

Neighbors in South Roanoke Meeting, Tuesday, May 16th, 2017 7:00pm

South Roanoke United Methodist Church

The meeting was called to order by President Barbara Duerk at 7:02. There were 27 people in attendance.

Treasurer Webb Roberts informed the membership that the association currently has an account balance of about \$4,000.

Officer Tinsley, the area's resource officer, reminded everyone to keep your car and home doors locked to "diminish crimes of opportunities." Crime is down in South Roanoke, but he reminded the residents to always report suspicious activity either by calling 911 or emailing him – brian.tinsley@roanokeva.gov Also, sharing suspicious activity via the Nextdoor app can create a community watch to keep everyone on the lookout.

Dale Crawford from the city's code enforcement division heard the concerns of the residents regarding AirBNBs. He suggested that anyone with concerns/complaints please contact the area specialist, Barry Stacy (853-1451,) or the zoning administrator, Jillian Moore (853-2346.) Complaints/concerns can also be reported by calling the hotline 853-2344 or 853-2000.

Fire Department Captains Jeremy Bennington and William Benson and Wildfire Hazard Mitigation Specialist Bradley Wright gave a presentation on the "Ready, Set, Go" wildland fire preparedness effort. South Roanoke has many "at risk" areas for wild fires. It is important that residents create a defensible space of at least 50 feet away from their homes: clear leaves, branches, and gutters. Also, consider replacing mulch with rocks. They are happy to come to your house to assess and help you prepare a fire prevention plan. Please contact them: Jeremy Bennington <Jeremy.Bennington@roanokeva.gov>, william.benson@roanokeva.gov, or Brad Wright brad.wright@dof.virginia.gov Also, please visit <http://www.wildlandfirersg.org/> for more information on this important program.

Dr. Kathy Tate and Resource Officer Labreska Whitaker reported on the latest news from Crystal Spring Elementary. There is a new bike pad, thus a "bike safety" training was held. The air conditioners will be replaced this summer. The playground turf is in need of replacement. The cost is about \$75,000 for this project; there will be fundraisers and residents are asked to please consider donating to this wonderful neighborhood asset and park.

Roanoke City Police Department Crime Prevention Specialist Scott Leamon informed the membership about Bradley Free Clinic's Roanoke Valley Hope Initiative. RVHI is designed to provide a gateway to professional resources for persons suffering from SUDs (Substance Use Disorders), in any form (opiates, meth, marijuana, alcohol), within the greater (and surrounding) Roanoke area who request entrance into the HOPE program. This program is also designed to inform the community at-large as to the severity of the Opioid epidemic confronting this community. RVHI will act as a gatekeeper and a pathway for the community to learn about and access substance abuse services that are available to everyone (hopefully, before an overdose or fatality occurs). RVHI consists of volunteer members, the RCPD, and civilian partners that will facilitate monthly (or more frequent) community-based "drop in" sessions/meetings for persons with SUD's where they can get information about professional health services available to them, as well as turn in any drugs or drug paraphernalia they may have in their possession. The community-based "drop in" sessions take place at the Bradley Free Clinic on the second Monday of each month. Intake hours will be from 11:00AM – 4:00PM. From Monday – Friday 9 – 5pm the Roanoke Police Department will accept walk-ins and will link them with volunteer Angels as best as can be done – the placement process will be more comprehensive and streamlined on the official "drop in" days."

Danielle Dehart from the office of Environmental Management addressed the members about the importance of keeping our valley and waterways clean. Clean up after your pet, don't sweep anything into storm drains, and don't litter. Please visit <https://www.roanokeva.gov/500/Stormwater> for more information.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:04pm. The next meeting will be on July 18th.

Minutes respectfully submitted by,

Stewart Putney

Secretary, Neighbors in South Roanoke

Neighbors in South Roanoke Meeting, Tuesday, January 17th, 2017 7:00pm

South Roanoke United Methodist Church

The meeting was called to order at 7:00pm by President Barbara Duerk. There were 17 people in attendance. Mr. Ric McClure, the music minister for SRUMC opened the meeting with a blessing.

