

## **RRCO March 16th, 2009**

General Meeting and Board Elections

**Board Members Present:** Jolene Siemson, Rob Handy, Kate Kelley, Carleen Reilly, Eileen Nittler, Marilyn Mohr, Steve Norris, Jan Spencer, Becky Riley

**Others Present:** Beth Parsons, Pat Reilly, Hans Wittig, Julie Schaum, Julie Hulme, Bruce Eveland, Lenore Barrett, Bob Coleman, Steve Shapiro, Pat Kerns, Sreedhar Thakkun, Margaret Mazzotta, Rick Rubin

Jolene called to order, made introductions and presented the agenda.

### **Public Comment:**

Becky Riley announced that on 04-02-09, 7-9 p.m. at the Red Cross, there will be a meeting regarding the proposed Seneca Co-Generation Plant, LRAPA is hosting the meeting to discuss the potential air pollution impact of this proposed new (wood burning) energy sources.

Jan Spencer announced a Rosetta Park Work Party on 03-20-09, at 5:00.

Bob Coleman has issues with the large amounts of traffic on RR and Howard. Can RRCO do anything about this? Becky gave quick background that this issue has come up as part of the Razor MUC planning process. She noted that she has heard from people opposed to lowering the speed limit on RR, as well as from those in favor. It may be more controversial among residents than some think. City does not want to propose lowering speed limit as part of the MUC plan, but believes that speeds on RR will drop with other changes to the roadway that are being proposed (narrower lanes, median) and adjacent development. LTD has indicated that a lower speed limit on RR would be desirable for operation of their buses. Becky, Carleen and Jolene have discussed a possible letter to the city, which they will ask the board to consider soon. Bob noted that the excuse that people will drive too fast no matter what is unfair to pedestrians. He noted there is no enforcement of the laws on driving. So maybe we should ask for enforcement. Jolene suggested we call officials, etc. and note our collective concerns.

Rob Handy has copies of a breakdown of the federal stimulus packet and what will go to RR for road improvements, mainly slurry or chip seals.

### **Board Elections:**

There are four open positions: Steve Norris and Rob Handy are not running for their seats. Steve encouraged people to run. Jan said he would prefer not to be the "token male."

Three people expressed interest in running:

Beth Parsons is concerned about traffic, crime and communication amongst neighbors.

Becky Riley and Carleen Reilly ran again for their positions.

The slate of candidates was presented and no one opposed the elections.

### **Public Meeting:**

Eugene Police Chief Pat Kerns and Margaret Mazzotta, a crime prevention specialist for RR, SC and Bethel gave a presentation on crime prevention. The Eugene Police Department (EPD) uses

a two prong approach--prevent victimization and prevent criminalization. Preventing victimization includes promoting neighborhood watch groups, conducting home safety inspections, and demonstrating burglary deterrents (free services through EPD for city residents). There is a new website [www.eugene-or.gov](http://www.eugene-or.gov). She walked us through the city website and some of the tools and statistics available, such as: Locking doors and windows makes burglary rates drop about 30%. She encourages people to report crime as that determines where patrols go. Chief Kerns said 40% of crimes are reported (95% of car thefts). One of the useful bits of information is the crime statistics map. You can type in an address or refer to a map, and pull up crime data for any area. Another is the Dispatch Log that shows who is dispatched for what calls at any given time (there is about a ten minute delay). Bruce Eveland noted that you can sign up for email alerts.

Steve Norris: What is EPD's criteria for setting up a neighborhood watch with the city/county patchwork? Margaret: If there is someone from the city there, she'll help set it up.

Carleen: is there a way to find out the speeding tickets on RR? Margaret: Citizens can take a class and do the radar training.

Sreedhar Thakkun: How can city and county fight crime when there's no jail space? Margaret: Yep, it's a real concern. One of the things we can do is lessen the likelihood of victimization--look out for each other (move garbage cans back), keep your bikes locked and doors shut and locked, etc. Sreedhar is worried that if you antagonize someone by reporting them, they'll be let out of jail that day and come back with knives and guns. Bob says more homeowners could arm themselves and do the vigilante thing.

Chief Kerns addressed the crowd: there is concern about services being equitable between city and county. EPD and LCSO support each other, but only in the most violent cases, but very rarely on routine service calls. LCSO says we should have between 1000 and 1600 jail beds, but there are 165. The kind of people that are committing crimes in Eugene (when jailed beds were 450, property crime was in the top 10% nationally, bottom 20% for violent crime) won't spend time with jail. Burglars prefer single story houses, older neighborhoods, steal from the same hood repeatedly. The same house will often be burgled by the same person multiple times. 88% of criminals are released within 24 hours. All crime, including the property crime rate is going up, and we have an inefficient and expensive response (with few beds and lots of warrants). Oregon has fewer police officers per capita than any other state, and Eugene is below the state average.

