

Clearwater Neighborhoods Coalition Meeting Minutes • Monday, April 3, 2017

1-3. Meeting called to order at 7:08 pm. Secretary Spencer Cook welcomed attendees with opening statement about the Great Neighborhoods Speaker Series and CNC's mission. Mr. Cook introduced representative Marybeth Dunn from series sponsor Recycling Perks. Ms. Dunn made brief remarks about Recycling Perks and urged attendees to sign up. Mr. Cook welcomed members of the Clearwater Police Department and introduced CNC board members.

President Howard Warshauer introduced Mayor George Cretekos who delivered the State of the City Address. Mayor Cretekos stressed his commitment to openness and transparency and praised city employees for the level of service delivered to citizens. Mayor Cretekos also reported that the city has held the line on the millage rate for 7 years; downtown redevelopment efforts under the Image Clearwater project are underway but will take considerable time to complete; beach redevelopment is helping drive the tourism industry which has seen record numbers; US19 redevelopment efforts continue under the leadership of the Planning & Development department; sports tourism continues to thrive with a women's international softball tournament coming to the city in July; and Neighborhoods Day is coming up Saturday, April 8.

Mayor Cretekos answered questions on a number of topics including the COS's role in downtown, the pending sale of the property adjacent to City Hall, and how Clearwater's neighborhood services efforts compare to other bay area cities.

Regular CNC monthly meeting called to order at 8:05pm after the conclusion of the Mayor's address.

4. Officers' Reports

Secretary Spencer Cook announced that March minutes were posted on the CNC website for review. Motion to approve made by Jack Mortimer and seconded by Doug Williams. Motion approved unanimously.

Treasurer Doug Williams presented Treasurer's Report. One member paid dues and a \$5 website charge is under review. Motion to approve made by Jack Mortimer and seconded by Spencer Cook. Motion approved unanimously.

Vice-President Karen Cunningham suggested that anyone interested in forming a neighborhood association should contact the CNC for assistance.

President Warshauer reported that the Imagine Clearwater project is progressing nicely.

5. Other Monthly Reports

Detective Eli Glenn, Clearwater Police Department reported that 82% of all crimes in the city are currently connected to unlocked vehicle break-ins and urged residents to keep their homes and vehicles locked. Citizens should notify police immediately if they see anything or anyone suspicious. Detective Glenn passed out information on the city's Operation Identification project and stressed that residents who keep track of the serial numbers on their possessions have a greater chance of getting those items back in the event that they are stolen.

Lawrence Young, Clearwater Neighborhoods Coordinator, reported Neighborhoods Day is April 8 and that 28 neighborhoods are participating.

6. Discussion of Speaker Series Subject

Attendees discussed the possibility of studying how Clearwater's neighborhood services efforts compare to other cities including St. Petersburg and Largo. Jack Mortimer suggested compiling data to further study the issue.

Discussion ensued concerning how Lawrence Young's role will evolve. Lawrence stressed the need for communication and transparency and stressed that progress will come.

An attendee reiterated that the city's housing stock is aging and that the city needs to help the situation by making neighborhood improvements. She stressed a full Neighborhoods Services Department would be helpful.

Another attendee stressed that the city needs to spend less on consultants and look for quicker implementation of existing projects. Concern was expressed that city departments are understaffed and that employees are underpaid, with many not living in the city due to affordability issues and some employees leaving for better-paying jobs in other nearby cities.

There were suggestions that CNC ask the city for a formal neighborhood redevelopment plan and that CNC should step up its efforts to help neighborhood organizations seek improvements by providing advocacy and advice.

7-8. Old/New Business:

Vice Mayor Jonson addressed the state legislature's consideration of a bill removing control over short-term rentals from the cities and handing more control over to the state. He urged attendees to contact their representatives to express opposition to the measure.

Ric Ortega announced that he has compiled information related to the CNC's effort to address code concerns and asked for assistance in taking further action. Spencer Cook agreed to review the information.

9. Other Business:

The next CNC meeting is scheduled for Monday, May 1 at the Countryside Library and will feature Natalie Nagengast from the Pierce Street market who will speak on activating and energizing neighborhood associations.

Meeting adjourned at 8:35 pm.

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