Roanoke City's Treasurer, Evelyn Powers informed the membership that she will be running for reelection for her position. She informed the residents that a new program will allow for the treasurer's office to now handle the following transactions normally handled only through the Department of Motor Vehicles: requests for handicap placards, vehicle registration, and license renewal. This should cut down on the wait time at the DMV, and it will also help bridge the budget shortfall that the city is facing this year, as the state will be paying the treasurer's office to provide these services.

Officer C.B. Tinsley introduced himself as the resource officer for South Roanoke. He advised against leaving your car unattended while it is warming up in the cold temperatures. Several cars in the city have been stolen in the last few months because of this. He updated us on the break-ins from over the summer. It is believed that the person who was arrested in the county was the same person who was burglarizing in South Roanoke. He reminded everyone to not leave your car or house doors open. If you have any information on any criminal activity, he asked that you call 853-2212, or his number – 853-5401. If it is happening then, call 911.

Dale Crawford of the Code Enforcement department for the city of Roanoke explained what his department cites as prohibited: vegetation over 10 inches high (not including shrubs and trees) and accumulation of trash and debris on a property, storing furniture, appliances, miscellaneous household goods, or other items on a front porch or in a yard for more than 24 hours. The city requires that residents mow the strip of grass between the sidewalk and the road/street. A permit is required to erect a fence or deck, and a vehicle or trailer located on private property must be in operating condition and display both a valid license plate and inspection decal. To report violations, please contact him at 853-1049 or through email: dale.crawford@roanokeva.gov

Everyone is encouraged to join the Nextdoor application. This can be downloaded on your phone or on your computer. It is an excellent information sharing source.

Webb Roberts, board treasurer, announced that the bank account has about \$4800.00. We have had 15 new families join Neighbors in South Roanoke.

Tammy Hale, editor for the social publication "South Roanoke Living" talked to the group about the magazine which is meant to unite the neighborhood. It features different families in the neighborhood and shares information about the events in the area, recipes, and any good that news that anyone would like to share and celebrate.

President Barbara Duerk enlisted the help of the membership to note the successes made by the neighborhood association since the reboot of the organization one year ago.

- A new Facebook page for the organization and the Nextdoor app
- Potholes and sidewalks have been repaired
- A bike rack and pad will be installed at Crystal Spring Elementary School
- Overhauled and improved safety of the crosswalk around Crystal Spring Elementary School
- A Bluegrass music series at Mill Mountain campground

The meeting was adjourned at 8:20pm. The next meeting will be on April 18th. (THIS WAS MOVED TO MAY 16)

Minutes respectfully submitted by,

Stewart Putney

Secretary, Neighbors in South Roanoke

Neighbors in South Roanoke Meeting, Tuesday, October 18th, 2016 7:00pm

South Roanoke United Methodist Church

The meeting was called to order at 7:01pm by President Barbara Duerk. There were 52 people in attendance. She welcomed the residents and speakers for the evening.

Stewart Putney, secretary for “Neighbors in South Roanoke,” told the group that the membership now has a Facebook page and asked people to please like this page, as well as signing up for the free neighborhood sharing app “Nextdoor.” Stewart is the spokesperson for the neighborhood to report issues with street and sidewalk repair to the city. Please notify her of these things by calling her home phone – 344-7771, email her at info@soroneighbors.com, or send her a message on the Neighbors in South Roanoke Facebook page.

Delegate Sam Rasoul addressed the membership. He asked that everyone learn about the constitutional amendments on the upcoming ballots on Election Day. Also, he said that there is a budget short-fall for the 2016-2017 fiscal year, but there is a “rainy day” fund to bridge the gap. For the upcoming 2017-2018 budget, there will be tough things to address: possible no pay increases for teachers and other state employees and possibly adding a surcharge for using plastic bags at check-out. Roanoke will have train passenger service back as of 2017.

Scott Leamon, certified Crime Prevention Specialist for the Roanoke City Police Department, spoke to the membership regarding the recent burglaries in our neighborhood. There were four events between the last part of September and the first two weeks of October. There is a man in custody that has ties to the burglaries in the county, and the city police department is working to tie him to the ones in our area. You can’t control other people’s actions, but you can “target harden” your property to decrease the possibility of a crime. He stressed several points to the residents.:

- 1) Always locks your doors.**
- 2) Notify neighbors if you will be out of town; you can also let Scott know scott.leamon@roanokeva.gov and he will send police cars to patrol your house and yard during your absence.**
- 3) Invest in a basic home security system and/or buy a dog.**
- 4) Call 911 to report any suspicious activity every time to start a documentation trail.**

Brian Tinsley is our neighborhood’s resource officer. Either he or Scott will attend our membership meetings to give crime reports for our neighborhood.

