

**East Allentown Rittersville  
Neighborhood Association**

**MINUTES**

President Dennis Pearson called the regular monthly meeting to order at 7:03 p.m. on May 18, 2015 at St. Peter's Evangelical Lutheran Church.

Present: Three officers (President Dennis Pearson, Treasurer Bob Jacoby, and Secretary Dave Schell) and five other neighbors were present at the meeting, as were Captain Tony Alsleben and Officer Jeff Wesneski of the Allentown Police Department and General Assembly Rep. Mike Schlossberg.

Secretary Dave Schell handed out copies of the minutes of the meeting of April 20, 2015. It was moved and seconded to approve the minutes as distributed, and the motion carried.

Treasurer Bob Jacoby gave his report. The current balance is \$446.03, the same as last month. We owe \$30 for storage, which will be paid along with another \$30 due this month. It was moved and seconded to approve the report as read and the motion passed.

Representative Schlossberg mentioned that some assistance money is available for organizations such as ours from various state funds, and asked that we make him aware of the projects and needs of the organization to see if some assistance can be obtained.

President Pearson mentioned that that we had received a communication at last month's meeting concerning the East Side Reservoir picnic area. The tables and grilles had been removed. Secretary Schell reported that he had subsequently written to the Parks and Recreation Department, and was assured that there are no plans to remove the picnic pavilion this year. The tables will be returned in the near future, although the grilles will not be.

Secretary Schell also reported on the following items:

- He has completed the flier that we have been discussing for several months, which will tell residents of the East Side about our organization, the Midway Manor neighborhood organization and various East Side youth groups. The city has offered to mail the information to all households in East Allentown.
- He noted that he had received a call from Morning Call reporter Emily Opilo concerning the new wall painting at East Side Tattoo. She asked if we were aware of the painting and whether the neighborhood association was taking a position on it. Schell told her that we were aware of it but were not taking any action, and a subsequent article in the paper reported this, along with a reaction by the owner of East Side Tattoo.
- Schell read a note from Captain Alsleben about police activity in the 1000 block of East Tilghman Street. This resulted in several arrests for drug activity, and was started by an anonymous tip concerning noise and activity. Captain Alsleben noted to the group that he urges people to continue reporting such activities to the police, even if they seem to be minor, since they can lead to larger issues.
- Schell also passed around a flier concerning the Citizens Police Academy this summer.

President Pearson reported on the Mosser Village organization's financial situation as reported in the Morning Call recently. The organization is losing money, dipping into their reserves, and may not last long is the situation is unchanged.

Neighbors mentioned several properties with grass not cut and other neglect in the area of Jay Street and E. Hamilton Street, the 900 block of E. Elm Street, and the 1000 block of E. Walnut Street. Captain Alsleben said that the recycling office should be called about the grass or neglect situations. The city will send a letter to the homeowners informing them that if no action is taken to correct the matter within a certain number of days (usually 7-10) the city will come out and clean up the mess at the homeowners' expense.

Captain Alsleben noted that registration will open tomorrow for the Citizens' Police Academy. The application to attend the academy is available online. The event has a limited number of openings and will probably fill fast, so anyone interested should download and complete an application and take it to the police at 4<sup>th</sup> and Hamilton. It should be taken in person since there are some documents (e.g. driver's license) that have to be copied as part of the application process.

He also noted several recent areas that have been targeted for speeding citations, including Godfrey Street, Graham Street, and the top of the Jerome Street hill. He also noted a recent large bust in the 600 block of Hanover Avenue of a meth lab. That matter started off as a fire call involving a malfunctioning oil heater. Neighbors had also reported people going in and out of the home with tubing and glass containers. He reiterated his request that people report suspicious activity, even if it seems minor.

President Pearson asked him to describe the recent heroic action of Officer Chris Hendricks of the Allentown force who was on the scene of a bad accident on the NE Extension of the Turnpike and assisted in the saving of several lives of people involved.

Representative Mike Schlossberg was given the floor and spoke of recent activity in Harrisburg, particularly with reference to the state budget. Both the governor and legislature have offered proposals to increase sales and income taxes and lower (or eliminate) property taxes. Rep. Schlossberg said that while the final version of the budget is still not clear we have a good chance of coming up with a decent state budget this year.

Pearson asked for progress on the funding bill for the 9-1-1 centers. As currently written this would provide funding for county centers. Most counties have a county-wide center. Allentown and Bethlehem are the only two cities in the state with city centers and they would not be funded under the current bill, but would have to be consolidated with the county centers. This would be unfortunate since the Allentown center is one of the ten best in the state, based on expenses incurred per call. The group also discussed school district consolidation, badly needed in some areas, but an idea that will not fly in the foreseeable future.

Representative Schlossberg handed out his business card to the group and urged those present to contact him at his office at 2030 W. Tilghman Street with any state issues.

President Pearson noted that there may be an official renaming of Irving Park and adjacent street on June 22<sup>nd</sup>. Andre Reed will be in town during that period, and it is also possible that the ceremony renaming the field at the school district stadium for him may be done at that time.

Pearson also noted that Ritter Elementary School is having a science fair this Wednesday. He will be a judge and will be giving a \$50 award, as well as awards for science fairs at the city high schools and middle schools.

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

Respectfully,

*David A. Schell, Secretary*