

WHITEAKER COMMUNITY COUNCIL

A CITY OF EUGENE NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION

PO Box 11692, EUGENE OR 97440

WCC Meeting 3/24/21:

Attendees:

Board: Chris Gadsby, WCC Chair; Katie Guske, Treasurer, Dilenia Cordona, Ian Winbrock, Johnny Skirving, Angie Byers, WCC Secretary; Gail Caru-Vetter, Anand Holtham-Keahntley, WCC Vice-Chair Andrew Price

Theresa B, Jubal, Clair Syrett, Cathy Feely, Linda, Phillip, Bee D, Travis Dee, Chuck, Margaret Mazzotta, Susan Thomas, Emily Yates, Alex Fikany, CEPD Sam, Jennifer Hoover, Tara Garkow, Iska Johnson, Kristi Bray-Dragt, Holly Hine, Susan Detroy, Thea Lee, Pee Funk, Sigh O'Nara, Brad Foster, Julie Bowman, Eli Veradas

Council Persons: Claire Syrett, and Emily Semple,

Eugene Police Department: Chuck and Margaret Mazzotta

Action Items:

Public Comments:

Travis Dee: Would like the WCC and the Whiteaker Chair to make a public statement on the acceptability on bringing AR-15's into public parks. *WCC Chairperson Chris Gadsby:* This is legal. *Travis Dee:* I would like to clarify that I'm not asking for legality, but what's right. It's my understanding that there were some inciting conversations prior to the groups bringing AR-15's into the park. Armed people in the parks does not promote peace, and does not encourage children to come to the park. I'm asking where this council and the Chair stand. I'm asking the neighborhood I've spent over 40 years in to take a stance on if it's acceptable, not if it's legal. *WCC Chairperson Chris Gadsby:* I brought in Claire Syrett, Emily Semple, and Chuck, EPD, for them to discuss this topic. Whether we make a statement or not, it is the law in an open carry state. I'm not sure what a statement against carrying guns in our parks would do. I spoke with the chair of the Jefferson Westside group, and we are working on a good neighbor agreement to advocate for showing people that we don't want to militarize our parks. It would provide a framework for non-militarization of our parks. *Chuck, EPD:* EPD was aware of this event in advance, and were prepared to respond. I would echo Chris' response, that it was their right to be there. We were there to support that, but would not allow criminal behavior. *WCC Chairperson Chris Gadsby:* A number of individuals have spoken to the organizers of this event,

and the group would like to work with our neighborhood on these concerns. *WCC Treasurer Katie Guske*: We all have our personal opinions, so taking a vote or stance is not as good as being proactive. I think it's important that we have a discussion of this in our neighborhood both in our Facebook page and in our meetings. *WCC Chairperson Chris Gadsby*: I see having a meeting like this is much more appropriate than Facebook. *Linda*: I would like to agree with Katie about censoring people online. I think that it's true that protracted conversations online are not as good as in person, but that the conversation should be able to happen online. *WCC at Large Board Member Margaret Steinbrunn*: My concerns are why the city would grant a permit for a rally to happen like that in a place surrounded by homes. It seems to me that if something did happen, there would be less collateral damage. *Jefferson Westside Councilwoman Semple*: We got a heads up at the beginning of the week that this event might be happening. The report came Saturday morning that there were approximately 8 people with guns. I could see the individuals dressed in black on the perimeter of the park. They looked intimidating, but were not doing anything illegal. The police did make a presence, as they were staged nearby. There were guns there, there were kids there. I didn't feel in danger, but I did feel on notice. My constituents did not have a reaction like this one. *WCC Chairperson Chris Gadsby*: They did not ask for a permit. Most protests have not requested one. *Councilperson Claire Syrett*: I am not sure that a permit was required for them to gather in the way they did. Can Chuck or Margaret speak to that? *Bee D (in chat)*: It behooves a candidate for leadership on a board to be transparent about their beliefs. It makes me nervous to be lumped into a statement by a leader who isn't transparent, by the use of the word "we". *WCC at Large Board Member Anand Holtham-Keathley*: (in chat) I do not need to talk but just prefer to stick to chat. When this event was discussed here before people described families turning away from the park when they saw the people with arms. I am wondering how people feel about that? *WCC Chairperson Chris Gadsby*: Have any of your constituents contacted you in regards to this event? *Councilperson Claire Syrett*: No, no one has come to me about this event. Events similar to this one, a smaller event, staged in the park, they are not required to get a permit. I did share a concern, as it is threatening in my view. It is legal, and the city would not have the authority to stop this activity. That would be a state law (the choice is to be an open carry state in our state legislature). Lastly, there was some speculation that there might have been a march to city counciler's homes if there was a large enough crowd. I share some of the concerns. *WCC Chairperson Chris Gadsby*: Developing a plan will take time, and we should be working with Jefferson-Westside. *Travis Dee*: I want to touch back on the legal versus acceptable, and on a comment Chris made on contacting the proper people. The Facebook page has over 3000 members, and we could take a stand on this. The idea that you don't hold power as a community council or chair is not correct. *WCC at Large Board Member Margaret Steinbrunn*: The day that they were in the park, somebody posted a picture of it on our Facebook page. They told me they'd gotten a permit. *Chuck, EPD*: I don't see inserting ourselves in the middle of people exercising their 1st amendment right is what should be done. We interject and arrest when we need to, but it's a balancing act/fine line for us. We're not going to jump in there because they do not have a permit. They do not communicate with us, and we scramble at the last minute to have support. *WCC at Large Board Member Dilenia Cardona*: This is a better space than Facebook. Facebook is not the platform for these things. *WCC at Large Board Member Margaret Steinbrunn*: To clarify, Proud Boys could do the same thing, and EPD would

