

SOUTHWEST NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION MEETING
Thursday, April 18, 2024
7:00PM – KYOUDOU CENTER AT GRESHAM JAPANESE GARDEN / ONLINE VIA ZOOM

MEETING MINUTES

1. Welcome, Call to Order and Introductions - Group

Meeting called to order by President Kathy Gardenhire at 7:02pm. Approximately eight members in attendance remotely, 11 in person. Quorum established. Guest Lina Sizmin, City of Gresham Office of Community and Neighborhood Engagement.

2. Meeting Minutes - Kathy

A quorum was not present at the January 18 meeting so draft minutes from Oct. 19, 2023 annual meeting and the Jan. 18, 2024 meetings were presented for approval. Motioned, seconded and passed.

3. Treasurer's Report - Dana

Treasury balance of \$320.89 with no expenses in the last period.

4. Guest Speaker – Gresham Police Department Public Information Officer Jarom Sweazey

Officer Sweazey introduced himself as filling in for Chief Travis Gullberg who was scheduled to speak tonight and sends regrets due to an unplanned budget meeting conflict this evening.

The upcoming safety levy would support 22 new positions in total, 13 fire fighters, 9 police officers. Staffing levels have stagnated over the past 20 years, we actually have two less patrol officers today than we did in 2004. One big call can consume all active GPD resources, then calls for service can be waiting.

National standards for police to resident staffing levels are higher than what we have currently. We have 1.04 police officers per 1000 residents, 2.5 per 1000 is one standard. Luckily there is some overlap between day and afternoon shift.

Q: Why does the city let population growth increase and the developers/builders seemingly don't have to contribute to the tax base to support increased police officers/fire?

A: This complex question would be best presented back to the City, I will take this back.

Q: When will ballot measures be distributed? Probably in the neighborhood of May 1st?

A: There is a website with some additional levy Q&A. Ballots mailed beginning May 1st.

Mike Lind indicated he has received some written answers to inquiries on Nextdoor or submitted to the City. Feel free to reach out to the City with additional questions as they have been responsive.

Gresham Fire Station 71 will be hosting an open house, there will be questions and answers specific to the Safety Levy this Saturday 4/20 from 2-4pm. There is a lunch and learn at the Gresham Elks on Thurs May 2nd as well 5:00-6:30pm.

Q: Are the GPD officer increases generally patrol?

A: Yes, the greatest need is for the patrol division to respond to emergent calls. When staffing levels return more to normal then the Traffic Division and other services may be restored. Some positions are ARPA funded. Community Safety Specialist (CSS) positions are very vital to non-emergency calls such as stolen vehicles and thefts and would continue to be funded with safety levy dollars.

Q: What about traffic enforcement?

A: Today the patrol officers do perform some traffic enforcement but it is secondary. There were 16 traffic fatalities in the past year, which has been increasing. Traffic enforcement unit would be the first specialty unit to be restored.

Mike Lind noted there are 11 GPD vacancies and this would only add 9 positions.

Gene Wilkinson stated he is a strong supporter of police and fire and you can add officers but if the county district attorney's policies are "catch and release", this is problematic. Officer Sweazey responded that GPD has a good working relationship with the DA. The rock thrower situation who was arrested and released night after night was an anomaly.

Kathy Gardenhire noted the graph contained the most helpful information showing the level staffing levels over many years. Previously we had the NET team as well. Recently the GPD was responsive during an SWNA traffic safety situation and nuisance complaint. Chief Gullberg and Captain Schmidt escalated the response and SWNA is appreciative regarding the handling of the situation.

Q: If this passes, how long before we would see officers on duty? Is there adequate staffing for background checks and training?

A: Yes, the training process is long and we do have the support staff to contribute to onboarding. It won't be immediate but the work will begin right away. DPSST police academy is now doing 60 recruit classes instead of 30.

The primary election is May 21st.

