

**East Allentown Rittersville
Neighborhood Association**

MINUTES

President Dennis Pearson called the regular monthly meeting to order at 7:04 p.m. on August 18, 2014 at St. Peter's Evangelical Lutheran Church.

Present: Three officers (Dennis Pearson, Bob Jacoby, and Dave Schell) and eleven other neighbors were present at the meeting. Captain Tony Alsleben and Mike Beidelman of the Allentown Police Department were also present.

Secretary Dave Schell handed out copies of the minutes of the meeting of July 21, 2014. There was one correction—the address of 5 S. Jerome Street was added to the list of “problem properties” that need to be addressed. It was moved and seconded to approve the minutes as corrected. The motion carried.

Treasurer Bob Jacoby reported that the balance was the same as last month--\$449.17. He noted that President Pearson paid for our liability insurance out of his own pocket and that if we had the funds we could possibly reimburse him at a future date. The cost of the insurance was \$237.00. It was moved and seconded to approve the report and the motion carried.

Dave Schell read the letter that we had received from Mayor Pawlowski giving us permission to again have the lights at Irving Park and other locations, and congratulating us on this continuing effort. He also read the letter that neighbor and attorney Robert Pandaleon had written and sent for the Association concerning The Source Hookah Lounge on Hanover Avenue. Legal counsel for the lounge had sent a letter to several neighbors threatening them with legal action if they persisted in complaining about disturbances at the lounge, and our letter noted that they were well within their legal right to do so.

President Pearson explained that the letter from mayor mentioned other areas for our lighting beyond Irving Park since we have continuing permission to put lights at those locations (including Keck Park, the Jerome Street islands, and elsewhere) if we are able.

Pearson invited officers Alsleben and Beidelman to address the group so that they could leave to handle other duties if necessary. The officers made the following points and fielded the following questions.

- East Side statistics show that violent crimes such as robbery are down over 50% on the same period last year. Thefts are down 23%.
- There is a gun buyback coming up on August 23rd from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. in the armory. Gift cards in the amount of \$100 will be given for operational guns and \$15 for non-operational guns.
- Officer Timothy Yanders, the city Crime Prevention Officer, would be joining us to make a presentation about crime prevention and how one can obtain a safety assessment for their property.
- Recent arrests include:

- A nineteen year-old male drunk in the middle of S. Jerome Street. He revealed where he got the alcohol and the suppliers were charged as well.
- Several persons were arrested after a fight at E. Maple and S. Carlisle Streets over something that had started in Keck Park. It was noted that there have been some problems in the Keck Park area that suggest that gangs may again be starting up in that area.
- Irving Park—drug activity is a problem. Sometimes people are present until 2 a.m. The police do check the park regularly, but neighbors asked for more coverage.
- Two rental properties in the 600 block of N. Jerome Street have repeated excessive noise and probable drug activity. Neighbors should report what they are hearing and where. If the reporting person knows that it is rental property they should mention that fact.
- There is high grass at an unoccupied property at 971 E. Elm Street. The grass is occasionally cut but there has been a van parked there without moving for months. The officers noted that if the vehicle is on the property (as this one is) rather than in the street, little can be done about it. Some businesses on Carlisle Street also have problems with uncut grass.
- Pearson noted that more houses appear to be going to sheriff's sales over the past two years. He reported that he had gotten an email from a neighbor on Lacrosse Street concerning probable drug sales in the alley behind the street. This is possibly the 700 block. Officer Beidelman noted that several arrests for drug dealing have already been made in that area.

Officers Alsleben and Beidelman left the meeting at this time and Crime Prevention Officer Timothy Yanders gave the group information about several programs.

- If one is going to be away for a period of time they may call the police desk at 610-437-7753 and request a vigilance officer to keep an extra eye on the property while they are away. There is no cost for this service. Try to make this request at least three days before you are going to be away.
- City residents can be loaned an engraver in "Operation I.D." to mark their major valuables with their driver's license number. Then the items can be identified if they are stolen and subsequently show up at an area pawn shop. Bring your driver's license to Officer Yanders' office at police HQ, 425 Hamilton Street, to borrow the engraver. This is also free of charge.
- The Checkmate Program is something we have covered at previous EARN meetings. One can become registered with the city so that when making a report to the communications center one does not have to give his or her name or other identification, merely their I.D. number. If you are still asked for identification you may refuse to give it and refer again to your number. Married couples may have a joint number or each get a card and number of his or her own. Since the card has to be signed by numerous city officials, including the mayor, it may take up to three months for the application to clear the system.
- The newest program, Yellow Dot, is targeted towards the elderly but can be used by anyone. With this program one gets a folder in which he or she enters information such as name, address, phone, medical history, physician, preferred hospital, etc. The booklet is left in the car's glove compartment and a yellow dot (included with the booklet) is affixed to the rear window of the car (towards the driver's side). Police and emergency

personnel then know to look for the booklet in the event of an accident where the driver is incapacitated. There is also no charge for this service.

At this point Officer Yanders asked if there were any other questions and, there being none, departed the meeting with the thanks of the group.

President Pearson noted that the mayor will be in contact with us for a walking tour, focusing on the problem areas on Jerome Street, possibly in early September. Once we have the date we will announce it via our email distribution list. [Note: if you would like to be added to our distribution list, show up at one of our meetings and ask.]

The next City Council meeting is Wednesday, August 20th at 7:00 p.m. if anyone wants to join to make comments in the Courtesy of the Floor section of the meeting. The Council meets on the first floor of City Hall, 435 Hamilton Street.

Neighbors noted that there is a continuing problem with damages to property by tractor trailers trying to turn at intersections that are too small for them to do so. This has been cited before. This time the intersection mentioned was E. Gordon and N. Oswego Streets, which is barely sufficient for garbage trucks to turn but not for tractor trailers.

Pearson asked if anyone had been having any problems with the trash and recycling day change. No one present indicated any such problem.

There being no further business, adjournment was moved and seconded, and the meeting adjourned at 7:58 p.m.

Respectfully,

David A. Schell, Secretary