

**Coalition of Gresham Neighborhood Associations  
September 12, 2017 – Oregon Trail Room, Gresham City Hall**

**Meeting Minutes**

NEIGHBORHOOD	ATTENDEES	NEIGHBORHOOD	ATTENDEES
Centennial	<i>INACTIVE</i>	Northeast	<i>INACTIVE</i>
Central City	<i>INACTIVE</i>	North Gresham	<i>Linda Van Deusen-Price, Linda Parashos</i>
Gresham Butte		Northwest	<i>Kat Todd, John Bildsoe</i>
Historic Southeast	<i>Janet Patin, Frani Grover</i>	Gresham Pleasant Valley	
Hollybrook	<i>Celeste Ets-Hokin</i>	Powell Valley	<i>Susan Ainsworth Smith, Sue Ruonala</i>
Kelly Creek	<i>Mel Roemmich, Carol Rulla</i>	Rockwood	<i>Donna Dionne</i>
Mt. Hood	<i>INACTIVE</i>	Southwest	
North Central		Wilkes-East	
Staff & Guests:	<i>Joe Walsh, Chief Robin Sells, Lt. Jeff Miller, Ricki Ruiz, Irene La Branche, Malcolm Fitzsimmons, Diane Rogers, Toni Evans, Jef Kaiser, Tom Stanley</i>		

**Welcome:** Meeting was called to order by Coalition President Carol Rulla at 7:04 PM. Everyone in the room introduced themselves. Minutes of 7/11/17 and 8/8/17 were approved as presented. Carol noted that Coalition Secretary-Treasurer Theresa Tschirky was unable to attend; therefore Carol will prepare the minutes and Linda Parashos helped with notes.

**Fireworks Enforcement:** At its July 2016 meeting, the Coalition raised concerns about the people shooting off illegal fireworks, especially so far before and after July 4<sup>th</sup>, and asked what could be done. ONCE Manager Aaron Abrams followed up with the Neighborhood Enhancement Team (NET) and reported back that NET would research what other communities have done to enforce fireworks laws. Diane Rogers later contacted the mayor's office about the problem of illegal fireworks, and Lt. Miller was assigned to take the lead on the issue. Carol thanked Lt. Miller, Diane and the other Southwest Neighborhood Association members who worked on the enhanced fireworks enforcement this past July 4<sup>th</sup>. Carol noted that the purpose of this discussion was to hear from Lt. Miller what the Gresham Police Department (GPD) did differently this year, what the challenges are in enforcing fireworks laws, what could be done to improve enforcement & compliance with the law, and what we in the neighborhoods could do to help. Lt. Miller noted that he wasn't aware of the Coalition's earlier interest in the issue and was glad to have the Coalition's involvement moving forward. He explained that GPD looked at a having a dedicated phone number for citizens to report illegal fireworks but decided that wasn't an option after reviewing Portland's experience with Ban the Boom. Portland had 30 phone lines staffed by volunteers but were overwhelmed by 200,000 calls. This led to a highly negative media story about their failure to respond to calls. Since Gresham doesn't have resources for anything like that, GPD decided to rely on the non-emergency number to take calls. Six extra officers, including Lt. Miller, were assigned to fireworks enforcement this July 4<sup>th</sup>. Since GPD had never previously enforced fireworks laws or issued citations, the policy was to confront people shooting off illegal fireworks, offer seizure of the fireworks and only give citations or arrest if people resisted. The goal was to respond to as many calls as possible to remove the materials and stop the behavior. Everyone they confronted chose to turn over their fireworks rather than face a citation (\$500 fine per illegal firework and a court date). Celeste noted that the biggest challenge is getting the word out and changing the culture. She asked about Fire Department involvement. Lt. Miller did reach out to Fire early, but there is not much they can do for enforcement, except what the Fire Marshall can do. He said that, when not responding to fire calls, firefighters do drive around on the 4<sup>th</sup> and talk to residents. He also noted that the District Attorney's office is in support of Gresham's enforcement effort and told GPD what needed to be done in order for the DA to be able to prosecute. This year there were 180 fireworks calls compared to 172 calls last year. GPD was able to respond to 57 of the 60 callers who asked for an officer, whereas last year they were only able to respond to 34 of 53 requests for an officer. Chief Sells noted that there was also a major SWAT call in the midst of all of the fireworks calls this year. Carol noted that many people think that GPD could pay for fireworks enforcement with revenue from citations issued and asked how much the city gets from citations. Lt. Miller said that most of the revenue goes to the state and very little comes back to the city. The Legislature would have to act to change that. Coalition members then discussed ideas for enforcement and education. Celeste suggested 1) better publicity about the law and GPD's enforcement, 2) school presentations to educate kids, and 3) roping off known problem areas, like the park in her neighborhood. Chief Sells said that a city she previously worked in would turn on the sprinklers in the parks on the 4<sup>th</sup>, which not only deterred people from gathering there to shoot off fireworks but also helped prevent fires. Carol asked about citizens sending GPD photos or video. Chief Sells said it can be done. This year one man sent a video of his neighbor shooting a shotgun on the 4<sup>th</sup>. NET officers went to talk to the neighbor later and ended up arresting him. She encouraged people to be careful and not put themselves in danger taking photos or video. Diane noted that the more dangerous material is a real problem. Several people noted the impact on animals, wildlife, veterans and kids, and the example being set for kids. Kat commented that

