

**East Allentown Rittersville
Neighborhood Association**

MINUTES

President Dennis Pearson called the regular monthly meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. on May 19, 2014 at St. Peter's Evangelical Lutheran Church.

Present: Three officers (Dennis Pearson, Bob Jacoby, and Dave Schell) and four other neighbors were present at the meeting. Allentown Chief of Police Joel Fitzgerald was also present, as were two other officers.

Secretary Dave Schell handed out copies of the minutes of the meeting of April 21, 2014. It was moved and seconded to approve the minutes as distributed. The motion carried.

Treasurer Bob Jacoby reported that the balance from last month at \$767.57. We paid \$29.99 for storage making our balance \$737.58. The report was approved by voice vote. This month we will have the storage expense and will also have expenses of \$200 for the science fair awards. The awards will be named in honor of two national science fair winners from Allentown.

Dennis Pearson noted that Denton Kriebel has resigned as association vice president due to health considerations. Pearson noted that Kriebel did much for the association during his term. Dave Schell noted that the bylaws provide that in the event of a vacancy caused by resignation, the remaining officers are to choose a person to fill the remainder of the term. He asked that anyone who would be interested in the office or would like to suggest someone else for it make his or her interest or his or her suggestion known to the officers.

Schell reported on various email correspondence he had received since the previous meeting:

- Capt. Tony Alsleben wrote on May 7th that the police Traffic Unit had conducted a detail that day at the Ritter Elementary School, with a focus on double parking and child safety. They stopped ten vehicles and issued seven citations. They had conducted a similar operation the previous week at Mosser Elementary School.
- Phyllis Alexander, City Neighborhood Coordinator, wrote after the last meeting that she had communicated with various city officers concerning items raised at our April meeting:
 - A collapsed wall on E. Walnut Street. This was referred to Mr. Dave Parker.
 - Animal control (specifically skunks). It was noted that only licensed trappers may trap skunks in Pennsylvania. The Allentown animal control officers are not licensed officers. If a skunk appears to be sick or injured the matter should be reported to animal control. If it is merely a nuisance a person can hire a trapper at his or her own expense. There is a list of trappers at allentownrecycles.org.
 - The city is aware of the blighted property at 5 S. Jerome Street, and Code is checking into the matter.
 - The continuing problem with large trucks attempting to turn at E. Gordon and N. Maxwell Streets was referred to Traffic Planning and Control, as were the traffic problems in the narrow 1100 block of E. Livingston Street.
- Schell communicated with Patrick Roels from Building Standards and Safety about any further progress to the blighted property at 404 N. Jerome Street. Mr. Roels replied that there had been an additional hearing before Magistrate D'Amore on May 14th. Again the owners did not show and again they were fined the maximum amount. The property is in the pre-foreclosure stage with

Wells Fargo Bank, which has registered the property on the national VacantRegistry.com site. At present we are still not certain when the repairs will be addressed.

- Schell also asked Ms. Alexander today if she had anything further to report to the members this evening. She sent additional information on the Leadership Institute on Saturday, May 3rd (9 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.), at the Sacred Heart Hospital Conference Center, 421 W. Chew Street. The event is free and lunch is provided. If interested, neighbors are urged to contact Alexander at 610-437-7679 or phyllis.alexander@allentownpa.gov. There are sessions for both adults and teens.

Dennis Pearson introduced Chief of Police Fitzgerald to the members and offered him the floor. The chief said that he has been making the rounds of neighborhood meetings, has been greeted warmly, and asked if we had any questions or comments. He had seen our previous meeting minutes via Capt. Alsleben.

Dave Schell offered to include him on the minutes' distribution, but said that he realized that the chief had many items to deal with and we didn't want to overload his in-box. Chief Fitzgerald replied with thanks, but noted that he asks each area captain for a monthly report, and that this material comes to him via Capt. Alsleben's report.

Dennis Pearson noted that the license transfer from Lower Milford to Allentown for Tony's has been approved by the Allentown City Council by a vote of 4-2 in favor. We are hoping for the best in the way things work out going forward. This is a club license, and since the club has been moved geographically the group will need new members to continue. In response to a question from Dave Schell, Pearson replied that as a club license, patrons of the establishment must be club members or their guests. The chief noted that the police will continue to work with EARN on enforcement.

Schell had a question about traffic stops, as he notices that often these involve two or three police vehicles. He wondered if that was standard practice or if it indicated a more serious reason for the stop. The chief replied that the matter of backup varies based on resources, who is on duty, other calls on those on duty, and so forth, but that multiple vehicles on the scene does not necessarily mean that it is a felony stop.

The group discussed traffic enforcement. The police do have different levels of enforcement depending on time of day or where they receive the most complaints. They try to deploy officers to problem areas and times to get a larger number of major violators.

A neighbor noted that there is a developing problem with the dumping of garbage—household, appliances, automotive, plus bags of garbage—along Bradford Street near where it passes under the Tilghman Street Bridge. If the material is not cleared up it attracts further dumping. This can be a problem in other areas of the city as well, such as on the south side off of Constitution Drive. In addition to police watching the situation, they are trying to get the railroad workers to keep an eye on the areas along the railroad right of way and report problems.

There being no further business, adjournment was moved and seconded, and the meeting adjourned at 7:45 p.m.

Respectfully,

David A. Schell, Secretary