

**East Allentown Rittersville
Neighborhood Association**

MINUTES

President Dennis Pearson called the regular monthly meeting to order at 7:03 p.m. on December 16, 2013 at St. Peter's Evangelical Lutheran Church.

Present: Three officers (Dennis Pearson, Denton Kriebel, and Dave Schell) and eight other neighbors were present at the meeting. Additionally, Sergeant Tony Alsleben, who will be replacing Captain Dean Schwartz as our contact officer, was present.

Dave Schell handed out copies of the minutes of the meeting of November 18, 2013. It was moved and seconded to approve the minutes as distributed. The motion carried.

Sergeant Alsleben, who will be promoted to Captain later this month, spoke on his background. His areas of responsibility will be the East Side, special events, K-9, and others. He wanted to introduce himself to us. He stressed how the force wants open communication with the neighborhood groups.

Dennis Pearson read several articles from the local newspaper about various criminal matters on the East Side. He also read the Letter to the Editor that he had had printed in the Morning Call concerning the city's fiscal situation, including the debt taken on by the Lehigh County Authority in its lease of the city water and waste division.

A neighbor noted how the city uses an accrual system of bookkeeping. He noted that the city brought in subsidiary funds through various water and sewer funds and asserted that a small tax increase added to those funds could have used towards retiring the pension debt. For years those accrual funds were being used for other items rather than putting the funds towards the pension fund.

Another neighbor, who is a water engineer, noted that the water system should be self-sustaining with the money coming in from water going to the water system. He noted that another problem that will result in increased user fees is various Environmental Protection Agency regulations involving increasing testing. The group also discussed the various agreements with Nestle and other large users, and the new meters. The old meters will have to be replaced as they are worked on as they contain lead and may need to be replaced within the next five years with lead-free meters, subject to continuing EPA regulation.

Sergeant Alsleben noted that he was being called away so we had a quick discussion on the posting in the window of the former Tony's Bar on Union Boulevard concerning an application of a new liquor license. We believe that this constitutes the necessary public notice. We will continue to monitor the situation.

The group discussed the Delta Thermal project. It has been very difficult to get answers from the city on what emissions will be produced by the project. The original proposal was to generate

electricity to run the city's sewer pumps. As currently written the contract calls for the funds generated to go to the Lehigh County Authority. Concern was expressed about burning in the valley due to atmospheric conditions.

Dave Schell read the letter that he had sent to Mr. Richard Wilburn, President of the Midway Manor Community Association, for that group's generous donation of \$100 for the Project Haas light display at Irving Park. Dennis noted that Bob Jacoby had injured himself to the extent of needing stitches while installing the lights.

The house at 404 N. Jerome Street with the damaged exterior that we have discussed repeatedly is getting worse. Additional pieces are flying off the property. We will ask the city to expedite any enforcement action. Question: Does Allentown require property insurance on homes in the city? We will check.

The feeling of several neighbors is that the Building and Standards has not been active in enforcing regulations. When a complaint is issued they will inspect the property, at least externally, but are very slow or absent at enforcement. Additionally, it is believed that the city is unaware of the rental status of many properties in the city.

There has been no visible action concerning the problems with the property at 7 S. Jerome Street that was discussed in the October meeting. To our knowledge the city has not sent anyone out to inspect the property.

The group had further discussion on the evolution of the property at the former Tony's Bar, how it had changed from a car wash to car repair to car sales, to a multi-use property that includes both automobiles and food/drink service. A neighbor also noted the appearance of mobile food vendors, including one large facility at the northwest corner of N. Sherman Street and Union Boulevard.

It was moved and seconded that we write to the mayor's office inquiring as to plans on the former Tony's Bar location. The motion passed.

There being no further business, adjournment was moved and seconded, and the meeting adjourned at 8:30 p.m.

Respectfully,

David A. Schell, Secretary