

**East Allentown Rittersville
Neighborhood Association**

MINUTES

President Dennis Pearson called the regular monthly meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. on October 19, 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 nine other neighbors were present at the meeting.

Secretary Dave Schell handed out copies of the minutes of the meeting of September 21, 2015. It was moved and seconded to approve the minutes as distributed. The motion carried.

Treasurer Bob Jacoby gave his report. The current account balance is \$401.03. It was moved and seconded to approve the report as read. The motion carried.

President Pearson reported that he had spoken to the person from PPL who will be handling our flagpole decorations in the park. This will be accomplished within a week and a half of Thanksgiving. We will be putting out the other lights early as well since the city will also be putting lights in Andre Reed Park (Irving Park) along with an artificial skating rink in lieu of the Lights in the Parkway, which will not be put in this year due to a collapsing retaining wall.

President Pearson asked if we could get volunteers to do this. Secretary Schell handed out a flier from the city. We discussed the procedure, and Pearson will go forward with the process as it appears that we can get sufficient volunteers to handle a Thursday or Friday evening session, but will avoid the full-day Saturday or Sunday sessions. We discussed whether we would need the volunteer background checks. It appears that we will not since the absolute deadline is not until the beginning of January.

Pearson noted that he took steps today to incorporate the Allentown Crime Watch organization.

Pearson asked several new attendees to introduce themselves.

Secretary Schell handed out fliers for Great Allentown Summit, a neighborhood group training session. This will take place on November 1st and Schell is planning to attend.

Pearson reported that the police attended the recent crime watch meeting, and noted that the East Side is still the safest part of the city. Pearson noted that the crime watch is concerned about housing and rental issues.

Pearson noted that we will be looking for volunteers to help put up the holiday/Christmas displays. We also hope to get assistance again from students at Dieruff High School. The holiday display was first put up in 1994, and the process of installation has been improved. When we first started putting the tree display on the flagpole it took fifteen people—now it takes only two.

Secretary Schell passed a sheet around for new attendees to add their email addresses for our minutes and other news distribution if they wished.

A neighbor noted that now that A-Treat is not operational at their former location it is very dark behind the plant, and asked about how to get a streetlight installed, and the group discussed the process of petitioning the city.

Another neighbor noted that there is a dumping problem around the area where the former (but now burned out) “gentleman’s club” was at Hanover Avenue and Club Avenue. This neighbor also noted that there are many elderly living in that area and wondered if we could round up some volunteers to help them dig out after major snowstorms. President Pearson will put something in the newsletter asking for volunteers.

Another neighbor questioned why one of the recent newsletters had minutes in it from 2014. Pearson explained that since we had been hoping to have a newsletter mailed by the city we had not been producing the hand-delivered newsletter for some months, and we were trying to “catch up” by making sure than no minutes “reports” were missed.

A neighbor asked if there is a community block watch? Is there some way to start such an organization? Pearson said police are trying to patrol. We do not have such an organization. Midway Manor used to have such an organization, but the person heading it died. Pearson believes that a genuine “block watch” organization exists at present anywhere in the city.

President Pearson noted that last week there was an event at St. Peter’s Church about the Syrian refugees, approximately one hundred in number, who are going to be brought into this area. He noted that the UN has control of who will be arriving, not the US State Department. Pearson noted that the Syrians are coming to this area because of the significant Syrian population in the Lehigh Valley, although those who are coming do not have family ties with those already in this area. Those who do have families here have to go through a different process to immigrate.

President Pearson noted that next month is our annual election. We need at least ten members at the meeting to hold the election. He put the current officers in nomination for the following year. Additional nominations can be made next month.

Treasurer Jacoby mentioned the city’s noise ordinance. It is our understanding that the city bought a number of noise meters to check the noise level coming from properties that have produced complaints. It was further noted that a renter in that situation can get in more trouble than a homeowner in that after three offenses the landlord may be required to evict the tenant.

A neighbor noted that the home next door to them has an uncovered swimming pool that is full of “black water.” What can be done about this? It could be reported to the city Department of Health. The group discussed whether in some cases it might be appropriate to also discuss the matter with the neighbor first.

A neighbor noted that there should be a traffic signal on Hanover Avenue either at Linden Street—the entrance to Overlook Park—or at Dauphin Street, fearing that someone will eventually be killed crossing the street. We had been told years ago that the city was waiting for the light to be installed when New England Avenue was completed to Hanover Avenue. Secretary Schell will write to the city asking again about the matter since the New England Avenue project has been stalled for years.

A neighbor asked about the drones that have been flying over the East Side recently? It appears that some of them are official government drones.

There being no further business, adjournment was moved and seconded, and the meeting adjourned at 8:18 p.m.

Respectfully,

David A. Schell, Secretary