

Lincoln Heights Neighborhood Council

General Meeting Minutes

Sept 17, 2013

The meeting was brought to order at 7:00 PM, with President Gary Schumacher presiding.

The officers introduced themselves: President Gary Schumacher, Community Assembly representative Marilyn Lloyd, and acting Secretary Sally Phillips.

**The meeting program was presented by Mayor Condon who came to the meeting to discuss his proposed 2014 budget.** Highlights:

- Budget document is posted online at: <http://www.myspokanebudget.org/> The Mayor suggested people review the first pages of this voluminous document to get a sense of what his goals were when composing the budget.
- City council can change the proposed budget. From the budget approved by the Council, the Mayor can strike items from the budget, but not add items.
- Parks are guaranteed a percentage of the general fund (by charter), funds that are administered by the park board. The library board controls its own spending and is being allocated the same % of funding in 2014 as in 2013.
- Budget decisions are being made with the criteria in mind – ‘Will this decision cause a person to want to live in the city?’. For example, good schools are key to people’s decision on where to locate, so the City has a vested interest in making the schools as effective as possible, and works closely with Spokane School District 81.
- City funds come from property tax, sales tax, and utility tax.
- Previous and current police administrations calculate that Spokane needs about 300 police officers. The budget prioritizes adding police, working toward the 300 officer goal.
- Fire budget will not be cut, but decisions are being made to get the same response rate all across the city.
- The City is integrating service between departments, so that, for example, utilities and street projects can be done together, and more economically. The budget is committing to not raising the utility rate more than 2.9% per year.
- City is paying off street bonds from reserve funds. This saves on paying interest on bonds and uses reserve funds that were not accruing any interest.
- The Utility department is being charged for engineering services previously done by the city from general funds. Funds from cell phone antennas being located on water towers will go into the general fund and contracts will be handled centrally in a consistent manner.
- The budget includes a 1% set aside for capital projects such as fire trucks and police cars.
- Full funding of the fireman pension fund is being extended out, with the payments being reduced and full funding to be reached in 32 years rather than 28.
- Body cameras have been approved for police.

- Due to persistent citizen complaint, the city will be testing a snowplow that can avoid dropping snow in people's driveways
- Workforce remodeling includes not filling some open positions, steering some employees (possibly new hires) into 401k's rather than pensions. 40% of workforce is eligible for retirement.

**Attendees raised concerns about:**

- how to reduce crime in Lincoln Park, with better lighting.
- Improved vigilance by police in the vicinity of Froggy Pond wetland to discourage dumping and illegal partying. Our resource officer, Tracy Meidl offered to send some patrols by that way.
- Bushes impinging on sidewalks, making for poor visibility for motorists
- Siting of Spokane's marijuana dispensaries

Gary reported that sidewalk has been installed on the west side of Freya from 18<sup>th</sup> to 22<sup>nd</sup>. Based on conversations at our last council meeting, the neighborhood approved moving funds planned for Freya at 36<sup>th</sup> to extend the work done lower down the hill at 18<sup>th</sup>.

A new convenience store is opening at 29<sup>th</sup> & Myrtle in an old commercial building that has been empty for many years.

**Marilyn Lloyd, Community Assembly rep and South Hill Coalition rep** set up intercept boards and asked attendees to review the boards and provide their input on signage, storefront appearance, landscaping, etc. The information is being collected by the South Hill Coalition neighborhood planning effort.

Meeting adjourned at 9:00 PM

Gary Schumacher distributed dump passes to interested residents after the conclusion of the meeting.

Submitted by Sally Phillips, Acting Secretary