

# WHITEAKER COMMUNITY COUNCIL

A CITY OF EUGENE NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION

PO Box 11692, EUGENE OR 97440

**WCC General Meeting 6/9/21**

In Attendance:

Board: Ian Winbrock: Chair; Gail Caru-Vetter: Vice-Chair; Dilenia Cardona: Treasurer; Angie Byers: Secretary; Theresa Burchell; Claire Roth; Jennifer Hoover; Thea Lee; Margaret Steinbrunn; Dan Schmid; Anand Holtham-Keathley; Andrew Martin;  
12/13

Community Members: Councilperson Syrett; Jason Vanderhaar, Eli Veredas, Jain Elliott; Travis Dee; Margaret Mazzotta; Stephen Fuller-Rowell; Julie Bowman; Emma Jones; Katie Guske

Presenters: Ryan Moore

## **Action Items:**

- Purchase incentives
- Change over signers at Columbia Bank
- Flyers sent for the clinic on Sunday

## **Public Comment**

*Thea Lee:* Reported on EPD, WILL NEED A SYNOPSIS OF THIS. TECH DIFFICULTIES.

*Angie Byers:* Free Bikes for Kids need volunteers to hand out bikes on Saturday. Link placed in chat for those interested in signing up.

*Margaret Mazzota:* Pastor Gabe and I will be meeting to discuss housing options Friday at 2pm, and I would love someone from the board to join me. Margaret will share the join information, and Ian will follow up with the board to see who would like to attend.

*Eli Veredas:* Alluvium updates.

1. We have the pantry from 4-6 every Thursday and Friday. Please spread the word, and there are bilingual digital resources for the event. From now until 6/28, you can also drop off clothing and non-perishable goods and food products that Waste to Taste will take to the Share Fair.

2. Yoga is run through the church on Saturdays from 10-11. On Sunday, from 1-5, there will be a hairstylist giving free haircuts and a food cart, as well as a Spanish translator for at least 2 hours of the event.
3. We are submitting a Neighborhood Matching Fund grant through the city to redesign and beautify the space to give out food. Getting free food can be physically, psychologically challenging, so, to respect dignity and self-worth, we'd like to paint the space in a way that is welcoming and supportive. Nikola Birdman is the muralist we'd like to use, and is a founding member of L.E.A.N, who will allow for BIPOC perspective in the design. We believe it will improve the utilization of the space.
4. *Ian*: I had an opportunity to speak in the city manager's office. The city is working with a number of CBO's to provide 12 car and tent camping. There are possibly 2 locations in the Whiteaker. They will not be re-locating individuals from Washington Jefferson Park unless there is somewhere they can go. *Theresa Burchell(in chat)*: June 23rd? *Thea Lee (in chat)*: City is announcing possible sites tomorrow. they want neighborhood buy in. *jennifer hoover (in chat)*: oh dear, why Whiteaker again? *Claire Roth (in chat)*: @Thea do they have a project URL where the announcement will be? *Ian*: They want to work with the neighborhood to get community buy-in. *Gail Caru-Vetter (in chat)*: Whiteaker is 2 of 12 sites. The distribution is much more equitable than it's ever been before. Let's be glad for the progress. *Ian*: Councilmember Syrett is working with WCAT for options on how to install a permanent art display. We can possibly use grant funding, and make the art about public health. *Travis Dee (in chat)*: are they private properties? or state or county? *Ian*: WHAT DID YOU RESPOND?

## **Springfield Eugene Tenant Association (SETA) – Displacement Protection Assistance**

Ryan Moore, SETA, Board member

We operate the only free tenant hotline in the region. We get calls from Eugene-Springfield area, as well as individuals outside of the city limits. We can provide resources, answers, as well as a lawyer. We both help renters, as well as collect data to track rental information for the region.

\*Shared presentation. We are recruiting organizations to sign on for a strong showing when we present to the City Council. This will not be completed in time for the organization

*Dilenia Cardona*: Out of curiosity, how does it affect those that have lived in a place more than a year. *Ryan Moore*: SB 608 stated that there are a small number of landlord-based reasons to evict someone for no-cause evictions. *Margarot Mazzota*: would this apply to landlords with less than 4 units? *Ryan*: Yes, and we realize that smaller landlords will not have the funds to pay these costs. We are going to the city for the funds to assist these landlords. The majority of the no-cause evictions are issued by independent landlords. There is evidence that many of these non-cause terminations are suspect, and are being used to circumvent the for-cause eviction process. *Thea Lee*: Are you providing renters with offered renter assistance? *Ryan*: Yes, and a lot of the calls we get are on how to pay rent as the moratorium is expiring. We walk them through

