

WEST HILLS NEIGHBORHOOD COUNCIL
MINUTES FOR THE MEETING OF DECEMBER 14, 2021

ATTENDANCE

Neighbors: Steve Bieri, Paul Bundy (Community Assembly Representative), Jerico Cairns, Karen Carlberg (Chair), Rick Clapp (Treasurer), Bridget Doran, Dwight Emerson, Josette Gates, Mike Gifford (Vice-Chair & Cleanup Coordinator), William Hagy, Colin Harris, Bill Heaton, Karen Jurasin (Communications Director), Susan Mensching, Craig Morgan, Julieann Morse, Lyle Morse, Joy Peltier, Shae Suski

City of Spokane: Trey George (Environmental Analyst, Wastewater Management Department), Kelly Mongan (Spokane Police), Johnnie Perkins (City Administrator)

Guest: Eric Williams (Community Partnerships Director, Second Harvest)

OCTOBER MINUTES

Minutes for the meeting of October 12, 2021, were approved.

COMMUNITY ASSEMBLY REPORT

Paul and Karen C decided we would try having Paul write a summary for each Community Assembly meeting and post it on Nextdoor, instead of having Paul give an oral presentation at each WHNC meeting. We welcome your feedback on this.

STORMWATER: Trey George, Environmental Analyst, Wastewater Management Department, City of Spokane

Stormwater is water that runs into our river and our aquifer. If it collects pollutants, these pollutants end up in the water we drink and the water we swim and fish in. Pollutants include excess fertilizers applied to yards, gasoline and oils from vehicles and other equipment, soap from washing cars, and bacteria from animal feces. Citizens can reduce pollution by reducing fertilizer use, keeping vehicles and equipment in good condition, washing cars in appropriate places, picking up after pets, and not pouring anything but water into storm drains. The city offers a \$50 rebate for fixing leaking vehicles. Our city has many grassy swales that collect stormwater and allow the water to drain slowly into the aquifer, removing pollutants. These swales must be maintained to keep them healthy. Private property owners are responsible for maintaining storm drains and swales on their property. See Spokanestormwater.org. Trey's presentation is at https://d16kzk4negkp9h.cloudfront.net/35/45/8e/35458ed731aa3e41593fc41b97db64b1/Stormwater_2021.pdf?Expires=1639869003&Signature=e0eNYSNUar00EbGD40PmVbQWSdFHsd2q87WD8IFYUbrTSZOjM5rZk9VnMldMb49KRGnd2T8kpWUiuL-7pRRMdieBG34YEelWwOOuMCC90NznP~lBWxiJP8Jua9ztsE7kCbdyPOOdermSvDkq8rS4LSYvkD1tTPFXhfNgu1ps8s_&Key-Pair-Id=APKAIXBZNN3ZZBIBSIDQ

AMERICAN RESCUE PLAN ACT: Joy Peltier, Community Engagement for ARPA, City of Spokane

The ARPA distributes federal funds throughout the US to help communities with expenses related to the COVID-19 pandemic. Spokane received \$80 M and Spokane County received \$101 M. The seven expenditure categories are public health; negative economic impacts; services to disproportionately impacted communities; premium pay; infrastructure; revenue replacement; and administrative. Joy's office helps people to apply for the funds, communicates the program to the community, and ensures equity in distribution of funds. Go to <https://tinyurl.com/35fbdmzn> for Joy's presentation. The Spokane ARPA home page is at: <https://my.spokanecity.org/covid19/arpa>.

SECOND HARVEST: Eric Williams, Community Partnerships Director, Second Harvest

Second Harvest serves as the food bank for 280 partners in eastern Washington and north Idaho. Home page: [Home - 2nd Harvest \(2-harvest.org\)](https://www.2ndharvest.org/). Locations for food pantries are shown here: [food near me - 2nd Harvest \(2-harvest.org\)](https://www.2ndharvest.org/food-near-me). Food insecurity has risen substantially since the pandemic started. In 2020 Second Harvest provided 44 million meals. They expect to serve 40 million meals in 2021. Donations and volunteers always are needed. Volunteers can come as individuals or as groups. To volunteer, see [volunteer - 2nd Harvest \(2-harvest.org\)](https://www.2ndharvest.org/volunteer).

