

Benton Park West Neighborhood Association  
Neighborhood Meeting Minutes

Thursday, February 20th, 2020

Submitted by: Erin Godwin

Call to order, Tim Thomas -7:04 pm

## Attendance - **28 adults & 2 youth** - Roll Call

- President - Scott McIntosh - **Absent**
- Vice President- Tim Thomas - **Present**
- Secretary - Erin Godwin - **Present**
- Treasurer - Linda Hennigh - **Present**
- Member At-Large - Pam Welsh - **Present**
- Member At-Large - Gwynn Jackson - **Present**
- Beautification - Stephanie McKinney - **Present**
- Block Link - Chris Schmidt - **Present**
- Communications - Scott McIntosh
- Community Garden - Linda Hennigh
- Our Neighborhood Garden - Scott McIntosh
- Dog Park - Jeni Poole - Absent
- Facilities - Bill Byrd - **Present**
- Fundraising - **Vacant**
- Housing Committee - Scott McIntosh
- SLACO Committee - Linda Hennigh
- Membership – Bill Byrd /Rosie Jackson - Absent
- Quality of Life and Safety - **Vacant**
- Youth Outreach - **Vacant**
- Cherokee Street Liaison - **Vacant**

## Notes

### 1. Introductions of new board members

### 2. Review November Meeting Minutes

**Freddie** moves, Chris Schmidt seconds, passes

### 3. Review November and December Treasurer's Report

a. Pam Welsh moves, Gwynn Jackson seconds, passes

### 4. New Member and Visitor Introductions

a. Renewals

1. **The Alberts**

## 2. Bill Byrd

b. Visitors

c. New Member

**Erin and Matt** on Arsenal

**BPW Committees** - There are a number of committees that can use volunteer input; you can help with one event or do more.

- **Community Garden** - There are four open plots at the community garden. \$10 per plot. Email Linda at [treasurer@bentonpark.org](mailto:treasurer@bentonpark.org) to get a plot.
- **SLACO Committee** - The Annual SLACO Conference will be at Vashon High School, April 4th at 7:30 am. This year's theme is youth; there is lunch and a variety of classes. Six residents can attend the conferences for free; email [treasurer@bentonparkwest.org](mailto:treasurer@bentonparkwest.org) to get a free ticket.
- **Youth Outreach** - Easter Eggstravaganza at Gravois Park 10-12 on Saturday, April 11. Volunteers are needed to help run the easter egg hunt and game. Please talk to Chris Schmidt if you would like to help or donate candy, etc.

### **Dan Guenther - 9th Ward Alderperson**

- Cosponsored Board Bill 189 with Christine Ingrassia - "Red Flag Law" to prohibit concealed carry weapons for any person subject to a restraining order for domestic violence. Had committee hearing; is currently being held to further confer with police and legal experts.
- First hearing in the Health Committee for a bill to provide six weeks of paid parental or caregiver leave for city employees.
- Alderwoman Spencer vacant buildings absentee landlords. Currently building inspectors who go to board up vacant buildings or cite overgrown lawns face danger. Add 150 fee for any building that must be boarded up by the city to pay for security/police accompaniment.
- Aldermanic Board Resolution 205 will direct the Board of E & A to not fund the workhouse, end federal contracts for housing federal inmates in order to provide sufficient space in the City Justice Center, and divert the \$16 million in savings to social services. Residents can reach out to Board President Reed and Mayor Krewson by email to express support. There have now been three hearings but the last two lacked a quorum to enable a vote. We currently have no pretrial services, mental health, or drug care; this will free up money for that. You can find more information on the Close the Workhouse website.
- DeSales didn't get funding but asked for Alderman Guenther to hold the parcel until they can submit their next LIHTC application in August. The extra time also provides time for more input from the neighborhood on plans.
- 3214-16 Pennsylvania had back wall out for years and Doug Bower rehabbed it and now has it rented out. Alderman Guenther will work to identify more potential rehab opportunities for Mr Bower. If you know a property that might be a good prospect for

rehab.