EPD closed two public safety stations--downtown and Bethel that got little use, and the two full time officers can be on the street now. EPD wants to identify neighborhoods at risk and work with citizens to prevent crime--when there is a spike in the neighborhood, volunteers and crime prevention specialists can move into the neighborhood and go door to door and let people know there was a burglary and talk about how the break in was done. EPD wants to invest as much as possible in crime prevention, because it's the least expensive approach, and to consolidate crime analysis function into a single function in order to better use data. "Ideally, down the road, we can return to community policing." As a community, we need to talk about how we're going to work to get more jail beds.

Rick Rubin: can we get more police on bikes in Maurie Jacobs? Kerns: Yes, this summer, though there still won't be as many as there should be.

There is a vice and narcotics unit that has a tip-line--682-5100. Agents look at every tip, start with computer, then visit the house.

Jan promoted the idea of "Broccoli, not burglary" by having more front yard gardening. With this approach, there would be more community building, more eyes on the street, and more work for idle hands. What's more, any food grown could go to Food for Lane County.

Rick: What percentage of crimes happen during the day? Kerns: Almost all break-ins. In the summer, there are more break ins at night due to open windows, and we pursue them more aggressively.

Steve Norris: How can we connect the neighborhood association regarding burglaries as we have good distribution lists, with crime stats? Kerns: We're working on a way to do that.

Beth: Our neighborhood watch had an email loop, and we contacted people when we saw something weird. Maybe we just need one good snoop per neighborhood.

Steve: How is the city and county thing working for you? Kerns: It would be a lot less complicated if it were all one service district.

Sreedhar: Common sense would be to maintain two different departments, though it wouldn't be cost effective.

Sreedhar: People dismiss LCSO as ineffective. Kerns: Yep, it's underfunded. Not much they can do about it.

Carleen: Any stimulus money coming into the city for crime prevention, drug treatment? Kerns: We've got a stimulus team looking at it. Looking at minimum requirements for COPS grant (federal program Community Operated Police Services), though he'd prefer that money go to LCSO. Also, there is money for software and equipment to help track better. Need a better case management system in Eugene, would like to do more online reporting, and need a field based reporting system, would save a bundle if there were a paperless system.

Rob: Timber money could put sheriffs onto rural forest land and that could free up sheriffs to come into towns. Kulongoski is trying to add state troopers (six in Lane).

Bob: the S&M gun shop always has a full parking lot. Lars Larson says everyone should buy a gun. Do you have an opinion on arming yourself? Kerns: He has never seen a study that has shown that possession of a firearm deters crime. He neither encouraged nor discouraged people from buying a gun. Dogs don't deter crime either.

Steve Norris: What about public humiliation? Post their mug shots online. Kerns: That's a possibility.

Beth: How about sting operations? Kerns: Labor intensive and not as effective as you'd think.

### **Board Business and Announcements:**

On Thursday, 03-19-09, there will be a Razor MUC public forum to address land use planning and zoning meeting (Chambers to Hilliard, from the River and the west side of RR) at Trinity United Methodist (440 Maxwell) from 3-5 and again from 6-8. Becky notes that the process is coming to an end, and there is no thorough community discussion about the process so she's feeling frustrated that RRCO hasn't developed a set of points to recommend. She'd like to see RRCO do some formal comments to the city and its consultants. There will be a CAC meeting on greenway development on 04-02-09. There is info on the city's website. Becky will circulate an email to interested parties.

Jolene: 04-20-09 RRCO will be on the MUC process with Ken Guzowski. Anastasia Sandow with Briarcliff neighbors will come, as they have some concerns about HACSA and the potential for the property to be developed high density. A lot of info about the process is online. Also it's on RRCO website which has links to city sites. She encourages public input. Also, RRCO came up with guiding principles when doing the design charette with Mark Gillem.

Rob Handy: Time to speak up and the April meeting focus is a good idea. He urged RRCO to be relentless to put out an email once per week to solicit comments.

Jolene: LTD coming to the May RRCO meeting.

There is an emergency response training on April 20. Steve and Kate have done it. Looks like another Walama Restoration Project work party on Saturday.

Kate: She and Teresa Damron are having a workshop for people who would like to know more about keeping chickens on Saturday, 04-04-09. Interested parties should contact Kate or Teresa.

Jan: tomorrow a video will be shown at the park at 7:00 about a conference in Boulder last week about localization. There are about five neighborhood organizations endorsing the idea of a sustainability committee.

Kate made a motion to approve the January minutes. Marilyn seconded the motion, and they were approved unanimously. Kate made a motion to approve the February minutes. Marilyn seconded the motion, and they were approved unanimously.

Meeting Adjourned 8:53  
Minutes by Eileen Nittler