

Lincoln Heights Neighborhood Council

General Meeting Minutes

May 20, 2014

The meeting was brought to order at 7:00 PM.

The officers introduced themselves: Sally Phillips, Secretary, and Marilyn Lloyd, Community Assembly.

We announced that our long-time President, Gary Schumacher, had died suddenly in an accident on May 2nd. Gary was a life-long Lincoln Heights resident. He was trained as a civil engineer, and did land development work all over the city, but particularly in Lincoln Heights. Gary helped found the Lincoln Heights Neighborhood Council and was active in it as far back as 1990. He was the linchpin of the neighborhood cleanups. We will all miss him.

County Commissioner Al French gave us a presentation on the county's effort to reduce encroachment around Fairchild Air Force Base. The next round of military base closures will occur in 2017. The County is doing whatever it can to avoid Fairchild being closed. Efforts to eliminate encroachment include: removing a railroad spur; shutting down a mining operation; buying, with the intention of demolishing, a housing development; proposing a bond levy to relocate residents at a mobile home park. The latter attempt failed at the ballot box. Mr. French *et al* are planning on trying again, after further public education on the issue. What's changed since the last vote: new state funding sources (Housing Trust Fund) are being sought; local charities will guide the process of building new housing and assisting residents with relocation. Mr. French also spoke against the Spokane Tribe's effort to build a casino in the alternate flight path for Fairchild.

His financial argument: Fairchild provides 12,000 jobs directly and indirectly to the Spokane area. There are 17,000 air force retirees here. Losing these folks would depress our tax revenue and property taxes. A bond levy to implement removal of the last encroachment area around Fairchild would be a minimal cost to the taxpayers.

Jackie Caro and Marilyn Lloyd presented **highlights from the Community Assembly.**

- A new crosswalk ordinance is proposed that will require crosswalk painting on high pedestrian traffic arterials (schools, Centers and Corridors, parks) in conjunction with resurfacing.
- Mobile speed sign designators that let drivers know how fast they are going are available for the neighborhood. The Neighborhood Council needs to decide where they might be useful and request a time for using the signs.
- The City has free trees available. The City has a goal of planting 10,000 trees. Alicia Powell at Office of Neighborhood Services has information on the program. Details of how the program will work are under development. Alicia will attend the LHNC July meeting to discuss the program.
- There is a change in how neighborhood block grants are being distributed, and LH will be eligible for funds. New rules are being developed, but the procedure may include requests being passed

through the neighborhood council. Typically, block grants are a funding source for sidewalk installation or repair.

Justin Pimsanguan from **SPARC (Spokane Police Accountability and Reform Coalition)** stopped in to let us know that the City is accepting applications for the newly forming police oversight commission, which will oversee the Office of Police Ombudsman. Deadline for applying is June 6th. People interested in following SPARC activities can get more information at <http://pjals.org/issues/police-accountability/>. An application for the commission can be found at:

<https://static.spokanecity.org/documents/bcc/commissions/ombudsman-commission/opo-commission-application.pdf>

Sally Phillips showed the South Hill Coalition map, the culmination of a two-year planning process for 5 south hill neighborhoods. Final draft, map and project matrix can be found at: <http://www.southhillcoalition.org/>. Click on 'View Final Draft'. The site has both the full text, and a map and spreadsheet of suggested projects. The plan will go before the Spokane Plan Commission on 6/11, then on to City Council for approval. This document is a vision statement showing the neighborhoods' wishes for neighborhood connectivity, especially for walkers, cyclists, kids on the way to parks and schools. The document can be used by city grant writers when looking for state and federal money.

Tim Burns, Police Ombudsman, presented highlights from his annual report. His authority has increased, thanks to city charter changes made last year. The City has hired 26 new police officers. The City has purchased and is about to implement body cameras for officers. Before deployment, issues on how to get consent to audio recording must still be resolved. A video room has been established to help with training. Telescoping batons are replacing the rather intimidating billy clubs. As a result of the Otto Zehm case, officers were assigned 40 hours of specialized training in dealing with mentally ill people. That training has been completed.

Tim reported that three people were killed by City police last year. Tim was free to discuss the one case where the investigation had been completed. It involved someone who led police on a car pursuit that tore through yards and into a local business. When finally stopped, the suspect pulled out what appeared to be a gun, at which point he was shot by police.

There were 135,000 officer contacts last year, with 218 complaints arising from the contacts. There were no complaints from taser, swat, or vehicle chase incidents. Of 1100 people identified by police contacts as mentally ill, 10% were arrested. Many others were transported to medical services.

A concern of Tim's is the 10,000 calls to police that did not result in a response, either due to an evaluation that they were not serious, or because no resources were available. He suggested calling the 'My Spokane' help desk number. After hours calls are logged and returned promptly, when offices reopen.

His further suggestion for city police: move from county public safety building where they pay \$38,000 per month in rent, where parking is scarce, where screening at the entrances is burdensome, and finding your destination is difficult.

Tim's Report is at: <http://www.spdombudsman.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/02/OPO-2013-Annual-Report.pdf>

Dump passes were distributed to attendees who requested them.

Meeting concluded at 8:55 pm

--Submitted by Sally Phillips, Secretary