

WEST HILLS NEIGHBORHOOD COUNCIL
MINUTES FOR THE MEETING OF APRIL 13, 2021

ATTENDANCE

Neighbors: Steve Bieri, Paul Bundy (Community Assembly Representative), Karen Carlberg (Chair), David Duhaime, Jean Duhaime, Dwight Emerson, Josette Gates, William Hagy, Karen Jurasin (Communications Director), Judith Van Dongen
City staff: Annica Eagle (Community Programs Coordinator)
Guests: Amy Dawley, Lisa Gardner, Dianna Gulick, Dave Spurbeck (Washington Department of Fish & Wildlife), Betsy Wilkerson (City Council, District 2)

MINUTES

Minutes for the meeting of February 9, 2021 were approved.

COMMUNITY ASSEMBLY REPORT

Paul reported on the March and April, 2021, Community Assembly meetings. March: Guests were Betsy Wilkerson (City Council) and Cupid Alexander (Office of Neighborhood Services). Discussion topics included neighborhood cleanups, leadership training, and walkability downtown. April: City Council representative was Karen Stratton. Discussion included Community Engagement Grants, North Division corridor, and housing action liaison.

NEIGHBORHOOD CLEANUP

The West Hills Cleanup Coordinator, Mike Gifford, was unable to participate tonight. Annica explained the current status of the 2021 neighborhood cleanup program. The original plan is to offer dump passes only, which must be reserved through MySpokane.org. There have been a lot of complaints, especially with regard to citizens who don't have a vehicle to transport trash, or are physically unable to transport trash, or don't have access to the internet. The city is continuing its discussion and will get back to us soon.

Dwight asked about code enforcement, particularly with regard to cleaning up after campers near W Burch St between S Assembly St and S Rustle St. Both

Dwight and Judith said they have called code enforcement about cleaning up there, as well as clearing vegetation that allows campers to hide. Annica, Paul, and William said they have had good results contacting either code enforcement (<https://my.spokanecity.org/neighborhoods/code-enforcement>) or 311. Betsy said we should keep reporting trash that needs cleaning up because the city is short staffed, they go where they have the most requests, which usually is downtown, and we need lots of reports from our neighborhood to get them here.

Betsy spoke further about help for homeless citizens. The city probably will use some of its pandemic-related federal funds for this. The city will hire both a civil rights director and an economics director. The Community Assembly is working on both housing and zoning. One problem that needs attention is that, at night when businesses are closed, there are no places for homeless people to use a bathroom or get a drink of water.

MOBILE SPEED SIGNS

William and Josette suggested three locations for our 2021 mobile speed signs:
W Rosamond, between E St and F St, westbound
W Sunset Blvd, by the crosswalk and bus stop, between S Assembly and S Rustle, eastbound
W Sunset Blvd, between Government Way and W 7th, eastbound

POLICE UNIT FOR COLD CASES

Dianna is working toward getting the Spokane Police to add a cold cases unit, in an effort to identify murderers that haven't been found. She is motivated by the murder of her 13 year old brother in 1989. Currently the police do not have enough personnel to devote much time to this, so the work is very slow, and many murderers have not been identified over the years.

Information can be found at:

<http://coldcasebase.com>

Cold cases of Spokane facebook group

Website: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/2469670143253035>

Searchnet PNW facebook group (showcases missing persons in and around our area) Website: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/441666723803553>

A petition may be signed at:
Coldcasesofspokane.com

Lisa, who is working with Dianna on this, said that there are 113 cold cases in Spokane since the 1970s that are dormant because they need staff time and they need tips. New DNA testing techniques could be used now if there was someone to do the work.

GARDEN SPRINGS CREEK MONITORING

Amy has created a stream monitoring project to assess the health of Garden Springs Creek within Finch Arboretum, in conjunction with a University of Idaho program. Spokane Parks & Recreation would like to have this data on water quality. The data will be collected by volunteers, who could be adults and children (10+ yr) - a great family activity and learning opportunity. There is a free online training program, and all supplies are provided. Each family or adult would visit the creek for 1-2 hr about 3-4 times per season. For more info contact Amy Dawley at getoutsidespokane@gmail.com or 619-952-3568.

ALL ABOUT MOOSE

Dave talked about our local moose population and answered our questions:

Moose are common in this area, including in the city. The population fluctuates.

The Department of Fish & Wildlife biologists usually want to leave urban moose alone. The moose usually don't stay in one area very long, and usually they are good at taking care of themselves.

Moose are ready to live on their own when they are several months old.

The biggest dangers to moose in a city are being fed by humans and being hit by motor vehicles. Feeding wildlife is dangerous, illegal, and can be fined as a misdemeanor.

A moose is relocated only when there is a good reason to do it, such as for public safety. They are taken to far northeastern Washington or north Idaho.

The young moose that was relocated from our neighborhood was removed because it was being fed by people and therefore staying in the neighborhood too much. In this situation, it was better for the moose to relocate it.

DFW does not track individual moose, even after they have been relocated.

Moose perceive dogs as threatening, as they do wolves. They are much more likely to attack a dog, especially if they are surprised by it, than a human. People walking dogs need to be very careful around moose and keep their distance.

It is rare for a moose to attack a human, except for bulls during mating season (September). If a person is worried about a moose charging, the safest thing to do is to go behind a tree or something.

Ticks are common on moose, especially in the winter. Ticks make the fur look terrible, but the moose usually recover fine.

Moose are not a protected species. They can be hunted, but this requires a permit. There is a limit of one per lifetime.

OPEN FORUM

Dwight has been working on food pantries, in conjunction with the Growing Neighbors organization that was discussed at our February meeting. He thinks he has located some funding. We will put this on the agenda for our June meeting.

Two people asked about closure of I-90 exits. There will be work on both the Geiger exit and the Medical Lake exit, but the exits will not be fully closed, just detoured. Info on the Geiger exit was posted on Nextdoor on April 13. Info on the Medical Lake exit is at wsdot.wa.gov/projects/i90/medical-lake/home

Annica reminded us to complete the survey on the Fish Lake Trail - Centennial Trail connector. The choice has been narrowed down to two routes, one of which will impact the southeast corner of West Hills. See the minutes of the February 9,

2021, West Hills meeting (posted on both Nextdoor and the West Hills website). Links to the survey have been distributed widely, including on West Hills Nextdoor. It is <https://my.spokanecity.org/projects/fish-lake-trail-connection-study>

Two days ago, the West Hills email account received a message about the proposed changes to Spokane School District school boundaries. This was too late to put the topic on the agenda for tonight. The changes are necessitated by the addition of three new schools and population shifts over the many years since the boundaries last were redrawn. The new proposal moves River Run students from South Hill schools to north side schools. Should West Hills become involved? This is not a City of Spokane issue; it is a school district issue. No River Run residents were present at the meeting, and no one attending the meeting was interested.

APPROVED JUNE 8, 2021