

Emerson-Garfield Steering Committee and Neighborhood Council Wednesday, October 9th, 2013

As the specter of Halloween approached, the October version of the Emerson-Garfield Steering Committee and Neighborhood Council commenced as it usually does on the second Wednesday of the month, this time occurring on October 9th and starting slightly late at 7:02PM. Introductions around the room were made and Chairman E.J. Iannelli called for approval of the minutes from the previous meeting, which were considered just good enough and just accurate enough to be approved with only minor hesitations from those who question the sanity of the secretary.

The meeting began with E.J. requesting changes or additions for the evening's agenda. None were offered so the agenda moved on to Matt West, from the Lands Council, who gave a presentation about Spokane River Toxins and eating fish and mud from the Spokane River.

One of the two toxins that are most readily available for your enjoyment in the river is PCB's/PBDE's (flame retardants). Exposure from these chemicals comes from eating fish caught in the river. The other toxin is Heavy Metals from a century of mining upstream. Exposure to heavy metals comes from rubbing dirt into an open wound...so don't do that. Also, don't eat any of the dirt.

More information is available through the Lands Council and they are located in the Community Building at Main and Browne.

Next up, E.J. reported that Garbage Czar Karl Boldt passed on several Dump Passes that would be available after the meeting and on Saturday, October 26th at the Corbin Senior Center.

The November meeting will be heavily laden with Block Grant discussions. We will be deciding where we would like the funds allocated in our name to be distributed among the various organizations that are asking for money.

Information concerning Photo Red Funds was discussed next. For the purposes of this discussion, we will use Jay Cousins as an example. Let's say Jay runs a red light at an intersection with Photo Red Cameras. He is then fined for that heinous crime. A portion of Jay's fine finds its way into a fund that supports traffic calming projects, which means Jay is actually supporting the safety of the community through his casual disregard of proper traffic flow. So be sure and thank Jay. \$437,000 was raised last year, which went to traffic calming. Due to a recent vote by the City Council, in the future, \$100,000.00 will go to the Spokane Police. \$50,000.00 will go to the C.O.P.S. program. \$20,000 will go to Graffiti Abatement. The rest will go for traffic calming. It should be noted that this council, along with the Community Assembly and many other neighborhood councils voted (an advisory vote) to keep all funds collected through the Photo Red program strictly for Traffic Calming projects.

(Disclaimer: To the best of the secretary's knowledge, Jay Cousins has never committed a crime of any type other than crimes against fashion and is by all accounts, a fine upstanding human person.)

It was reported that Christ Clinic has applied for a permit to allow them to use a house adjacent to their property for commercial use. It was previously zoned residential and a minor zone change was allowed. E.J. has more information if you need to know more.

Corbin Senior Center had a successful Walk-Along at Corbin Park which brought out more people than last year and raised \$1,000. Harvard Park sponsored a Spaghetti Fundraiser which brought in another grand. The Munch and Mingle Auction sold out the day before the event. The Parks Department did not raise the contract amount for Corbin even though a bunch of people wrote letters, made phone calls and held up signs at nationally televised football games. Senator Andrew Billig has offered to guide Corbin towards the possibility of maybe getting a grant for a new elevator. Corbin's name will appear next month as we dole out Block Grant funds with a request for funds for a variety of needs.

The E-G Community Garden is wrapping up its season and there is a cleanup day scheduled for Sunday, October 20th. Membership is \$20.00 a season and everyone benefits from the harvest.

As of this meeting, there were two remaining E-G Farmer's Markets for the season. Four Raffles are set for the final gathering on October 18th and you must be present to win.

Megan Kennedy, who is the Chairman of the Planning Committee, announced there is a big planning workshop meeting scheduled for the next evening from 6:30 to 8:30. Another meeting is scheduled for November 14th and the more people who attend, the better and more inclusive the planning will be.

Lt. Dean Sprague gave the monthly Crime Report. Crime statistics are down for E-G, although you may not agree with that if you've been ripped off. Starting the first of the year, the Police Department will be surveying itself regarding Racial Profiling. Currently, 88% of those arrested are white males. Officers will be filling out information detailing demographics after every arrest that will then be collated, synthesized, and processed to see how they are doing.

The Community Assembly has a retreat scheduled for Saturday, October 12th where the focus will be re-inventing Community Assembly and Neighborhood Councils. Sheriff Ozzie Knezovich will be the keynote speaker.

The playground equipment for Emerson Park was installed in July.

Sidewalks are complete for this year and many of the projects are just now being wrapped up.

Seminars for Building Stronger Neighborhoods have been going on and the next one will be October 21st at Corbin Sr. Center. It will be concerning formation of Non-Profit organizations.

We will be gathering again on Wednesday, November 13th at 7PM.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:12PM.

Stan Burke
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