

Gresham Butte Neighborhood Association

October 13, 2021

Officers present: Jim Buck, President; Sandy Davidson, Vice-President; Theresa Tschirky, Treasurer; Lynn Saint, Secretary; Tracy Slack, Land Use Chair.

Minutes

GBNA minutes for May were unanimously approved.

Grant Uses

Funds from the city were received for the reforestation project. Last year, we had ordered 1300 seedling trees. This year, 1000 will be planted. The summer drought had a horrible effect on the saplings. There are now funds for a water vehicle to rehydrate new plants. Volunteers may do some cane cutting again after the fall growth has died back. Trees should be planted in early March rather than in March and April to avoid a drought. Scholls Valley Nursery has been contacted. Theresa has the funds in the bank to cover the costs which will be incurred.

Land Use

Tracy Slack reported that there was one permit granted in early September. Nothing was very remarkable about the Butte property.

Treasurer's Report

Theresa Tschirky reported \$2,496.50 in the account of funds currently available.

Introductions

Approximately 14 individuals, who introduced themselves, participated throughout most of the meeting. Typically, we meet on the second Wednesday of the month.

Crime Prevention

Tracy indicated that he has reached out about understanding how a crime watch network operates relating to the cost, participants and expectations from this. We are one neighborhood on the city's map with several enclaves separated by the butte. He brought up the possibility and efficacy of Neighborhood Watch.

Both **Michael Gonzales**, ONCE (Office of Neighborhoods and Community Enhancement) director, and **Charles Skeahan**, a Gresham NET (Neighborhood Enforcement Team) police officer, addressed crime prevention.

Michael Gonzales reported about the NET. They focus on livability in the neighborhood, drug houses, abandoned homes, developing relationships within the community. They work closely with the code enforcement team. They are disbanding at the end of the year. as officers will be redistributed and deployed in different areas.

The city is short on officers with retirement and a general loss of these first responders. Filling the role of an officer is very difficult, currently, for recruitment.

The police department had a crime analyst and supplied NET with that information regarding crime statistics. That position was cut but actual statistics can be provided for those who have an interest.

Increased security for neighborhoods is a need. NET officers try to employ environmental protection by design. They come out and assess where there is unwanted activity. The landscape can open more crime opportunities. Cut back shrubbery and add lighting. Ideally, they are looking for ways to eliminate these opportunities.

The city has made a hybrid of Neighborhood Watch and Crime Prevention. Some components of staying alert to crime include the following pieces of advice and information. Recognize neighbors. Police response now is not at the best levels. We need to rely more on each other rather than on police presence. In an emergency, first responders will go to communities where there is the greatest need. Next Door will share information with fellow residents. It provides current event observations for neighborhoods as neighbors post.

Michael has a Ring camera from which he obtains notifications continuously. He can input his own predetermined radius from, for example, five miles to fifty miles or more. People often report and share with videos. Ring partners with public agencies and first responders so that information can be shared. A certain level of detail is lost when there is rain, for example. The device does a good job of recognizing motion. The range of sight is pretty good for sharing across the ring network. Ring has a spotlight feature with motion detection. Gonzales's camera spotlight will illuminate the yard. As far as cash outlay, Michael set up Ring for about \$300 and has not experienced any issues to date. Google also has a camera as an alternative

Question: **Does one need to post his GPS location as a ring user?** The exact location is not given but will provide an approximate address. A video is posted for double checking.

Question: **How does one get into it?** You must opt into it. You can select whether you wish to show the address.

Officer Charles Skeahan, NET Officer

Question: **What does the acronym CPTED represent?** Crime prevention through environmental design.

What steps are needed to create a crime watch for Gresham Butte? Jim Buck explained the boundary lines to clarify the boundaries.

The CPTED model will be worked around properties and buildings on them through light and mechanical observation checking out fences and walls. In law enforcement, rather than taking an entire block, it is best to employ more limited boundaries. One can get a handle on a particular criminal activity within. Overgrown trees will block surveillance. Light posts near a home are an advantage. The two-foot by six-foot rule affects foliage. It does not matter if bushes are next to a window. People cannot hide under two feet. Trim trees up to a six-foot level to prevent criminals from using them to hide. It gives the illusion of surveillance. Many trees are trimmed up; bushes are trimmed down.

Yellow lighting tends to have a wash out effect in security cameras. Do not use yellow light on the outside of the house. LED lights are a true, natural white color which allow for ease in seeing details for identification if there is a video recording. Each property can focus on having visual lines of sight. When we can see out, others can see in. Criminals do not want to be observed.

Michael Gonzales asserted, "Video quality is best with LED especially at night." He, personally, taps into the smart home technology. Lights are triggered by his GPS to create scenes for the home depending on hours of outings. His lighting app helps as he schedules when he is present or absent. He can program from his home. The Ring camera will automatically turn on lights. Activity within the home will be a deterrent. Smart home apps integrate and tie in with

each other. Lutron is a brand of some of the smart home technologies that employ motion sensors, shades going up and down, lighting.

