

HHIA 1/24/11

Roll Call: Tara Ohler-Jenney, Beth Murphy, Brenda Smarko, Anna Baldwin, Stacy Ross

Not present: Paul Sager

Approval of minutes

Stacy Ross elected as Vice President

Undine Lee recently elected block captain on Eiler, introduced as new neighbor

Officer O'Brien

Officer of the Year, March 16 at Christy Banquet Center

Honor all officers of the month winners and announce Officer of the Year

Had 2-page handout on Fire safety

Discussed problems in Camden NJ where they laid off ½ of police force

We don't want this to happen in St. Louis. We need more officers on the street, not future.

St. Louis used to have 2200 now we have 1200

Larceny from vehicles, 1 last year in January, this year so far we've had 4

Someone reported cars parked with "for sale" sign on the public street, also can't park on side walk – too heavy, will crack the side walk

This Southern Commercial Bank robbed last week – security guard realized she had no accomplice and wasn't armed so he chased her to the parking lot and bashed out her window. By the time she got out onto Grand the cops were there.

Average response time 3.5 minutes on priority 1 and 2 calls

Guy transferred to the district from traffic – told to keep traffic uniform and motorcycle so he will set up traffic patrol a couple days a week. This guy has written over 10,000 calls in 10 years. Everyone who gets stopped gets a ticket.

Audience member reported ATVs in the park, on the median and on paths – officer O'Brien encouraged her to call non-emergency number: 231-1212

Guest Speaker: Blake Youde, Deputy Superintendent of Institutional Advancement

Here to give an update on the school district

\$155 million bond issue July/August – found that we need to do a better job of getting out and letting people know what’s going on in the school district

We have a lot of new things on line or coming online.

Brought 2 handouts – snapshot of the district/stats and “report card”

Need 6 points for provisional accreditation, we now have 5 points. 2 years ago we had 3 points. We’re making progress, not enough, but we’re pointed in the right direction.

2010 MAP improved in every testing category except 1 (3rd grade comm arts)

We’ve addressed three areas – stability in governance, stability in finances and stability in academics

Last three years we’ve had state appointed board, 2 years superintendent

Now it’s how can we assure that every child in the city receives a high quality education

50,000 kids in slps or charter or attend schools in county

Early childhood education lays the foundation for academics, critical reasoning and thinking skills, succeed in high school and as an adult

24 more EC classrooms for 2011/12 school year to serve 400 more children

New York policy close or “reconstitute” schools that are failing after 3 years. Send kids to higher quality school or bring in new teachers and administrators to that school.

Programs for students who don’t succeed in traditional schools.

Gender based schools – generated a fair amount of discussion – 4 elementary/middle either 2 schools all girls/ 2 all boys or may have schools segregated by floors where students opposite gender don’t see each other after they step off the bus. Increased academic performance, lower discipline problems.

Dr. Adams is not for or against charter schools – just wants a high quality school

A real redirection for the school district – hasn’t been much love of charter schools. Definitely one of Dr. Adams’ initiatives

We’re looking for creative ways to meet the needs of our constituents for less cost as our local and state revenues are declining. Better product for less money.

Questions from audience:

Q: You haven’t said anything about parental responsibility.

Youde: We’re trying to figure out the best way to deal with that issue. There’s no one right answer.

Q: How do we compare to schools around the country?

Youde: We have the same successes and challenges of other schools. Member of organization of large urban school districts from around the country.

Enrollment decline is leveling off, probably because of the economy. Issues that affect the community are coming into the schools – we love it when it's a great thing – churches or organizations adopting a school

Atlanta Public Schools held up for quite a while as the best urban school district in the country – recently some challenges to the validity of their statistics

DC public schools – seen as very successful but recently left

New Orleans – where Dr. Adams came from – signs point to it moving in the right direction

Q: Doesn't see a lot of latchkey or after school programs

Youde – that's a great question. In elementary schools we have after school programs – 3 hours, five days a week. Academics, enrichment, recreation. Some programs in middle schools, none in high schools, rely on extra curricular activities – sports, drama club etc. It's our intention to build our after school programs in middle and high school.

100 school buildings, 73 schools operating, Average age 75 years old, some over 100 years old. 25,000 students

Q: Graduation/drop-out rate

2 parts – data

Dr. Adams came in two years ago and kept peeling the onion back and discovered we weren't doing a good job of tracking our students. If a student moves out of the district we're supposed to track whether they graduated – very difficult. We've used things like Facebook and Twitter to find students – it works very well.

The other part is keeping them in school. If they have a meaningful relationship – we have people who call them, go to their house or go to the Bread Co., if that's where they hang out. It's a very slow process, it doesn't give you a 10-20 point spike but it should give you steady upward trend.

Q: I notice children on my block are bussed. During the summer I see a lot of children just playing aimlessly outside.