the process. *Thea Lee*: Are you looking into options for smaller landlords that need to sell or move back into their properties? Also, is there a way to help reduce the property managed fees required to apply for housing? *Ryan*: A bill for one application and one fee to allow for multiple properties did not pass in congress. Those examples are legal non-cause evictions. *Councilperson Syrett*: I do believe the city could support landowners. Ryan and I are set to meet this Saturday to talk about what's needed. *Andrew Martin*: Is there research on what this has done to rental prices? And will rents go up as landlords build it into the rent, which could increase the problems with the already high cost of rent? *Ryan*: This is an argument that comes up whenever a renter protection fee is brought up. First, in PDX, when they passed their ordinances rent dropped dramatically. It is not a perfect solution. If it does result in some increase in rent, there is a cap of 10%, and the harm it prevents will outweigh the harm it causes. *Dan Schmid*: This could put me and similar individuals that rent out rooms in their homes as a favor. Are there protections for removing someone that isn't a good fit for the space? *Ryan*: This ordinance will not touch no-cause evictions. *Dan*: Is there something that could be done city-wide to make it easier to move into places? *Ryan*: Councilor Syrett would be able to speak more to programs such as that. SETA is working to fill the role of Clearinghouse for renters. Landlord's Association can provide guidance to landlords. *Anand Holtham-Keathley (in chat)*: City provide funding for first, last month's rent. City/County build many mobile home parks. *Margaret Steinbrunn*: Did we not pass a law that you couldn't ask for first, last, and a security deposit? *Ryan*: That's not something I'm familiar with. *Margaret*: To clarify, does that mean someone that is selling their homes to cash in on their investment would have to pay the cost when they sell their home? *Ryan*: Yes, but I will flip that on its head. It's intended to stop someone from experiencing homelessness that is given 90 days notice and unable to afford the first, last, and security deposit. The intent is to reduce harm. *Margaret*: How do you make sure they use that money to get another place? Does the landlord just give the former tenant a check? *Ryan*: Yes. *Margaret*: So there is nothing to keep them from not reinvesting the money into the community. *Ryan*: If they choose to become homeless they can. *Theresa Burchell (in chat)*: question for Ryan: is the 1st, last, and deposit equal to their current rent vs the cost of new housing? *Ryan*: The way we have it right now it's tied to fair market rent for different sized units. *Travis Dee*: Is the date presented of other no-cause eviction data versus just call ins. Is that representative of your data as a whole. *Ryan*: I'm using a loose definition of hotline, which includes all queries we've received. *Travis Dee*: Do you verify this tenant information? *Ryan*: We haven't seen a need to verify, as people tend to use our hotline when they're in a crisis. *Travis Dee*: What I'm concerned about with this entire idea is a lack of data, a lack of transparency of keeping landlords honest. It could be true that there would be an explosion of homelessness after the moratorium on evictions is lifted. I'm concerned there's a false narrative being pushed without concrete data. *Ryan*: This is solid data. Our local hotline does collect physical data, as well as the Oregon Law Center is studying every single eviction case and are verifying this information. *Gail Caru-Vetter VC (in chat)*: This program helps small landlords who cannot afford to pay this cost. It provides at least the possibility that a person so evicted could find replacement housing. There may not be anything available to rent. *Emma Jones (in chat)*: I agree with Gail, it can take months to find housing here. *Margaret Steinbrunn (in chat)*: He stated that they are trying to get the city or county to fund some of that money.. Not that they have... *Gail Caru-Vetter VC (in chat)*: When my landlord died and we were no-cause

evicted, they paid us all 3 months of our current rent if we left in a timely manner. That gave me the financial "breathing room" to be able to get replacement housing within the 90 day window. *Margaret Steinbrunn (in chat):* Yes as of 2015 in Oregon landlords can charge first, last, and deposit. *Theresa Burchell (in chat):* Gail, this is a great example of what SETA is working towards. It brings me a lot of hope for the institution and success of this program in our area. Thank you for the share. *Andrew Martin (in chat):* Ryan - I'm interested in any resources you have. I like academic research and policy papers so don't be scared to send dense material