5. Land Use Report - Thea

Planning/Land Use case MISC-24-00021 – Thea spoke to Planner On Duty (POD) today, the miscellaneous case is for renaming of two street names. There is a URL for the Gresham City Council

meeting on 4/22/24. SE 182nd Avenue (between SE McKinley and SE Richey) changes to SW Linneman Avenue and SE 195th Avenue (off NW Division St) changes to NW Eastwood Ave to align with the Gresham street grid. Contact Amanda Lunsford for additional information at 503-618-2235.

Butler Creek Subdivision PR-23-00043 – project is now visibly active with heavy equipment and land clearing across from Butler Creek Elementary School.

Butler Ridge Subdivision – February 7th there was an ENN (Early Neighborhood Notification) meeting and notes are available.

Shaul Woods tree cutting – one tree came down in the January 2024 ice/wind storm and landed on a house. There were then emergency meetings and the city made a decision to clear all trees within 150 feet of the property line (approx. 200 trees). The logging operation was only announced the day before it was conducted. This caused concern throughout the community, including neighborhood associations and the Urban Forestry Subcommittee.

A letter was obtained from 2021 showing USFS plant pathologists had done a review of the site. Information included previously unknown data that showed other risk factors including fire risk and pesticides used on the berry bushes.

Gail Cervený asked if any of this was known prior to the acquisition? The primary purpose of the acquisition was to protect the trees on this site.

Thea: Some was known but it appears there was more information learned after the fact.

Urban Forestry Subcommittee asked why they just cut the 200 trees down and didn't assess selective logging or other options.

6. Future Meetings and Speakers

July Picnic and Information Fair: Dana - 7/18/24 would have been the normal date, but the city is beginning the extended Arts Fair this day. We decided to move a week forward to 7/25/24. We will be able to announce via several communication methods. Instead of doing hot dogs and barbecuing this year we decided to be more cost conscious with an ice cream social. We are sending invitations to community organizations to setup an information booth at the event. Metro will be holding a small item recycling event, CFL bulbs, household batteries, sharps, prescription and pet medications. Lions Club will be accepting donations of hearing aids and eyeglasses to repurpose to those in need.

The plan is to serve ice cream in cups rather than bars and we will have toppings available for make your own sundaes.

Matching Grants for the neighborhood association projects are going to be offered by the City again, awarded dollars must be offset by volunteer hours contributing to the event. If you are interested in

volunteering to help please sign up and you will be contacted. We can use ice cream sundae servers, setup and tear down, SWNA sign up booth, check in vendors, chaperone block party trailer games and more.

There might be some donation items available – please reach out to Dana Duval. Also if there are any volunteers, please contact Dana. danakol24@aol.com

SWNA/ONCE will send the postcard out to all residents in the neighborhood for this event too.

October 17, 2024 – will be meeting at Kyoudou Center for elections.

7. New Business

- 1) Neighborhood wide garage sale, Amy and Melinda, what about all along Binford Lake Parkway between Pleasantview and Towle? There are 99 homes facing Binford Lake Parkway in this segment alone. This could attract a lot of people and the model has been successful in other neighborhoods. Fri-Sat-Sun July 26-27-28, 9AM-4PM following the July picnic at Butler Creek Park. Will try to find a way in Nextdoor to do an organized map. We will announce this with our mailing list in conjunction with the July meeting. Michelle Wilkinson volunteered to assist with signs and fliers.
- 2) Nuisance complaint follow-up discussion, the children are apparently homeschooled and are not supervised. They have also been riding in the park and entering/exiting via the adjacent woods. GPD responded to the complaint and contacted the parent(s) regarding the illegal motorcycle riding and it has been much more quiet recently.
- 3) Gene Wilkinson commented on the pavement preservation program (Hitting The Streets), there is quite a bit of waste in paving residential cul-de-sacs adjacent to arterials and other streets being paved that have very little usage. Contact Gene if you are interested in more information to be presented at a future SWNA meeting. We will try to get the transportation department to be a speaker at a future meeting.

Adjourned 8:36PM, motion by Dana, seconded by Amy, all in favor.

Respectfully Submitted,

Brandon Harer
SWNA Secretary