

WBNA Board Meeting by Zoom February 16, 2021

President Dave Holland called the meeting to order at 7:09.

Board Members present: Dave Holland, Jaclyn Lanae, Pat Roseland, Rose DuBois, and Joy Rehfeld. Members Sharissa Hermanson, Deb Jensen and Jim Shaw were also in attendance.

The current agenda and minutes from the January 19 meeting were approved. John Wilmes was unable to attend, so there is no Treasurer's Report.

NEIGHBORHOOD SECURITY: Dave, Lt. Sigel, Pat

Updates on Arson Arrest: Lt. Sigel informed us that the suspect was arrested and charged with 5 arsons, and more charges may be coming. The arrest was due to investigative police work, and no tips were received. The reward money will be left unawarded.

Homicide on Flormann: Lt Sigel states the case is ongoing, and the PD is unable to release information. He further stated that there is no danger to the community; the perpetrator and victim likely knew each other. Security Cameras: Dave has had requests for recommendations for security cameras. Dave explained there are two ways to go with cameras – individual residential which range in cost of \$50-\$250, or commercial grade, which run about \$1000+ per. Lt. Sigel said “you get what you pay for. The commercial ones have great capabilities, more than a single homeowner might need, or a system that can be coordinated with the PD.” Rose said Ring works fine, but info is delayed. Dave explained that a network of commercial cameras can be owned, maintained and managed by an entity, but it would be more complicated than WBNA can sustain. He suggested a better solution may be that individual homeowners buy and install their own cameras. The individual cameras can still be linked together an IP address, and be monitored by one WBNA manager and/or the RCPD. Deb Jensen said that MRRG is considering hiring a security patrol company to monitor businesses on Mt. Rushmore Rd, and asked if WBNA would want to partner. Deb is investigating pricing and will share that information at our next meeting.

Lt Sigel stated that councilman Nordstrom was looking into possible grants for security, as Robbinsdale Watch Group is looking into a grant. Pat volunteered to call Ritchie. Pat requested information on recent crimes in the area. Lt Sigel detailed few incidents in the area, other than the homicide on Flormann. He educated us on the difference between a robbery (person crime to steal by force) and a burglary (entering a structure to commit a crime, usually theft). In the past month, there's been little activity in the West Blvd area.

WILSON PARK FESTIVAL: Sharissa

Sharissa states that she has sent Festival applications to vendors and applied to the City for use of Wilson Park, which should be approved once our insurance is renewed

in the next month. Response from vendors is very positive – they’re excited to have the Festival back. Sharissa is looking for volunteers to help vendors as they arrive – direct to their booth areas, answer questions, help carry things if necessary. She’s looking for help with trash management before, during, and after the festival, as well as people to work in the gazebo. She wants to form a committee to help with planning – someone to find and arrange entertainment, another to act as volunteer coordinator, etc. All interested parties can contact Sharissa by the email account wblvdevents@gmail.com. She states there are 10 spots designated for food vendors, and food trucks may be considered, depending on the diversity of applications received. Jaclyn volunteered to provide contacts for entertainment. Sharissa will post requests for volunteers on Facebook, our website, and in the newsletter. Pat suggested we contact the Wilson Park beautification group that planted and maintained the park last summer as possible volunteers.

WEBSITE UPDATES: Jaclyn, Sharissa

Jaclyn states they had to rebuild the website and reorganize the content to reflect the vision of WBNA, providing a distinction between the historic district and the local historical society. They would like board members to provide a headshot and short bio, which should be sent to Sharissa. They’re discussing having a historical component, to list historic facts relating to West Blvd for use in marketing and drawing the community together.

Sharissa gave us a virtual tour of what she called the “rough draft” of the website, demonstrating the ease of navigation to find all the information provided on the website.

She has created a PayPal account linked to our bank account, so new members can join and pay dues, contribute or donate to various projects or causes. A discussion ensued regarding the creation of a donation fund to help the arson victims. As the arson reward money was not awarded, Jaclyn suggested that WBNA donate some of that money to the victims, if they are willing to accept a donation. Sharissa reminded WBNA Board members to write a quick bio for the website.