Chris Chittum, planning director for the city of Roanoke, notified the group that the city would be considering an update to the zoning in the city. This change would allow lots of at least 5,000 square feet to convert single family homes into rental duplexes. He said that homeownership is down, and this would encourage investors to develop vacant homes and undeveloped lots into rentals. There are 20 lots in South Roanoke that could be changed.

Bob Clement, Neighborhood Services Coordinator, invited everyone to attend the annual neighborhood potluck dinner at Jefferson Center on Friday, November 11th at 6:00pm.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:30pm

Minutes respectfully submitted by,

Stewart Putney

Secretary, “Neighbors in South Roanoke”

Neighbors in South Roanoke Meeting, Tuesday, July 19th, 2016 7:00pm

South Roanoke United Methodist Church

The meeting was called to order at 7:03 pm by President Barbara Duerk. There were 33 people in attendance. She welcomed the residents and introduced the other board members: CJ Meidlinger (VP), Webb Roberts (treasurer), and Stewart Putney (secretary).

Officer Bill Green addressed the group regarding crime prevention tips. Lock your cars; don't leave anything of value in your vehicle; report suspicious people and activity to 911. Neighbors help neighbors. He also discussed a recent robbery in the 2300 block of Crystal Spring Avenue. This was an isolated incident that was drug-related. Animal Control Officer Hanes addressed the concerns of the recent coyote sighting/attack on Avenham. She said that although they are nocturnal, if they smell food from a previous BBQ, they will track during the day. They are rarely rabid, just hungry. A rabid animal appears drunk with discharge from the mouth and nose. Call 853-2411 to report unusual animal activity.

Kenneth Lang, the southwest quadrant collections inspector, spoke to the membership about recent changes in solid waste pick-up. Since the 2015 streamlining of recycling began, there has been an 85 % increase in items being recycled. As far as brush pick-up, small piles can no longer be collected unless it is leaf pick-up season. Please place small brush directly into your trash can, as during this time of year, it all gets taken to the landfill. Large brush (4'x4'x4' up to 6'x6'x6') will be collected weekly by way of pitchforks. You may leave other large bulk pick up items of 3 things per week. Please place old recycling bins in your new recycling can. Only place loose recycling items in the blue bins – no leafy materials.

Andrea Garland and Hong Lui from the Roanoke Transportation Division spoke to the residents about the problems of speeding in the neighborhood. They advised that we all need to be diligent and work together, as most speeders in the neighborhood LIVE here. Form a neighborhood watch to report speeders. The app – “Nextdoor” was discussed as free way for all South Roanokers to connect and look after each other and share information. The Franklin Road Bridge into downtown is slated for replacement as of this November; the project may take up to two years.

Problems with pot holes and sidewalks requiring repair should be reported to Stewart Putney via “Neighbors in South Roanoke” website.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:20pm

Minutes respectfully submitted by,

Stewart Putney

Secretary, Neighbors in South Roanoke

Neighbors in South Roanoke Meeting, Tuesday, April 19th, 2016 7:00pm

South Roanoke United Methodist Church

The meeting was called to order at 7:03pm by President Barbara Duerk and welcomed the 77 attendees. Boy Scout Troop 210 gave the flag presentation and the "Pledge of Allegiance."

Vice President C.J. Meidlinger (*moderator for the forum*) asked each candidate to give a 2 minute opening statement about themselves.

Mayoral Candidate, Martin Jeffrey: "My mission is to bring everyone in Roanoke together."

Candidate Freeda Cathcart: "We have a great quality of life here in Roanoke. We need young people to stay in Roanoke and get jobs here."

Candidate Michelle Dykstra: "Thank you for hosting the marathon! I was born and raised here and moved back here and want to grow businesses here."

Councilwoman Anita Price: "My life's work is with families and children."

Candidate John Garland: "I was born and raised here. I am a consensus builder; I believe in building businesses and economic development."

