior to the next regular meeting. At the next regular meeting there will be an open extended discussion of the matter to allow all residents to freely voice their opinions on the matter. At the conclusion of the discussion a vote will be taken, and all residents' votes counted using the current voting requirements in place. If the change is voted for in the affirmative according to Section 13, the change will be submitted to ONS for action.

CNC bylaws, SECTION 13:

- A. These bylaws may be amended by approval of a two-thirds (2/3) vote of those present at a regular Neighborhood Council Meeting. The resolution to amend must have been proposed at the preceding regular Neighborhood Council Meeting. Notice must be given as to the proposed amendment concerns in the call for the meeting at which the amendment shall be voted upon.

Reference to the bylaws can be found at:

<https://comstock.spokaneneighborhoods.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/11/Amended-Bylaws-Comstock-Neighborhood-Council-2-17-16-finalized-1.pdf>

End of Proposed bylaw change for Comstock Neighborhood Council
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