

**East Allentown Rittersville
Neighborhood Association**

MINUTES

President Dennis Pearson called the regular monthly meeting to order at 7:01 p.m. on December 21, 2015 at St. Peter's Evangelical Lutheran Church.

Present: Four officers (President Dennis Pearson, Vice President Robert Pandaleon, Treasurer Bob Jacoby, and Secretary Dave Schell) and five other neighbors were present at the meeting, as was Kenneth Heffentrager of the Allentown Tenants' Association and the 10th Ward neighborhood group, and Ben Long, candidate for the 132nd District of the General Assembly.

Secretary Dave Schell handed out copies of the minutes of the meeting of November 16, 2015. It was moved and seconded to approve the minutes as distributed. The motion carried.

President Pearson handed out a sheet with the dates of next year's EARN and Crime Watch presidents' meetings.

Treasurer Bob Jacoby gave his report. The balance is now \$527.03. We received donations of \$75. In addition, we earned \$38 in skate rentals and a \$3 donation when we ran the ice rink at Andre Reed Park on December 11th. It was moved and seconded to approve the report as read. The motion carried.

President Pearson announced that the investigative situation got messier in the city as several additional charges have been filed, the most recent one this morning when the city's former financial director was indicted.

Ben Long, candidate for next year's election in the 132nd District of the General Assembly, was introduced and spoke to the group. Mr. Long answered a number of questions about the current budget process, his belief that the two parties had to reach across the aisle and get work done, and about his background. He works in his family water business and is currently finishing his degree in Political Science at De Sales University.

Pearson noted that the city has borrowed \$4.2 million from the solid waste to fund the general budget, planning for it to be paid back within seven years. Earned income tax will be going up. Rather than going to the taxpayers for approval of the amount above 0.5% for the city and school district the city utilized a state law applying to distressed cities. It will be 1.65% total, of which 0.5% to the school, 0.5% to the city for services, and 0.65% to the city for pension.

As of June 2016 the city will go to a "single stream" system of recycling collection rather than the "dual stream" as at present. Recyclables will still be separated from garbage, but the current green bucket (glass, plastic, metal) will be combined with the blue bucket (paper).

Secretary Schell noted that the city will be replacing the signage on Wahneta Street in the near future. This problem is a problem that we had discussed at a previous meeting with people going in the wrong direction.

Pearson passed around a copy of the Lehigh Valley Housing and Homeless Prevention Resources, which lists phone numbers and other contact information for various social services. This information will be included in our next newsletter that is distributed throughout the east side.

Treasurer Jacoby noted that there have been some water leaks repair needed in the area of E. Tilghman Street and N. Kiowa Street, and also street surface deterioration, both possibly caused by truck traffic. He suggested that we again ask for a posting for no trucks on East Tilghman Street between N. Irving and N. Maxwell Streets, and N. Kiowa Street from Hanover Avenue to Union Boulevard.

Pearson reported on to items of interest before the zoning board. A martial arts studio that has opened on N. Quebec Street just north of Union Boulevard has requested a variance from the parking requirements. They currently have eighteen spaces and the city has asked for 65. They have noted that their business runs on a different schedule than neighboring businesses and they don't have a number of clients at the same time to justify such a need. Additionally, the P&G Auto Works in the 1000 block of E. Livingston Street has asked for a variance to expand their auto repair business.

Ken Heffentrager spoke to the group about the effort being mounted by the Allentown Tenant Association against illegal dumping in the city. The group is actively reporting illegal dump sites and is pushing the city to install roving cameras to catch the perpetrators. People who see illegal dumping in progress are asked to call 911, or dumping can be reported to Allentown recycling at 610-437-8729. The dumping can also be reported to the Tenant Association at 484-202-0742 or admin@allentowntenantassociation.org.

A neighbor reported that work is proceeding on the Old Mosser School on Carlisle Street. It appears that there may finally be electric service on the property since she no longer hears the generator that had previously provided power for tools.

President Pearson noted that St. John's Evangelical Congregational Church on Jerome Street has a program called "The Closet" which collects clothing for young people who are considered "voluntarily homeless" since they are living outdoors away from parents or foster parents. The is no charge for the clothing, and the church also provides spiritual counseling.

There being no further business, adjournment was moved and seconded, and the meeting adjourned at 7:55 p.m.

Respectfully,

David A. Schell, Secretary