

South End Neighborhood Council
Monthly Meeting August 15, 2011

The meeting was called to order at 7:00pm.

Present: Earl Brydson, Chair; John Pellessier, Corresponding Secretary; Gia Casto; Cary Nilson; Brian Kilen; Jim Brekke; Katherine Sutalo, acting secretary; William King; Tony Caldwell. Fred Brookshier was expected to come, but did not make it. Benjamin Cordy notified the Chair that he is resigning from the Board because he has moved out of the SENCo area.

The minutes of last meeting were not printed due to the corrections made to them. They will be presented for approval at our next monthly meeting.

The Chair recognized Joseph Lonergan, City Council Member representing the 5th District, attending the meeting.

Fire liaison: Alan Estes told us there were 7,700 calls for service from his department in July. In the South End, there were 262 fires, 2,600 medical calls, and 572 other calls. He also passed out flyers on utility safety and knowing when to call 9-1-1.

Metro Parks liaison: Roxanne Miles reported that soccer and football league signups are going on now; the Fall Event Calendars will be out later this month; the Park District has a survey on its website to find out what park programs people participate in and what programs they would like to participate in; and the Pooch Pool Party will be Sept. 10th (after the pool closes for human use).

City Manager's liaison: Katie Hampton reported that billboard code updates were passed which do not allow digital billboards and regulates where signs may go and how far apart they must be. The City Council districts are also being redrawn – the Community Council will consider the redistricting issue on August 25th and probably later as well. Ray Arellano, the former Assistant City Manager, is Acting City Manager until a permanent replacement for Eric Anderson is hired. The City will conduct surveys and meetings to ask the public what qualities are important for the new City Manager to have, before they start the hiring process.

Police, School District, and Tacoma Power liaisons were not present.

Citizen comments:

1. A.D. Redding commented that there seems to be gang activity at Alling Park, with 'vendetta' stencils on the sidewalk and gunfire at night. He and other neighbors have reported the activity to the police. Roxanne will also make sure that Metro Parks removes the graffiti.
2. Pat Lloyd from the Fern Hill neighborhood commented that their neighborhood innovative grant project (adding a safety island to a Fern Hill Elementary School crosswalk project) is already underway. The project is being built by the City and its contractors.

The SENCo Board voted to elect John Pellessier Treasurer, with 6 votes. The votes were counted by the City Manager's liaison. This leaves John's former position of Corresponding Secretary open.

The Chair reminded SENCo members that there is a new bylaws review committee, chaired by William. William will need other people to participate in the committee. The bylaws were last updated in 2008. There is also a new membership and nominations committee, chaired by Kathy, that will also need others to participate. Benjamin's position on the Board is open now; Fred's and perhaps Tony's will expire at the end of 2011. Any nominations should be sent to Kathy by October's meeting to be on the November SENCo Board election ballot.

Earl shared some information from the Community Council meeting about future expansion of the I-5/Hy16 interchange. More ramps will be added to connect the HOV lanes on each highway directly with each other.

Earl and Katie also shared information about a pilot program through the City's Safe and Clean Initiative. This program will use citizens to contact their neighbors about nuisance code violations, in hope of reducing the number of violations that need enforcement by City officials. Many citizens are not aware of the nuisance regulations and are likely to comply if problems are pointed out to them.

No report from the Across the Fence committee: the committee meets in alternate months; their next meeting is in September.

Tony reported on the SENCo Youth Group. There will be only 2 members left this fall, since 3 graduated from high school this year. They plan to hold a potluck cookout soon. Tony is hoping that the School District can help recruit new members for the group. The members are supposed to be 7th and 8th graders, who perform service projects and hear from public officials and non-profit groups. Roxanne pointed out that all Tacoma public middle schools have after-school SPARX programs with on-site coordinators – these coordinators may be able to help Tony recruit for the Youth Group.

Tony also asked whether the City can look into allowing citizens to report crimes by texting, since youth seem to communicate mostly by texting. The Fire Department liaison responded that the new 9-1-1 upgrade currently planned will include: 1. the ability for Fire and Police responders to communicate directly with one another; 2. the ability for 9-1-1 operators to pinpoint the locations of cellphone callers; and 3. the ability for citizens to report emergencies by sending texts and/or pictures. Katie reported that the City is also looking into a cell phone app that will allow people to send texts or photos to City staff to report non-emergency issues.

Meeting was adjourned at 8:06pm.

Minutes submitted by Katherine Sutalo, August 16, 2011.