## **Whiteaker Open Neighbors Group Facebook Group Proposal**

Jason VanderHaar, Former WCC board member, Whiteaker community member

*Jason:* I am proposing that the page is not an official board member space, though board members that are moderators would not be doing so in any official capacity. I'd like to focus on two core tenants: Originally the founders of the group were myself, an individual that no longer lives in the neighborhood, and Chris Gadsby, who doesn't have an interest in moderating anymore. 1. I think we should put together a philosophy statement on how we would enforce the rules. 2. I want to include a spirit of generosity and discussion as part of the mission statement. One of the biggest areas of conflict is that those with differing opinions will immediately take the person's meaning as the least generous interpretation. I'd like to switch that to encourage dialogue with the assumption of the most generous interpretation. I see the current rules as great and explicitly stated, as well as the joining questions. I would change how the rules are enforced, and including those in addition to the one being moderated. *Dan Schmid:* How would the group function if there was not moderation? Do you think it would spiral out of control? How do you see your task as moderating itself? *Jason:* There are other groups that are loosely moderated, and devolves into people being as awful and abusive as they feel like. In the past, the group has not done a good job of moderating itself. There is no space for conspiracy theories or fights that end up in name calling. The more easygoing stuff does self-regulate. It's the extreme instances that need moderators. *Gail Caru-Vetter (in chat):* Unmoderated groups can get out of hand really quickly. *Jennifer Hoover (in chat):* can u please explain how & whom u propose for moderators. *Claire Roth (in chat):* I have been thinking of the importance of community in this time of still being separated by impacts of COVID-19. We are still largely separated physically, so online groups (Whiteaker Open Neighbors Group) foster togetherness. I think the main goal is fostering useful information and community in an online forum, which is still a learning experience for all. Especially for people who aren't able to show up in person for community-forum events (even in the 'normal' times). *Jennifer Hoover:* How do you propose finding the moderators that will be successful with different viewpoints coming in that would get along? *Jason:* One of the original founders and I were completely different, but we had a similar goal of fostering respectful dialogue. I'd like to find groups or different walks of life in the neighborhood that would like to give up a small amount of their time. I want a big moderation group so that individuals don't have to give up too much of their time. *Jennifer:* How would you delineate what you're saying as a moderator versus as a group member? *Jason:* We would use "mod" distinction. The proposal is for the board to turn it over to me, which would result in a larger community moderation, as I

don't agree a single entity should "own" the page. Emma Jones (in chat): I think a large group of moderators would be great as long as the Open Neighbors Page has clear direction and a manifesto. Claire Roth (in chat): The bigger modmin team the better—the houseplant group I am admin of has 11 folks. Travis Dee (in chat): I think the two current mods are by far the most neutral so far in my experience...which is important so the page doesn't turn back into an echo chamber that discounts certain neighbors viewpoints. *Dilenia*: Do you have a team of moderators in mind? I strongly believe that the WCC should be a member, but not running it. *Jason*: I do have a couple of people in mind, but they are still thinking about it. I'd also reach out to Centro Latino and other diverse coalitions, which means there would be a transition period from small admins to a larger team. I'd like 6 folks at least. Any WCC members would not be serving as WCC board, but as neighbors. Eli (in chat): Jes Worely of Centro Latino has been working with Alluvium on stuff. I'm sure she would be happy to help. She developed our flyer for our food pantry. *Margaret*: This echos what Claire and I have already proposed. I think it would be great if Claire were an admin. I'm concerned of the right of modmins kicking off individuals for differences of opinions. How are you going to maintain respect? *Jason*: I know it can be a daily occurrence of individuals cussing each other out on the page. I do not agree with booting people out that have different opinions than mine. Even breaking the rules does not necessarily mean they should be booted. *Claire Roth (in chat)*: There could be a Google Forms posted the group asking for applications (that word sounds too formal, but you get the idea) for modmin position. For me, Facebook is the wild west, and you will never be able to tell everyone that they can and cannot say. We are very isolated, and do not have healthy community forum spaces in person. Online forums are very important because of that. I look at the group as a way to get timely information to the community. That's my goal with this group.

### **WCC Vaccine Clinics: Prep for clinic on Sunday, June 13<sup>th</sup>**

- Overview: 1-4 PM at Alluvium. There will be a food truck and free haircuts. HIV Alliance is also interested in partnering with us to do STI testing, as well as provide naloxone kits. The Burrito Brigade will also be there on the last Fridays, and the U of O will also offer testing for Covid. We will have a mixture of the J&J and the Pfizer vaccines. We need to spend the FEMA funds as well as other grant
- Promotion: We are working with Emma and Holly for graphic design and social media promotion, but we need community and board members to volunteer and promote. *Theresa*: Can we get physical flyers to hand out at Red Barn? *Ian*: I will get in touch with you about physical flyers.
- Set-up: Sunday at 10am
- Take-down:

Volunteers: Jason, Gail, Theresa, Julie Bowman, Katie Guske, Emma Jones, Ananad Holtham-Keahntley, Dan Schmid, Margaret Steinbrunn

### **Volunteer and Event Coordinator hiring Team**

Thea shared the preliminary job description and the interview questions with a call to meet tomorrow to finalize it.

**Previous Meeting Minutes Approval:**

11/12 Yes. 1/12 abstain. Motion Passes.

**Future Agenda Topics**

- Alluvium Neighborhood Match Grant
- Volunteer and Event Coordinator
- What it means to be a Board Member-share passions
- Cindy with EPD dispatch, to talk about prioritizing their response to the Whiteaker.
- Stephen Fuller-Rowell with a Whiteaker History Project

**9:00pm / Adjournment**