respond the same way. *WCC Chairperson Chris Gadsby*: I think we should have a blueprint of how to protest/use our spaces for everyone to feel safe. This is where I want to proceed with this, with some teeth. I'd like to have the guidance of EPD, council support, and neighborhood leadership.

OHA Grant Funded Handwashing Stations:

Updates: These are permanent infrastructure funded with OHA grant money. The locations will be 2nd and Blair at Ninkasi, and at Oakshire. This will allow water bottle refill, as well.

Grant and Vaccine Clinic Presentation

We will be focusing on vaccine passive and vaccine hesitant individuals in future campaigns. It is our job as a community council to get good information and good opportunities for vaccinations to this group.

Campaign:

- Diversity of language
- Science communication
- Vaccine confidence
- Vaccine commitment
- Infection and Transmission Prevention:

Opportunities with OHA: There are talks of future vaccination events.

Next Steps:

- Completing vaccine communication strategy by 3/31
- Completing OHA Grant spending by 3/31
- Make a vaccine strategy by 4/21 to meet potential demand.

Alluvium: Owner has offered the space for future events.

Emily Semple, City Council: I'm grateful, as I got my shot there. It was sunny, everyone was really nice, and I'm personally so grateful.

WCC at Large Board Member Ian Winbrock: It is important to not pass judgement on people, and we should not negate reasons why people are vaccine hesitant. We should keep that event feeling, and make it easy and accessible.

WCC Chairperson Chris Gadsby: The neighborhood feedback was that we had positive feedback, with some concerns about the cars coming into and out of the church. There were young people that came by on bikes and stopped to help. There were Spanish speakers that stopped to help.

Jennifer Hoover: Is there talk about having another pop-up clinic. *Ian:* We do not have information yet, but we will begin to prepare in April for the possibility.

WCC at Large Board Member Margaret Steinbrunn: Does anyone know the young man that stood in the driveway for 4 hours handing out paperwork? *Julie Bowman:* The guy's name was Adam, and works for LTD.

Motions:

1. \$4000 to pay a local accountant to digitize WCC financial records for the next treasurer to use. Motioned from Katie, seconded from Margaret. **Passed.**
2. \$360 Qualtrix subscription for eligibility determinations, especially for vaccine clinic. Motioned from Ian. Chris seconded. **Passed.**
3. Website: \$8000 from grant money to pay a professional team to build a website for the WCC. The website will be a comprehensive meeting place with the ability to update projects, zoom links, scheduling. It will also look very professional. Margaret motioned. Who would the website be hosted through? Squarespace, which is easy to update. The package includes a year of the use of Squarespace. The website designers will train anyone that wants to know how to use it. *WCC at Large Board Member Gail Caru-Vetter:* I'm curious about the change from \$5000 to \$8000. *WCC at Large Board Member Ian Winbrock:* The Covid funds are being proposed to use for the website to be a trusted brokerage of information. *WCC Vice Chairperson Andrew Price (in chat):* funds from covid fuckary needs to be directed to that. website needs to be setup from WCC funds. That money can be used to help homeless. I don't feel that's a good use of money. so. as vice chair. I think we need to put our grant money to help not setup a website. that can be funded elsewhere *Travis Dee:* Bids? *WCC at Large Board Member Ian Winbrock:* There was not a formal process due to time constraints. *WCC at Large Board Member Dilenia Cardona:* The city of Eugene does provide us with a website that is ours. Why are we paying for a website if we have one? *WCC at Large Board Member Ian Winbrock:* They do not provide us with a website, they provide us with a webpage. It is monitored by the city. What we've learned is that when individuals have information from trusted community partners they are more likely to get vaccinated. *Thea Lee:* Is the website linked with emails? *Emma Jones:* Yes, this company is very experienced. *Thea Lee:* Could it have a donate page? *Emma Jones:* yes. *WCC at Large Board Member Dilenia Cardona:* As far as emails are concerned, has the board ever thought of using Microsoft 365? They offer it at a low cost or free for non-profits. I think that \$8000 is a lot of money for a website, as there are a lot of free options out there. Microsoft will provide email, sharepoint, and other things at a low cost. *Emma Jones:* This is a website that will provide a platform that you cannot get from a free site. *WCC at Large Board Member Gail Caru-Vetter:* I'd like to point out that we have to spend the grant money by the 31st. We are making sure these resources can be used in the future. *Iska Johnson:* It's very important to have a website as a hub. *WCC Vice-Chairperson Andrew Price:* Putting grant money into our community funding website means that we have to use our website

