



## CLEARWATER NEIGHBORHOODS COALITION

### **Clearwater Neighborhoods Coalition & Foundation – Meeting September 9th, 2024**

Bill Jonson – President

Annette Pardue– Vice President

Chelsea Gird - Secretary

Rudy Michalek – Treasurer

David Lillesand – CNC Council

President Jonson called the meeting to order at 7 pm. Those in attendance introduced themselves and the neighborhood or group they represent. Special guests included Whitney Fox, a candidate for US Congress District FL-13, who introduced herself. Representatives from the Clearwater Neighborhoods Department were also in attendance.

#### **Ruth Eckerd Hall (REH) Presentation on the Bay Care Sound Amphitheater one-year operational summary.**

The first speaker was Susan Crockett, President and CEO of REH, which manages Baycare Sound, Capitol Theater, Ruth Eckert Hall, and the Marshall Hoffman Performing Arts School. She spoke at length about the vital purpose and history of the non-profit and how it engages its audience and public. It helps them and provides a service of both artistic value and artistic input into the Clearwater scene. She went on to discuss the history of Ruth Eckert Hall, its challenges, and its goals. Ruth Eckert Hall was nominated for the second year in a Row, and the Bay Care Sound was nominated for best amphitheater this year. She then showed a promotional video that was very inspiring.

After this, she introduced Bobby Rossi, REH's Chief Programming Officer. He reviewed the upcoming programs and how they contribute to business and events within

Clearwater. He spoke of the costs of bringing bands in and the overall costs of spending more now and saving later. Ruth Eckerd is investing in permanent video display screens, lighting systems, and sound equipment at the amphitheater. It is expensive, but we are known for our sound success, which is why we have the testimonies we do. Doing this will allow us over year two to see the savings to remain at the lowest possible ticket prices. REH is a non-profit, as indicated in the ticket prices.

### **Clearwater Neighborhoods Division Update:**

Jollee Castelli, Clearwater Director of Public Communications, announced the reporting relocation of the Clearwater Neighborhoods Division from Planning and Development to the Communications Department to improve direct communication with neighborhoods. She reported that Monica Lueking is the neighborhood coordinator for the neighborhoods to the east and Javente Scott is the neighborhood coordinator for the west side of the City.

### **Clearwater Police Update:**

President Jonson reported that upcoming CPD events were detailed in the meeting agenda. They are • Sept 14th – Glenwood Estates 100-Year Celebration o Location: 617 N Glenwood Ave ▪ Time: 10:00 – 3:00 pm • October 1st – National Night Out o Location: Countryside Mall ▪ Time: 5:00 – 8:00 pm • October 4th – Coffee with a Cop (National coffee with a cop day) o Location: McDonald's – 1500 S Belcher Rd ▪ Time: 8:00 – 10:00 am. Information was reported by Officer Kaye.

### **Business Meeting**

#### **Request to participate in Clearwater's Veterans Day Events:**

President Jonson reported that the CNC has been invited to co-sponsor the Veterans Day event on Saturday, November 9, in Coachman Park. Bill reported a 12:30 pm parade down Cleveland that will include three local High School bands and end in Coachman Park. A formal ceremony will be held on the green in Coachman Park, and several speakers and performances will be held. That Saturday in Coachman Park will also include Market Marie, which will wrap up just before the 2:00 pm program. Co Sponsorship for the CNC will involve communicating the event to our member organizations. There was consensus to co-sponsor communication for the parade.

**Minutes** of the CNC August meeting were prepared but have not yet been posted on the website.

**Treasurer Reports** are the same as in July on the website.

**Discussion of Community Rating System (CRS) Priority for Clearwater:** President Jonson reported that the City is in the process of establishing City wide goals. He suggested that the CNC may wish to suggest a goal of reaching level 2 on the FEMA's CRS flood insurance rating. This is the same level as reached by Pinellas County for the unincorporated portions of the county. The City of Clearwater is currently at a level 5, whereas the County is at a level 2 which provides an additional flood insurance discount of 15% over policies within the City. After much discussion, Patrick Raftery moved to authorize CNC President Bill Jonson to start discussions with Sarah Kessler, City Environmental Specialist, regarding the City establishing a realistic plan to achieve a CRS level 2, perhaps within 2 years. The motion was passed and Bill will be reaching out to Sarah to begin those talks.

**Nominations Committee** The annual election for 2025 officers/board positions is approaching. Rudy Michalak is completing his second year as treasurer and will term out of that position. President Jonson appointed the following to the nominating committee to propose a slate of officers for election in November: Karen Cunningham, Nancy Wolf-Diaz and Mary Ellen Lansburg. If interested in serving please reach out to Karen, Nancy or Mary Ellen by September 25th. The slate will be presented in October and the election, if unopposed, will happen in November. Otherwise the election will occur in December.

### **Neighborhood Round Table.**

Cheryl Acton reported additional tree trimming issues with Duke Energy, to which President Jonson replied that Duke is coming to the November meeting to discuss tree trimming and undergrounding of power wires.

The Del Oro Grove neighborhood reported on meetings with Safety Harbor about potential increase air traffic approaching Clearwater St Petersburg airport. The airport recently announced plans for a \$100 million upgrade gate plan ramps. The concern is with increasing noise over Clearwater. [www.delorogroves.com](http://www.delorogroves.com) for the link to more information.

Coastal Ridge reported pothole problems in their neighborhood. Ms. Castelli suggested they work with Monica Lueking of Neighborhood Services.

Kathleen Beckman reminded members of the deadline for requesting vote by mail ballots. For more information go to [VotePinellas.com](http://VotePinellas.com).

Cheryl Action raised the general concern about infrastructure inadequacy in the area with increasing numbers of people moving to the area. She suggested public transit improvements.

Javonte Scott reminded the group of the importance of updating the neighborhood contact list in their department. He also reported the City is doing infrastructure improvements in Valencia Park to create more access to the park.

President Jonson reported on a Nash Street home that is overgrown and has code enforcement fines accruing. The property has been unoccupied for five years and is not homesteaded. This is an example of the need for more effective code enforcement.

Trisha Kirby reported on the Clearwater 101 class. .

**December CNC Holiday Gathering:** Vice President Annette let us know that we can do our Christmas Party at the View again this year on December 2. Additionally she reported that the CNC did not receive the city grant to develop resources for HOA organizational documents.

**Next CNC meeting October 7:** Mayor Rictor will address the project development approval process through the Community Development Board.

President Jonson adjourned the meeting at 8:42pm.