

GWWCA Membership Meeting – Tuesday, May 17, 2015

Larry opened the meeting at 7:31.

Agenda:

- Welcome to all.
- February's meeting was cancelled due to weather, so the elections for executive Board were held. Larry announced the slate and all board members were reelected (due to lack of competition):
 - Larry Dempsey, President
 - Parry Carlson, Vice-President
 - Paula Sutherland, Treasurer
 - Monica Rodgers, Secretary
- Treasurer's report: Larry summarized the latest expenditures and income. Expenditures included mostly donations to charity. Because the organization has a healthy bank balance, Larry asked for input on ways to use the funds for the community. He provided his e-mail for this purpose. GWWCApresident@gmail.com.
- www.Nextdoor.com: please join, if you haven't yet. This is a great tool for keeping in touch regarding many subjects, from crime in the area, to recommendations and requests for recommendations for various contractors, etc.
- Suggested GWWCA changes:
 - Begin membership meetings at 7:00 instead of 7:30? We will do a trial run in September. Larry asked for input; one member commented that it can be difficult to be home from work in time to be at a 7:00 start time.
 - Move February meeting to March because of inclement weather. Move to March? The general consensus was yes, so beginning in 2017, the February membership meeting will be permanently held in March.
 - Hold elections in November to be effective January 1 of the following year, instead of February of the current year. Again, all agreed.
- Larry summarized criminal incidents in the community September through mid-May. There followed a brief discussion of specific incidents.
- Lee District Nights begin in June. Every Wednesday there is live music. Larry showed the schedule. It's held in the amphitheater at Lee District. Shows begin at 7:30.
- Local farmer's markets. The Huntington market is on Thursday near the old Metro police station (brick building). Also, Orchard Country Produce has a stand at Bush Hill Presbyterian Church on Saturday mornings.
- LDACO meeting on Wednesday, May 25 at 7:30 p.m. at Franconia Government Center
- General discussion of traffic, community, roads, water, and more.
- Larry briefed everyone on the EMBARK organization that hopes to make big changes to the Route 1 corridor. There are multiple entities from multiple counties involved. The plan includes a dedicated bus lane, extending metro to Hybla Valley, and adding pedestrian walkways on both sides.

Invited speaker: Mark Sickles, our VA Delegate. Mark came and gave us all a summary of the legislative session in Richmond.

- This was a budget year. Mark explained that, since governors are limited to one term, they have only one opportunity a governor can put in a budget while they are in office. Governor McAuliffe got most of what he was seeking. In Mark's words, the budget process was "pretty non-partisan." Sickles is on Health and Human Services. There is a lot of change in that area.
 - Medicaid Expansion: Mark is in favor. He brought up the challenge we have with mental illness, and pointed out that Medicaid expansion would cover a lot of this. Virginia is paying more for some health services than we otherwise would. There are 100,000 out of 400,000 Va residents using ACA insurance that don't qualify for subsidies, which is financially difficult for many people.
 - Mark stated that more attention is being paid to mental health care, largely in part in response to the VA Tech and Creigh Deeds incidents. Many people who are in jail belong in mental health facilities. There has been improvement in this area, but there is a long way to go.
 - Mark has always felt strongly that we have governor in office that gives needed money to the schools, but it is a balance with all other areas in need of funding. Because the county board of supervisors gave more money to FCPS, the state legislature persuaded the governor to replace some of that money to the county.
 - Library funding: there have been some controversies with regard to classification of employees and also regarding hours. Per Mark, there is a "library formula" in which 40 cents per capita, except that only 10 cents per capita for population over 600,000, which adversely affects our county. Mark was able to get the governor to increase that.
- Virginia 2021: organization working on changes in redistricting
- Mark was asked about the empty government building on Telegraph Road just south of Lee District. He didn't know, but said he'd check.

Thanks to everyone who attended, and welcome to all new and prospective members. The meeting adjourned at 8:55.