Question: **Does Ring technology make a discernible difference?** Cameras catch crime but they don't necessarily stop crime. The illusion of surveillance is part of a deterrent. There are overt and covert cameras. Giving the illusion of being watched will have obvious presence. It will not stop crime. It will give police and detectives an ability to determine who was at the property.

Covert cameras will not necessarily give signage of their presence. When there is a crime, the footage will occur as a witness camera to provide evidence of an event.

A blinking red light in a car could act as a deterrent. Usually, someone bent on breaking into a vehicle will not want to deal with the unknowns of a red flashing light.

Tracy asked for comments on Crime Watch network signs. Question: **What are people doing differently in those neighborhoods? What are homeowners doing in those areas?**

Officer Skeahan revealed that Neighborhood Watch signs are more antiquated. Cameras are replacing the signs. With the advent of the cell phone, a capacity for hanging onto images helps improve identification of crime activities. Any time anything remotely out of sorts occurs, individuals have their phones set up to discern if something is intentionally going wrong. It may not be a bad idea to set up a group chat.

Text notification can be set up for a group. Different apps can set up a specific tone if there is an emergency. Attendees and neighbors were challenged to work on messaging each other back and forth. It is better to get a text than a phone call.

Some of the ways we design yards and bushes encourage us to keep surveilling others' yards and be armed with a communication device.

Question: **Do home security systems with wiring to detect break-ins? Is this a part of neighborhood security? Is it viable?** It is antiquated. A sign is somewhat of a deterrent. There needs to be an illusion of surveillance. They will usually go somewhere else where they won't be observed. It is the idea that someone may be able to see.

Question: **What about invasion of privacy? Are there legal considerations for people on a given chat group in a block?** There is no legal aspect to that. There is nothing wrong with neighbors communicating with neighbors. The only legal issue is if someone obtains a photo or a recording if someone else has an expectation of privacy. A living room is an expectation of privacy. Usually, if you are doing this under the guise of neighborhood safety, there is often no legal recourse.

Tracy asked about hybrid for both a Neighborhood Watch and camera networking by opting in if one so desires. The real hybrid is not just relying on the camera network but adding in the chats and other ways of communicating. Although it is antiquated, the major portion of the files from Neighborhood Watch indicate that most of the people have either passed away or moved. We can be more dynamic in staying on top of things.

The Neighborhood Ready program exists to protect and patrol vulnerabilities within neighborhoods. We must be careful in recognizing that there are crazy people out patrolling the various locations, also. The group, Citizens Volunteers in Patrol, uses average citizens. Caution is advised as far as what individuals can do in the neighborhood.

Many are more in need of receiving the intelligence capabilities to help. Acknowledging that there are many who are more vulnerable, we need to take personal responsibility to check on our neighbors. We need to be aware of one another.

Truthfully, Gresham Butte has low crime. We want to be aware of the weakest places. When there is a sense of unity among neighbors, the crime incidents are low.

Question: **Are monitored security systems responded by police presence?** Simple answer, “No.”

In working with NET, Officer Skeahan communicates with both neighbors and businesses. He addresses personal security and property security. Officer Skeahan is willing to come to a home, personally. If anyone needs information about a visit, sending a message to My Gresham App should elicit a response. NET will receive the report for anything addressed to the agency.

Award

The beautification project achieved Back Yard Habitat Certification for Dawncrest. Jim Buck had spearheaded most of this effort, along with his wife Mary Ann. Recognition goes to them and to the neighbors who participated in this renewal effort.

Election of officers

This needs to occur at the first meeting of the year, starting in the fall. President, Vice-President, Treasurer and Secretary are duly elected. Rules from the Neighborhood Coalition have determined that Tracy would become an officer who would have an equal status with the others as an officer.

Theresa Tschirky put forth a nomination to accept the board from the previous year. Sandy Davidson seconded.

Does anyone have an interest in this organization as an officer? The opportunity for attendees was presented. No one else stepped forward.

By a show of hands, all current officers maintained their various positions. We are being asked to think of a suggested topics for this year’s meetings.

City Concerns

Tracy mentioned that the city is going through some serious financial concerns. Look for the agenda items on the city’s web page. People don’t need to testify but need to have a heightened awareness of the needs the city is currently experiencing.

Neighborhood associations could have a zoom meeting on the same night as a council meeting to let people know of the urgency of each topic. The city is losing staff, along with programs and services. Leaders need to be held accountable for making sure issues are being addressed appropriately.

Next Meeting

The next meeting is scheduled for the second Wednesday of the month, November 10.

Meeting Adjourned at 8:24 p.m.