

Roll Call

A neighborhood meeting of the Kalamazoo City Commission was held on Monday, November 16, 2015 at 6:00 p.m. in the Community Room at City Hall, 241 W. South Street.

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT:

Mayor Bobby J. Hopewell
Vice Mayor Don Cooney
Erin Knott
Shannon Sykes

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT:

David Anderson*
Matt Milcarek
Jack Urban*

Also present were Deputy City Manager Patsy Moore and City Clerk Scott Borling.

Commissioner Cooney, seconded by Commissioner Sykes, moved to excuse the absences of Commissioners Anderson, Milcarek, and Urban. With a voice vote the motion passed.

Miscellaneous Communications

An opportunity was given for miscellaneous communications, but no communications were offered.

Neighborhood Communications

Representatives from the following neighborhood associations and community groups were present and addressed the City Commission:

Oakwood Neighborhood Association

Lizzie Stuart, President
Cheryl Lord, Executive Director

Stuart Area Restoration Association

Max Tibbetts, Board Chair
Sarah Hoisington, Executive Director

Oakwood Neighborhood Association

The Oakwood Neighborhood Association representatives:

- distributed copies of a brochure on the Oakwood Neighborhood Association and the November 2015 edition of the *Oakwood Times* newsletter. Copies of these documents were filed with the papers for this meeting.
- reported on recent and upcoming Association activities, including a volunteer recognition program on October 25th, a holiday party for on December 6th, and the Bell, Book and Canto holiday concert on December 18th.
- announced the Association was conducting a food drive during the month of November.

*Commissioners Anderson and Urban arrived at 6:05 p.m.

- thanked the Parks and Recreation Department for working with the Association to increase funding for the after school program in 2016.

- reported the Parks and Recreation Department was working with the Friends of Woods Lake group on the Woods Lake Beach Park improvement project.
- thanked the City Clerk for working with the Association to find a better polling facility for Precinct 12, as Oakwood Bible Church was not working out.
- thanked the Public Services Department for replacing yield signs with STOP signs and for quickly addressing weed violations.
- stated the Public Safety Department's Knock and Talk initiative had been well received by residents.
- reported 5,273 contacts through the Neighborhood Center, including 1,307 youth contacts.
- indicated the Association had benefitted from 4,170 volunteer hours through October, which was valued at \$96,409.

Oakwood
Neighborhood
Association (cont'd)

Vice Mayor Cooney encouraged Ms. Lord to give feedback to Public Safety Chief Jeff Hadley regarding the Knock and Talk program. How is after school program going?

In response to a question from Commissioner Cooney, Ms. Lord stated the After School Program was licensed to do one activity, and the Association had chosen tutoring. Ms. Lord described the After School Program, including the daily routine, activities, and incentives offered to students. Ms. Lord also related some of the Program's success stories.

The Stuart Area Restoration Association representatives:

Stuart Area
Restoration
Association

- reported the Association was working on the properties at 530 Douglas Avenue 613 Stuart Avenue.
- stated volunteers were working to remove the corner flower beds on Kalamazoo Avenue due to liability concerns.
- indicated there was a lot of work being done at the old fire station and indicated the renovations were scheduled to be completed in the Spring.
- thanked City staff for their work on the Jay Rhodes Building to get it demolished.
- stated the housing market in Stuart was hot, and the majority of sales were for owner occupied houses.
- indicated new people were interested in serving on the Association's Board of Directors.
- reported there were 25 major housing violations over the summer, and after the Association reached out to these property owners only four violations remained outstanding for the City to address.

Stuart Area
Restoration
Association (cont'd)

- offered remarks on “authentic communication” and stated the City needed to understand the differences between “stakeholders” and “citizens” and the engagement strategies that would work with each group.
- indicated the timeline for the 2016 neighborhood funding application process had created difficulties for the Association.
- distributed invitations to the Association’s annual holiday party on December 16th and the November 2015 edition of *Stuart Neighborhood News*. Copies of these documents were filed with the papers for this meeting.
- described upcoming informational sessions on window rehabilitation and home security.
- stated residents were seeing a rise in crimes against pets.

Citizen Comments

Next, an opportunity was given for citizen comments.

George Magas, City resident, reported the Downtown Development Authority (DDA) had sent the 5-Year Parking Plan back to the Parking Committee and stated the primary area of concern was the elimination of the 90-minute parking spaces. Mr. Magas discussed the need for additional signage for the Arcadia Ramp and offered remarks about condemned properties on Burdick and Portage Streets.

Commissioner
Comments

Finally, an opportunity was given for miscellaneous comments by City Commissioners.

Mayor Hopewell noted the Commission didn’t direct staff, and it was often more effective to direct comments and concerns to the Department Directors or the City Manager. Mayor Hopewell clarified the DDA had not “voted down” the 5-Year Parking Plan but remanded it to the Parking Committee for further review.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 6:36 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Scott A. Borling
City Clerk

For City Commission approval on December 7, 2015

Approved by: _____

Bobby J. Hopewell, Mayor
Dated: December 7, 2015

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