many youth groups fundraise by selling legal fireworks. Chief Sells said that long-range it would be nice if the city could put on a fireworks display. John thought that it would be very difficult to get people to give up their fireworks. Chief Sells noted that officers must see a person lighting an illegal firework in order to issue a citation. Celeste asked about Washington state law and whether Washington and Oregon might work together to ban fireworks. Lt. Miller said that Vancouver had taken a zero tolerance stance, and there seems to be a shift in attitudes and growing awareness of the problems caused fireworks. Sue commented on the Eagle Creek fire, which may have been started by legal fireworks. Lt. Miller noted that fireworks are legal in Oregon only on July 4<sup>th</sup>, not any other day including New Year's. Carol collected names of those who would like to serve on a Fireworks Committee to work with Lt. Miller on this issue.

**Division Transit Project:** John Bildsoe, Jef Kaiser and Carol Rulla had attended a workshop where the planners presented details comparing staff's proposed station locations to the Coalition's request to move the Angeline stop to Birdsdale, the Civic stop to Wallula and the far eastbound Eastman stop to Norman. John again brought maps showing the proposed station locations. Jef noted that the Coalition's stop changes were proposed as a package which provided better station spacing and align with bigger intersections that could better serve future development. Carol summarized information from the workshop: At Birdsdale, the slope of Division prevents construction of a station which can meet ADA requirements for boarding/alighting and sightlines are poorer than at Angeline. Any stops in the vicinity of Birdsdale or Wallula would require extensive sidewalk construction which would have to be constructed before the new Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) became operational and for which there is no money. Birdsdale does have more riders than Angeline, but Civic has more riders than Wallula, and Eastman has significantly more riders than Norman. The federal grant proposed to fund the BRT is a smaller grant meant to address current conditions, not future potential. Staff will evaluate whether the eastbound Eastman stop can be moved closer to the intersection (along the Burger King frontage). Janet said she appreciated that staff considered our proposed changes and that the Eastman stop might change. Kat asked whether the BRT will really have better transit time than the current bus and whether that included the extra time to walk to further stops. John said that planners are still expecting a 15% transit time improvement but it doesn't include extra time to get to the stops. Jef noted that, with the BRT in place, it would increase pressure on the city to fund Division and Birdsdale sidewalk improvements through the Capital Improvements Plan (CIP). He encouraged the Coalition to press the city to fund those projects. John and Kat commented that the proposed station locations will diminish their two families' access to transit. They don't intend to block the project but they can't support it.

#### **Neighborhood & City News & Reports:**

Carol made the following announcements:

- Staff will soon be seeking recommendations for the 2018 Council Work Plan. She encouraged members to bring ideas for Coalition recommendations to the next meeting and suggested that the Coalition start sending any related to land use to the Planning Commission as well as to the City Council.
- The Coalition bank balance is now \$0 since the check to Family of Friends has cleared.
- Watch carefully for errors developers might make in sending out Early Neighborhood Notification (ENN) notices. Recently a developer incorrectly sent notices to just a few of the surrounding property owners (but not the NA) and sent them all by certified mail. Janet asked for clarification on the NA's responsibility when developers contact us about ENN meetings. Carol said that the ENN meetings and notices are the developer's responsibility. The NA should respond promptly to developers and can help by suggesting good meeting locations and dates & times.
- The latest Gresham Repair Café will be part of the new Community Conservation and Repair Fair at MHCC on Saturday, 10/7, 11am-3pm. Carol noted that the Coalition co-sponsors the repair cafés with the city and asked if the Coalition is willing to be listed as one of the sponsors of the fair. Coalition members agreed that was appropriate.
- The Council voted on 9/5 to approve the changes to the Council Citizen Advisory Committee structure to eliminate the Citizen Involvement, Natural Resource & Sustainability and Public Safety Committees as standing committees and use task forces in those areas. Hearings haven't yet been scheduled to make Comprehensive Plan changes to move the Citizen Involvement Committee's statewide Goal 1 role (citizen involvement in land use) to the Planning Commission.
- John and Carol have been in communication with GIS staff about revisions to GreshamView. If anyone wants to help with testing, there will be a meeting on Monday, 9/25, 9am at City Hall. Linda Parashos volunteered to help.

Coalition members asked about the status of the search for a new ONCE Manager and the new Livability Manager position. Joe Walsh reported that there were about 100 applications for the ONCE Manager and 50 for the Livability Manager. Interviews will take place over the next few weeks, and the hope is to hire in October.

With no further business, the meeting adjourned at 8:40 PM.

Minutes prepared by Carol Rulla, Coalition President

Next meeting: **Tuesday, October 10** – City Hall Oregon Trail Room