- Over 2 weeks over 200 trees were removed, all trees removed were inspected by certified arborists. Over half were Ash trees removed due to Emerald Ash Borer infestation; remaining Ash trees will be given annual injections. Also removed were Oak trees with Oak Gall Disease, Sweetgum trees which have been a source of lawsuits, and Bradford Pears which drop limbs and cause property damage. Stump removal requires Citizen Service Bureau requests to make it a priority; you can report any stump even if not by your home. Please also request new trees. Only 1/3 to 50% of trees make it to full size. Forestry has been marking utilities along curbs to facilitate new plantings this season. Tree removals are being done ward by ward.

### **Gagik (Jack) Khoudian - District 3 Community Outreach Officer**

- January 2019 crimes 15, 2020 had 23, but crimes against persons is down 44%. Most crimes are crimes of opportunity. Dark tints on cars mean people will smash the window to get in and there is no loud noise, so it is easier to get in.
- Lock your doors; some burglaries occur when they are left unlocked
- There have been 13 larcenies from vehicles but no package thefts
- All stolen vehicles were recovered
- Wednesday Feb 26, 6 pm safety meeting at Roosevelt High School auditorium, public safety meeting with mayor and aldermen in attendance.
- Always call in crimes, even minor; you don't even have to give your address, just the block. This ensures resources are allocated to the neighborhood.
- Texas and Crittendon has Real Time Crime Center (RTCC) cameras that read license plates and provide a live feed to reference for evidence and catch stolen vehicles. This was in response to an incident with 60 rounds fired; to keep things de-escalated.
- A Cherokee beat officer will be taking over for Officer Khoudian who will be in classes.

### **Barb Potts - Neighborhood Stabilization Officer**

- There are census jobs for \$23/hour with flexible hours, weekly pay and paid training. Go to [www.2020census.gov/jobs](http://www.2020census.gov/jobs).
- There are 700 jobs available with the city. Forestry and other seasonal crews will be hiring. City now pays \$15/hour. [Stlouis-mo.gov](http://Stlouis-mo.gov) for job listings.
- Please report illegal dumping. Reports get a \$100 reward per conviction.
- Street light project to find all street lights needing repair March 1-8. Call Ameren for alley lights and CSB for street lights.

### **Emily Thenhaus - Cherokee Street CID**

- CID has a number of committees- beautification, public art, etc; you can find info at [CherokeeStreet.com](http://CherokeeStreet.com)
- [CherokeeStreet.com](http://CherokeeStreet.com) also includes a business directory, press stories, CID info, committees, comprehensive events calendar, and a blog.
- STL Stylehouse at Cherokee and Compton will celebrate their 10th Anniversary with a block party from 12-5, March 28th. Flowers and Weeds will be celebrating their 5th Anniversary.

- LoFi 'music festival' April 11- 18 live music videos will be filmed with all music genres. Free to attend.
- The CID has requested LED lights for west of Nebraska to improve visibility
- Working to get secondary officers on Cherokee from the city in the near future.
- CID board and others are trying to reignite plans for Love Bank Park at Cherokee and Nebraska. If you have ideas for infrastructure or programming, reach out to Emily.

### **Attendance Prizes**

- a. Pack of Bees Knees Cocktails- Jennifer Albert
- b. Wine- Jacque Schmidt
- c. Free Frosty for a Year from Wendy's- Matt
- d. Purse- ?

### **50/50 - Bill Byrd**

- a. \$40 total
- b. \$20 for the winner
- c. Pam Welsh won

### **Announcements**

- b. Neighborhood cameras - Contact Chris Schmidt with information about your external cameras so officer Khoudian can reach out for evidence when crimes occur.
- e. Five Star Senior Center will have a trivia event at St. Wenceslaus on February 29

### **Meeting Adjourned - 8:00 PM**

- a. Mathew moves, Cory seconds, passes