
Walnut Hills Area Council: Business Group

Minutes

Minutes: February 16, 2017 - Walnut Hills Area Council: Business Group Meeting

Taken by Michael Rountree, Childress & Cunningham, Inc.

Attendance:

Susan Bunte	Kathryne Gardette	Pat Neal-Miller	Aimee Shinkle
Matthew Cuff	Tim MacConnell	Officer Kandice Roper-Issa	Yolanda Smith
Katy Dietz	Mike Mattox	Michael Rountree	Greg Warner
Cindy Fischer	Bill Myles	Joe Sandmann	Kevin Wright

Opening:

Meeting called to order at 9:00 AM with welcome to new members and introductions all around.

Minutes from meeting on January 19 were approved, Michael Rountree 1st, Aimee Shinkle 2nd.

Treasurer's Report presented as handout, overview given by Mr. Cuff on behalf of absent Treasurer. Report was approved, Aimee Shinkle 1st, Greg Warner 2nd.

Committee Reports:

Safety – Officer Roper-Issa

Crime statistics handout was presented. As Thefts From Autos continue to be high, Police will resume issuing “report cards” that let drivers know how tempting their vehicle might be, if items are visible inside. There was a recent arrest of a robbery suspect, who is a juvenile transexual prostitute and who confessed to two other robberies. Information was also handed out regarding the Citizens Police Academy and the 2017 Police Youth Live-In. The Citizens Police Academy will be occurring on Wednesday evenings from March 22 to May 10, 2017. The Police Youth Live-In will be at Camp Joy from June 19 to June 23, 2017.

Officer Roper-Issa gave a reminder that in-depth discussion can be held at the WHAC's Safety Committee meeting which is held on the 4th Thursday each month, although she said she would not be able to attend the February meeting.

Membership/Promotions – Aimee Shinkle

Aimee is evaluating the current roster and status of dues payments, and is considering developing a card for issuance. She is also reaching out to those who might be willing to help with this committee. The goal is to hold committee meetings outside of the full body meeting, with succinct reports only during the main WHBG meeting; Matt noted that there were sign-up sheets for both Membership and Communications Committees.

CNBDU – Cindy Fischer, Joe Sandmann

Joe recommended submission of a request for major (over \$30k) project funding for \$500k for streetscape improvements between Gilbert and Copelen, with no proposal for a minor (\$30k or less) project; the pre-application(s) for these projects are due March 1. WHRF expects the actual project cost to be about \$600k, and they are waiting on a quote for burial of power lines. This will be the same kind of streetscaping as was previously installed between Kemper and Victory Pkwy. Kevin said that the overall strategy is to implement streetscaping block by block as each gets new development, but some locations just need funding such as from CNBDU. Motion to draft a letter of support for this pre-application proposal was approved, Kathryne Gardette 1st, Cindy Fischer 2nd.

Cindy announced that the operating funds budget of \$4,600 was approved the prior week, which provides funding for certain specific endeavors and categories through the end of June 2017; she reviewed these spending categories. The next funding cycle will begin on July 1, and we can begin thinking now of how to best utilize those funds. Cindy said that we need to ensure that we don't let any go to waste, noting that category allocations can be adjusted. Joe said that Music Off McMillan could use up funds, and Kevin noted that coordinated cleanups are another option.

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Other Matters:

Joe announced that the WHRF has applied for a grant to establish a residential program similar to the current Facade Improvements Program that they offer to business district storefronts. This would be a program that offers forgivable loans to owner-occupied homes, possibly just in the SW quadrant. Michael, who serves on the review committee for the current Facade Improvements Committee, asked how important it would be that projects are “facade” in nature, and Joe replied that it will cover only improvements that are visible from the street. WHRF still needs to collect letters of interest from local residents.

Guest speakers from Cincinnati Public Schools – Susan Bunte, Bill Myles, Yolanda Smith, and Pat Neal-Miller – spoke about the Spencer Center, which is to be a school for gifted children about a block away from Douglass School. This will serve about 500-600 students, intending to be open for grades 3-8 by August and for other grades later. The building will not look like a traditional school, they will have project-based programs, and they are looking for true partnerships with community organizations.

Kathryne said that CPS doesn't reach out to the community prior to decisions being made, as this is twice in 12 months that major decisions affecting the neighborhood have been made. Kevin said that while we are happy to have the new school, Douglass is still struggling and yet has the capacity for hundreds more students. Bill said that there wasn't enough space at Douglass to add the programs they intend, and that they will be more involved with the community going forward. Yolanda said they want to be good neighbors, and Susan said that the LSDMC is the decision-making committee that could use more participants. Kathryne noted that the WHAC already has a representative on that committee.

Aimee presented a flyer for “Hoops & Hops” coming up on March 18, which is a fundraiser by Mercy Neighborhood Ministries hoping to raise \$40k.

Matt reminded everyone of the new softball league that is going forward, with flyers to be forthcoming soon. This will be a league that will be dominated by the sports prowess exhibited by the team sponsored by JustQ'in, according to Matt.

Meeting adjourned at approx. 9:50 AM.