COMMENT ON REZONING OF PROPERTY NEAR INTERSECTION OF W SUNSET BOULEVARD AND S GOVERNMENT WAY:

The new owners of the vacant property at the northwest corner of Sunset Boulevard and Government Way, Gib and Susan Brumback, want to build a five story apartment building with some retail on the first floor. This was discussed at length during the West Hills August 2021 meeting (<https://westhills.spokaneneighborhoods.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/WH-Minutes-2021.08.10.pdf>). The property currently is zoned for up to three stories, so the Brumbacks are requesting a rezone for five stories, which is essential for the project to be economically viable. The rezone request requires that the property owners meet with the neighborhood council (our August meeting) and the general public (they did that). Then there is a public comment period which began December 7 and ends December 21. Karen C wondered if we should submit a favorable comment for WHNC as a whole, since response at our August meeting generally was positive. After discussion, we concluded that there was a variety of opinions among our neighbors. Therefore we will submit our own individual comments, if we choose. Send them to Donna deBit, Assistant Planner II, at ddebit@spokanecity.org by December 21, 2021, at 5 PM. The property address is 2937 W 7th and the permit # is Z21-318REZN.

SPOKANE'S NEW CITY ADMINISTRATOR, JOHNNIE PERKINS

Johnnie is Spokane's new City Administrator. He manages all 16 city departments, including police, parks, streets, solid waste, and so forth. He implements the mayor's and city council's policies. His priorities are safety, customer satisfaction, and exceeding expectations. Prior to

coming to Spokane, he had more than 30 yr experience in city management, especially with solid waste.

CRIME AT MOTEL 6 AND THROUGHOUT CITY: Kelly Mongan, Spokane Police

Officer Kelly Mongan is the neighborhood police officer for precincts in the southwest quadrant of the city, including the southern part of West Hills (south of the cemeteries).

Motel 6:

(Background: After one of our neighbors was assaulted and robbed near the Motel 6, we invited Kelly to our February, 2021, meeting to discuss what could be done about the years-long problem of crime associated with the motel. He agreed to start creating a chronic nuisance complaint against the motel. These complaints usually are used for individual residences, not businesses, so this is trickier, and will take time. After two people were shot on November 5, West Hills Chair Karen Carlberg and neighbors Colin Harris and Kurt Scudder sent multiple emails to the District 2 City Council members, City Administrator Johnnie Perkins, Police Chief Craig Meidl, and others, stressing the urgency of a city response to the Motel 6 situation. William Hagy and Jerico Cairns sent their own letters about neighborhood crime to Mayor Nadine Woodward.)

Kelly, his colleagues, and an assistant city attorney completed the chronic nuisance complaint about Motel 6. One finding was that there were 69 calls to the Motel 6 between January 2 and November 17, 2021. The complaint was mailed to the Motel 6 owner on December 13; they have 15 days to respond. Various outcomes are possible. For example, the owners could add more surveillance cameras, video, and lighting, trim hedges, and hire different managers. If the owners do not comply, the motel could be shut down.

Other crime:

Several West Hills neighbors described crimes they had experienced in the neighborhood, as well as a perceived recent increase in the incidence of crime. Kelly said the following: There is a limited number of police officers on duty at any one time, so they have to prioritize. Report all crimes to 911 (if urgent) or to Crime Check (509-456-2233) even if a response isn't expected. They are more likely to respond to a crime report if there are photos or video of the perpetrator or if a stolen item is found in a pawn shop, for example (they need sufficient evidence to charge someone). Do not downplay the severity of the crime. Ask for your case number so you can follow up. Do not leave valuables in your car, including a garage door opener. The state legislature made changes to laws last summer that make it more difficult for police to chase or talk to suspects, making it harder to charge people with crimes (Susan M, who is on a police advisory committee, said that bills will be submitted to the upcoming legislature to reverse those decisions).

Other questions and comments about crime:

Josette: If a prowler is on your property, what should you do? KM: It is legal to defend yourself. It is best to separate yourself from the prowler, lock the door, call police, do not escalate the situation.

Rick: Do "No Trespassing" signs help? KM: It is not effective to post them in yards. However if you tell a prowler to leave, and they don't, then legally they are trespassing and you can report it. If they enter a fenced area, then it is burglary.

Good lighting helps. Susan M suggested that if everyone keeps their front porch lights on, there will be more light in yards and street.

Block Watch helps. Some parts of West Hills have one, others don't.

KM: Keep reporting all crime to Crime Check.

SELECTION OF WHNC OFFICERS FOR 2022-2024

New officers will serve from January 2022 through December 2023. Karen C suggested that we need new people, new ideas, new energy. She said that we haven't been doing what our bylaws say, because the tasks that need doing are not the same as those listed in the bylaws. Karen J suggested that we have something like a board of directors instead of specific offices. Karen C said that everyone has different talents, so working as a team is good, with each person contributing according to the talents that they have.

All the current officers are willing to continue (Paul Bundy, Karen Carlberg, Rick Clapp, Mike Gifford, Karen Jurasin). Five additional people volunteered (Dwight Emerson, Josette Gates, William Hagy, Susan Mensching, Julieann Morse).

These 10 people will meet the last week of December to figure it out.

Approved February 8, 2022