

Clearwater Neighborhoods Coalition
Meeting Minutes
February 4, 2013

President Carl Schrader called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m. Members present, per sign-in sheets, are on file.

Speakers

Amy Finotti-Lacaria, from Quest Corporation of America for Pinellas Suncoast Transit Authority and Bob Lasher from PSTA presented information on a community bus plan. They are trying to get input from people who ride the bus to establish a bus plan that will enhance public mobility. They want to redefine transit's role in supporting economic development. The group played a survey game to rank transit improvements. Mr. Lasher said that PSTA has lost about \$40 million since 2011 forcing them to cut service. Better regional connections was most desired, then more frequency of busses. She asked members to take the survey on www.psta.net

Major Dan Slaughter from the Clearwater Police Department introduced himself to the members and stated that he is a resource to the citizens. He addressed the issues at the Budget Inn and is pursuing strategies to make the situation better. A question was raised regarding the City of Clearwater's process for declaring a business a nuisance versus that of Madeira Beach. The State of Florida licenses hotels and the question was raised as to why we can't petition the state to review his license.

Katerina Gerakios of City of Clearwater Economic Development provided a brief update on the Homeless Initiative weekly count. The 2013 Point In time Homeless Count was done on Jan 21-24th. The results should be available in about a month. Last year there was 5.3 thousand homeless in Clearwater both on the street and in shelters. A question was raised about street feeding and what action has been taken by the City to control it. Katerina stated that they are trying to approach the issue on a county wide basis. She asked members to call police if you see homeless encampments or activities at 562-4242.

Michael Delk and Terry Teunis from City of Clearwater Planning and Code Compliance provided an overview of code and compliance. Terry Teunis stated that there are 7 Code Inspectors, 1 Sign Inspector and 2 Business Tax Receipts inspectors. The most frequent calls are regarding parking and motor vehicle issues. Also overgrown grass, junk and abandoned properties. There is an initiative to secure the abandoned properties as a nuisance issue to prevent squatting by homeless and prostitution. Michael Delk spoke about the effort to be more strategic now that there have been reductions in staff due to budget constraints. They are using data to track 5 different indices to determine: 1) neighborhoods at risk, 2) those improving and 3) those that are stable. This should enable them to maximize use of their resources. There will be an updated neighborhood code book issued soon.

A recommendation was made by a member to have an incentive program for Solid Waste to identify code violations and report them to the Code group.

Secretary Report: Shelley Kuroghlian presented the January 7th minutes to the membership. A motion to accept as written was made by Doug Williams, 2nd by Ron Delp. Passed unanimously.

Treasurers Report: Doug Williams presented the Treasurers Report. A motion by Norma Carlough was made to accept as written, 2nd by Ron Delp. Passed unanimously.

Old Business

Crest Lake Park Resolution: A resolution was passed by the membership in the January meeting for the CNC to send a letter to the City supporting the opening of the bathroom facilities. Carl Schrader has been conducting a survey of park users for 30 days and will compile the data and share with members next month. Carl has challenged the neighborhood to produce 30 days of events in Crest Lake Park.

Carl presented the resolution to the membership. Discussion was held regarding the inconvenience of not having a restroom. The majority opinion was that the City should not inconvenience law abiding park users. The resolution was read to the membership who asked that it be amended to state that the bathrooms be opened within 2 weeks. The vote was unanimous in favor of the resolution.

A date for the memorial for Jason Paul has been set for February 23rd

New Business

Committee Groups & Assignments:

Postponed to next meeting.

Neighborhood Trash Barrel Painting

A suggestion was made to see if neighborhoods could work with the City and Solid Waste to paint the trash barrels. This type of activity was proposed for putting fun back in Clearwater.

Neighborhoods day is April 13th. Eric Wilson asked each neighborhood to participate and get to meet their elected officials and City of Clearwater staff.

Clearwater Gateway Farmers Market will have a Strawberry Fest on Saturday, February 23rd.

Motion by Julie Thompson, 2nd by Norma Carlough to adjourn. Approved unanimously.
The meeting was adjourned at 9:10 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Shelley Kuroghlian
Secretary, Clearwater Neighborhoods Coalition