

VP Bill Jonson called the meeting to order at 7 p.m.

Public Safety Update: Lt. S. Wannos and Officer Brian Hoxie

Wannos listed a series of crime stats. Six robberies, 50 burglaries, 12 auto thefts.

Cheryl Acton asked about crime stat decline. Wannos attributed decline to officer conducting traffic stops and officer visibility. Wannos said stats fluctuate up and down.

Hoxie said the department is deterring crime by being more visible.

Another resident said cars being unlocked is a big cause for theft/burglaries.

Kathleen Agnew thanks police for visiting her HOA.

Marita Lynch asked about tracking crime. Wannos said resources will be directed to "hot zones." He said most of the crimes (robbery/burglary) are crimes of opportunity.

Hoxie said if an increase in crime is noted in an area resources will be flooded to that area.

Resident asked about loud vehicles. Wannos said there is a state ordinance for loud exhaust and citation for loud music over 100 feet.

Resident said she recently moved from Miami and complimented police on stats. She then asked about how police respond to spring break traffic. Wannos said the department increases officer presence on the beach. Wannos said there would not be an increase of officers along Drew Street. Hoxie said the traffic team does focus on Drew Street before moving more patrols on the beach.

Alex Nixon asked about domestic violence stats. Hoxie said he will have those at the Spring Branch Neighborhood Association meeting.

Erika Escamilla asked about catalytic converter thefts.

Resident asked about constant calls at Walmart at Highland Avenue. Hoxie said there are a lot of calls for thefts there.

Hoxie listed upcoming events. Mentioned mentorship program with HEP. Said there are 80 children in the program.

Acton asked about resources for the homeless. Hoxie mentioned an outreach program. Wannos mentioned 211 and 411 as resources.

Coyotes 101, Officer Aaron Schultz, Pinellas County Animal Control.

Schultz gave a PowerPoint presentation on the countywide problem of coyotes. Dunedin and Clearwater have the most sightings. There is a map with historical sightings and recent ones: <https://myfwc.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=361045279a7f46829cc316da3d2ddc88>

He said sightings in Clearwater are down this year from last.

Schultz said coyotes mainly feed on cats and small animals. They typically stay away from humans and large dogs. They typically do not go after animals larger than them unless they are in a pack.

Coyotes can take different forms, they don't all look the same. Average lifespan is five to six years. They average six pups in a litter and four litters a year when they are under stress. The females go into heat when they lose numbers. Programs to reduce coyote numbers failed because of the coyote's reproduction cycle. Coyotes migrated to the area from neighboring counties.

Schultz recommended using a loud noise maker to scare them away. He also recommended devices to install on fences to keep coyotes from trying to jump over them.

He said coyotes do not normally attack people. There is only one known fatality. It was a 3-year-old girl who was attacked by one in 1981. There are no known attacks in Pinellas.

It is legal to hunt coyotes because they are considered a nuisance animal. It is not legal to fire a weapon within the city/county limits.

Sightings can be submitted to:

<https://myfwc.com/contact/fwc-office/regional-offices/>

Coyotes can lose fear of humans if there are no consequences attached to human/coyote contact. Coyotes are resourceful and easily adapt. Loud noises, bright lights can scare off coyotes.

To prevent attacks do not feed them, do not feed pets outdoors, secure trash can lids, keep overgrown areas trimmed and clear, keep pets indoors at night.

Coyotes are host to at least 11 species of parasites including lice, ticks, heartworms, whip worms and lungworms.

When the county tried to eradicate them the population grew from 50,000 to 500,000. In 2021, there were an estimated 225,000 in the whole county.

Neighborhoods update, Samantha Moullett, Neighborhood Services Manager

Moullett introduced Erika Escamilla, new neighborhood coordinator. Escamilla shared her background.

Moullett said an Arts and Cultural coordinator was hired and will start soon. She gave an overview of public arts in Clearwater and mentioned the Public Arts Advisory Board. The department also oversees the Sister City program. The Erase Black Cemeteries and other historical preservation also falls to this department.

Moullett mentioned Neighborhood's Day and a community officer request form to ask for an officer's presence at an event: <https://www.myclearwater.com/My-Government/City-Departments/Police-Department>

Coachman Park opening is July 4. Moullett mentioned the city survey asking residents what events they would like to see at the park and for other feedback for the park. Moullett said there will be three in-person community engagement sessions for feedback for the park.

The fire department now offers CPR classes.

The Arbor Day tree giveaway is April 29 at the Public Works Complex. "Living the Culture" Series.

"Taste of Ethnicity" May 20 on the 600 block of Cleveland. The events will highlight different cultures in the city.

Secretary report: Minutes were sent to President Carl Schrader.

Treasurer report: Rudy Michalek asked anyone who has questions or hasn't joined to join.

Drew Street, Complete Street Update, Bryan Beckman

Beckman recently met with Whit Blanton, head of Forward Pinellas, who asked for community support for the project. The project could be on the city council agenda in another week.

\$8 million is budgeted by FDOT to start the project by July 1. FDOT already completed \$400,000 worth of design work. Design could be up to 60 percent completed by April/May. FDOT has a link to a presentation on the project on its website.

Jonson welcomed new attendees to the meeting. Oak Acres, Plaza Park, Country Club Addition, Clearwater Point and Glenwood Estates.

Jonson adjourned the meeting at 8:49 p.m.