for primarily Covid-information. I don't think our website needs to be directed around that. *WCC at Large Board Member Margaret Steinbrunn*: To clarify, my understanding after being on the committee and being at the meetings, we would use it for the set-up. It does not mean OHA will be on our website for years to come. *WCC at Large Board Member Ian Winbrock*: Both Margaret and Andrew are partially correct. The grant is for education, outreach, and communication. We will continue to have OHA oversight on Covid work on the website if they fund it. They will not have oversight on other items on the page. **Motion Passes.**

Homeless Outreach Center:

WCC at Large Board Member Ian Winbrock: I do not feel that our time or input has been respected with this center. The city has not put enough time into integrating neighborhood stakeholders into the process, they did not allow us to be co-creators of the utilization of the space. If the state and county trusts us, and the city doesn't, that's a slap in the face. It feels as if they want us to rubber-stamp something. During the last meeting, I delineated what I thought the shortcomings of the process: communication (more regular, as there were months of gaps), work plan (provide due diligence and connection for outreach). Angie should be connected with park ambassadors. (Angie is not). The city staff says they do not have the time to prioritize the process. We are solutions orientated, and will work with the city staff.

WCC Chairperson Chris Gadsby: We have put a lot of work into this. This resource center is going to serve the people that are in that park for a long time.

Councilperson Claire Syrett: This is the first time I'm hearing this, and am not directly involved. Is this the best format? Should we meet with city staff to have this conversation with them? City staff does know how to work with neighborhood associations. Staff has not indicated to me that they do not have the time to engage the steering committee. It has been used by outreach workers as launching space. Peter, Jason, and Reagan have all been pulled into the Covid response, and stop things they were doing with the center.

Councilperson Emily Semple: The resource center evolved from a community center, and has changed. This is horrible news, and we have to find out what's going on. The use of it has shifted due to Covid, and should have been communicated. Where are we going to put people, as they keep piling up in 4-5 places.

WCC at Large Board Member Dilenia Cardona: I came to the community meeting, and was told this could be anything (day center, community center). I provided some idea, but Peter stopped contacting me back. Now, over a year, it's just money going out the door. Here's good people with solutions trying to do something with it.

Thea Lee: There is a councilor work session in April to discuss where the unhoused are going. Closing the bathrooms has made some problems in the neighborhood. Councilperson Syrett requested bathrooms open, and staff said they will try it again to see if they can be opened.

Councilperson Claire Syrett: 4/12/21 work session will discuss unhoused issue throughout city.

WCC at Large Board Member Margaret Steinbrunn: The city is moving forward with a plan we know nothing about, as trucks are driving through and dropping off materials. Yes, it does feel like we are there to rubber-stamp choices they've already made without our input.

Cathy Feeley: Is there a joint session planned with the county, as it's not just a Eugene problem. I'd be more interested in a public meeting so that they can take comments.

Councilperson Claire Syrett: We have a strategic plan done jointly with the county, and there is a staff person employed jointly (to find shelter and permanent housing) to oversee the plan. The worksession in April is about city property, right of way, and the management of the unhoused and other folks. The joint work sessions are public. We only meet together occasionally for public hearings, which are more formal. You can give county comments and city comments.

Chris Gadsby, WCC Chair: The HRC has played less of a role than we'd hoped. I do believe we are working in the right direction, and as long as we keep our solutions-based approach we will not get compassion fatigue.

New Subcommittee:

Tabled to next meeting's discussion.