NEWSLETTER: Elizabeth

Elizabeth was not able to attend. She’s working on it, and still planning for the first edition to come out on April 1.

MEMBERSHIP: Joy

Joy reported that there have been no new members. The current membership stands at 114. Of those, 54 members are paid up on dues; 57 are behind, and 3 are designated as Lifetime members. It’s difficult to ask for dues when we’ve not had a meeting in a year, and the membership drive will pick up as we are able to meet in person. Joy is planning to have a WBNA Membership Booth at the Festival. Also, as members start using the website, they will be able to look up their status and pay dues. It was suggested that a membership form be included in the Newsletter, or a link to the website. As soon as the website is ready, Dave suggested we email those who are behind on dues as a reminder and include a link to the website where residents can renew their membership.

STREET LIGHT PROJECT: Dave

Grants: Dave researched available grants, and discovered two – both due October 1, 2021. The Deadwood Grant through the State Historical Society is a possibility, but it's not clear if street lights fit that grant, and the amount of money is limited. The second grant is through the DOT and has a \$50,000 minimum. Lights, sidewalks, safety upgrades at Wilson School: The DOT grant includes lights and other possible projects, such as the Safe Routes to Schools program, which would help repair sidewalks. Sidewalks are needed at the open area that is next to the old MG Oil building which has a railroad crossing. A sidewalk is needed on the west side of WB between St. Andrew and St. Patrick Streets. There are documented safety issues near Wilson School that could be addressed through the DOT grant. Improvements would become City projects because the City would be the sponsor of the grant. It would be an 80/20 split; DOT pays 80% of the cost and City pays the remaining 20%.

Dave is working with the BH Council of Local Govts, which is the local entity that writes grants for the City. Eirik is working with the City of RC. He sent an email to the City engineer stating that WBNA has raised \$10,000 to contribute toward the new lights. If the engineer is on board, he will take it to the Council. The city would have incentive to add the sidewalk at the railroad crossing, as it's very expensive, and the DOT grant specifically lists "pedestrian crossings of railroad tracks" in the grant application. Board members were in favor of applying for both grants, and especially the DOT grant which would allow us to obtain historic lighting, add sidewalks, and contribute to safety issues near Wilson Elementary.

Dark Skies: Jaclyn states the impact of losing dark at night due to artificial lighting affects more than humans, but also wildlife. Diane Knutson, president of International Dark Skies is a South Dakotan and is interested in helping us navigate this and may be able to help with funding. She will help us select lights that qualify. Dave and Eirik are in communication with Dakota Supply Group, vendor for City streetlights. Their rep Julie Wood is a lighting specialist who knows Diane Knutson and will help us comply with Dark Skies-friendly lights.

SNOW REMOVAL: Dave

Dave suggested we coordinate snow removal on West Blvd only, as neighborhood walkers use those sidewalks as much as the homeowners. He suggested we hire one company to do snow removal for West Blvd only – no side streets. This should be self-supporting through donations. We can canvass the neighborhood to determine local interest, and possibly start next year. There were comments for and against. Rose was secretary for a homeowners association. For the HOA, snow removal was a major expense and residents came to depend on it and complained when it wasn't done to their liking. It depends on how many times it snows, what the contributions would be, etc. The Board agreed to check out costs – such as the guy with the four-wheeler with a blade who currently does snow removal for individuals in the neighborhood. Dave suggested that when we speak to people, we should be clear that we will not require payment from everyone. All moneys are by donation only.

BLOCK PARTY: Dave

Sharissa volunteered to head up the committee. Pat, Becca and Joy volunteered to serve on the committee.

WILSON SCHOOL ADVOCACY: Dave

Dave wants to see what we can do to help save Wilson School from closing. Pat suggested contacting Councilman Bill Evans, as he has expressed interest in saving Wilson, also. This issue will be revisited in August or September.

Dave closed the meeting at 8:37.

The next meeting will be on March 16, 2021 at 7:00.

Respectfully submitted by Joy Rehfeld.