

WEST HILLS NEIGHBORHOOD COUNCIL General Meeting
MINUTES JUNE 13, 2017

Introductions

All attendees introduced themselves.

Neighborhood Resource Officer

Tim Ottmar, our Neighborhood Resource Officer, explained what he does, and then answered our questions. He is the Spokane police officer who serves as NRO for West Hills and several other neighborhoods. His main job is to work on nuisance problems in neighborhoods, including renters and landlords, drugs, fights, and assaults. We can contact him with neighborhood problems at tottmar@spokanepolice.org, 625-3383.

Motel 6 is the biggest problem in West Hills. There are major problems with prostitution, drug dealing, fights, assaults, and so forth. These problems filter out into the surrounding neighborhood, including the golf course. The Motel 6 owner, who lives elsewhere, has cooperated and agreed to hire security guards and require ID for room rental.

We citizens can help fight crime in our neighborhood by reporting all incidents to Crime Check (456-2233). Call 911 if the incident is in progress; otherwise just report it, even if it is a minor break-in with nothing stolen. Make sure you record the incident number in case you want to follow up. The police cannot respond to every incident, but seeing patterns in crimes helps them to know where the hot spots are and to work on those. The police do not have access to neighborhood NextDoor accounts, but Karen Jurasin can email West Hills crime reports to Tim (however the police have found that not everything reported to NextDoor actually is true).

One neighbor complained about speeding on Rosamond. Tim and Katy Myers (our city staff liaison, 509.625.673, kmyers@spokanecity.org) suggested two things: Request a speed monitor for the location where the speeding occurs (Katy). Contact the city's traffic hotline, giving details about location, time of day, specific cars or neighbors for repeated offenders.

Homeless population

Ryan Oelrich, Executive Director of Priority Spokane, and Tim Ottmar talked about our local homeless population.

The homeless include families with children, working adults who cannot afford housing, people with mental health issues, and others. Almost all of them are not dangerous to the public.

Priority Spokane is working especially with homeless families, helping to stabilize and house them, and trying to prevent the children from eventually becoming homeless adults.

Citizens SHOULD NOT give homeless people money, food, clothing, blankets, or anything else. Spokane has lots of agencies and organizations that help them, and it is much better for them to use these resources. The organizations can help the homeless people to become more responsible for themselves. We can give money to the organizations instead.

Call 911 if we see fires that may have been started by homeless people. Call 311 to report homeless camps or trash. The police know these people and can work with them to meet their needs. Citizens SHOULD NOT approach homeless people or their camps.

There have been a lot of complaints about homeless people around the Fish Lake Trail. Jim owns 14 acres near the trail and said that homeless people have created problems for him for 30-40 yr, so the problem is not new. We can report camps to 311. Tim said we will be safest if we stay alert to our surroundings, don't use headphones or ear buds, and go in pairs or groups. Private property owners can post "No Trespassing" signs that are high enough to avoid removal, and then ask police to cite and remove homeless campers. On park property, police are responsible for dealing with people who camp illegally after 11:00 pm.

Latah/Hangman Creek Project

Daniel Collins presented information about the development of this new trail. There will be a planting at People's Park on Oct. 14. There will also be an extended planning session October 28th and 29th.

Conservation Futures

Neighborhood members looked into this as an option for preserving the view at Fort George Wright Drive. Feedback from the City indicated that this will not be a viable option. Valerie from the Addiction/Family Center for Catholic Charities let the council know that the apartments being built will be for low-income families.

Community Assembly Update

Ponderosa Pine Contest- neighbors can participate in the City's contest for the biggest and tallest tree.

Office of Neighborhood Services- has equipment available for lease for neighborhood events.

Pedestrian Traffic & Transportation Committee- neighborhood councils can participate, contact the community assembly for more information.

Police Ombudsman- positions are open.

Adjourned 8:12pm