Candidate Trish White-Boyd: "The residents are in a position of power to make changes in this election. We need job opportunities."

Candidate Jim Garrett: "I was going to sit this election out until I felt that I needed to join in to speak out against the potential of electing Roanoke to be a "Sanctuary City.""

VP Meidlinger asked the candidates their opinions on adding a park back to South Roanoke since ours was taken away by a Carilion land buy-out:

MJ: "We need one, and it can be done"

FC: "We need to have the neighbors update the Neighborhood Plan to be able to tell the city what they want."

MD: "Neighbors need to come together to come up with a plan and then tell council."

John Garland: "Neighbors should communicate their needs for parks to parks and recreation."

TWB: "Our government should respect neighborhoods' needs."

Jim Garrett: "Money that went into building Elmwood Park could have gone into our neighborhoods; we should all pay attention to our city's budget."

VP Meidlinger asked the candidates how they will support businesses growth vs the individual Neighborhood Association Plans.

MD: "Our neighborhoods are central and council is the spoke. We should respond to what the neighborhoods want first."

AP: “ We need to be organized – get to know each other – and take care of each other.”

John Garland: “ I want to strengthen the liaison between the neighborhoods and the city.”

TBW: “Our neighborhoods should be more organized.”

Jim Garrett: “ I am not about fluff – on any level. We should communicate our needs.”

FC: “ We need to stimulate activities between neighborhoods and council. We have many great leadership training programs here.”

MJ: “ We need to fund the neighborhood advocacy group for our neighbors for more than \$1,000.00”

Candidate Duane Howard: entered the meeting after his own meeting in South East ended:

“We need to build relationships with the city and the neighborhoods to be able to work together.”

VP Meidlinger *asked the candidates their opinion about how citizens can be more involved with boards that meet mostly during daytime hours – which prevent working people from participating.*

John Garland: “Boards can elect their own start times to be able to include working people.”

TBW: “ These boards should meet at night to allow for more people to be involved.”

Jim Garrett: “These meetings should be at night.”

AP: “ The people should be heard about alternative starting times for board meetings. I am always accessible if anyone ever wants to talk to me about their concerns about anything”

MJ: “ Our priority should always be neighborhoods and solving their problems.”

FC: “ We should have town hall meetings to bring council and neighbors together.”

MD: “ Boards meet different times of the day which allow for more people to be able to be involved. We need more young people to get involved.”

DH: “ We need to do something differently. We need to hear our citizens.”

VP Meidlinger: *How would you balance a business decision vs a neighborhood plan conflict?*

Jim Garrett: “ Neighborhoods are centered – nothing more important.”

DH: “ Rezoning should always be considered – what if the business goes out of business and we are suck with something bad for our neighborhood?”

MJ: “ Neighborhood plans should always be honored first.”

FC: “ We need to create a bridge between businesses and neighbors for conflict resolution.”

MD: “ Conflict = public discourse. Council members should be generous enough to listen to neighbors.”

AP: “ We should all strive for a quality of life regardless of our zip code.”

John Garland: “ Businesses should enhance our neighborhoods – and should consider if they are wanted there.”

TBW: “ I advocate for intervention and remediation.”

WRAP – UP

VP Meidlinger: “ wrap up comments about yourself”

Jim Garrett: “ I am caring, compassionate, and against the idea of “sanctuary city.””

TBW: “ I don’t support the “sanctuary city,” and I will work hard for you.”

MJ: “ We need to come together and become “one.”

AP: “ My focus is always on children and the school system.”

MD: “ I believe in listening to neighbors in helping our government to move in the right direction.”

FC: “ I will always be accessible. My focus will be to grow businesses.”

John Garland: “ I revitalize neighborhoods – I take condemned properties and bring them back to life – and I intend to continue to do that in Roanoke. I want to make a difference in this town.”

DH: “ I want to continue to improve the neighborhood of South East so that we can catch up and be equal to the rest of the city; this will make everyone’s properties values rise.”

The meeting was adjourned at 8:38pm. President Barbara Duerk thanked everyone for attending the meeting. All candidates were invited and attended with the exception of Mayoral Candidate Sherman Lea who was attending another meeting that night.

Minutes respectfully submitted,

Stewart Putney

Secretary, Neighbors in South Roanoke