Youde: Summer school has posed a real challenge – state cut back funding that we rely on – to three weeks, but that's three weeks more than a lot of districts. We need those three weeks for academics, for nutrition. State hasn't told us yet what they will fund. Right now we're planning on a four-week summer school. We're talking to the Y, the rec centers to help us out. We're trying to develop a coordinated effort.

Aldermanic reports:

Matt Villa

Brought fliers on recycling. 11th Ward recycling containers should be in by the end of February.

Almost everything can be recycled. No plastic bags, no window glass. It's a single stream so you can put everything in the same containers (please rinse food off).

Brochures on smoking ordinance. I've had a lot of questions on the smoking ordinance that went into effect on Jan. 1.

Carondelet Neighborhood paid for private study and put together a nice color brochure of the businesses in the neighborhood. 12-month student – what do we need to do to better market the neighborhood, demographic trends, residential housing stock, all-encompassing plan, includes some of Holly Hills. Carondelet Neighborhood is not that big so we knew what was happening in surrounding neighborhoods.

A lot of good has already come out of it. A number of new businesses have moved there. Coordinated efforts with visitor's guide to bring people into the neighborhood. Received some stimulus money about a year ago, because of the plan we were able to implement part of plan along S. Broadway – 4 blocks around S. St. Louis Square Park. Hope to extend it. If you haven't driven down S. Broadway lately I think you'll be impressed with the development that's taken place over the last couple years. There's still a long way to go, I realize.

I was interviewed for You Paid For it. I invited Elliott Davis down to see it and he sent me an email that said he was dropping the story because I was able to justify it. I don't know how often that happens.

Carondelet Park Board meeting last week: Lyle House will be taken down to the bare wood and repainted, landscaping and lighting. That will spruce up the Lyle House. Landscape architect put together 3 plans – an orchard design – what it may have looked like when the Lyles lived there – not necessarily fruit trees but small flowering trees relatively closely spaced, a formal garden and then a natural prairie garden.

Matt will email them to HHIA to put on the web site. The park board is looking for feedback – what would people prefer to see.

Q: Could it house a restaurant?

A: It's in bad shape. Pinocle group holds a lease there. They've taken care of the building, they pay insurance. We hope to eventually use it for catering events. We'd like to get the parks department out of that area and renovate the stable as event space – that's in the long range plan.

Plan was to move park service facilities to the old gasconade animal shelter and then the renovations could begin.

Matt met today with Archdiocese about old St. Mary and Joseph school building that is empty – hasn't had a school in there for probably 30 years. We're looking for a developer to either renovate it or tear it down.

Been meeting monthly about Shopper's Cleaners building. Some talented people are donating their time to help up come up with some creative solutions. Hopefully we'll have a positive development this year. We do have some federal money set aside. We do have to find someone with private money, we could help them out.

Loughborough Bridge – Phase 1 is the only phase we had money for. We should really be widening both sides. Well that's great but we don't have money for both sides, so for right now we're just doing the north side. That was the original plan. It's not scheduled to be complete until early summer. Then the Holly Hills and Delor bridges

New bridges over River Des Peres at Germania – slated for construction in 2013. Money is in place, they're just doing the design work now.

Fred Wessels and I are at Food Land at 8:30 on Friday mornings. We do have constituents who come.

We've been having emails down at city hall over the last 2 weeks. If you've emailed Brian(Kolde) or I and haven't heard from us, give us a call.

NSO – Brian Kolde – 657-1364

I am now back in Ward 11 full time. Was covering both Ward 14 and Ward 11. Now I'm happy to be in one place. We're in the dept. of public safety, we're not in the police dept but we deal with the police every day. We deal with a lot of nuisance issues, problem properties, trash problems, street lights – problems with city services that you haven't been able to resolve any other way.

We're divided by ward boundaries. It used to be by neighborhood boundaries. It does make it easier for the aldermen – they have one NSO instead of 3.

Anyone who tried to email anyone in city govt. with st.louiscity.com – problem with AT&T. Normally you get an email that says there's a problem with the email address – well it was taking 2 weeks to get those bounce backs. Supposedly they've gotten it fixed. The phones seem to be working.

Old Business

Holiday lighting contest

Tara – this year they seemed especially great. There are some homes that every year just look great.

New Business

This bank has been wonderful for the many years that we have had this meeting here. But for a number of reasons we'd like to move the meetings. Accessibility – we actually have letters from people who say that they can no longer come to the meetings because they can't get down the stairs. It's also outside

the neighborhood boundaries. And we're hoping to get more members and we're hoping a change of venue might increase our members.

The Y has offered us space – it's accessible, it's in the neighborhood, it's a community center.

Principal of Woerner school also offered their space – in the library.

Looking for writers for the newsletter – we'll help come up with topics

New ad sizes available for advertising in the newsletter

Flags/ and boathouse tiles available for sale

Summer movies – planning will begin soon

March meeting – discussion groups, goals for HHIA, speaker ideas, how we can better serve the neighborhood.

Quarterly park cleanups -

Q: House tour? NO! It's a big, big job and we need help!