

GWWCA Membership Meeting – Tuesday, November 19, 2013

Larry opened the meeting at 7:30.

- Membership phone directories: there will be a delay due to some needed verifications. They should be out early in 2014.
- Join GWWCA.nextdoor.com: 233 members in 205 households, 1031 total households. It's a great way to request and share information on home contractors, local crime, local events, etc.
- Larry reminded everyone of \$15 dues for 2014.
- December 8 from 2-8 p.m.: fundraiser for garden at Sweet Frog. Mention the Memorial Garden when ordering.
- Sharon Chapel Church Sunday November 23, 10-3 (craft fair?)
- Non-profit energy inspection service. Larry is sending out e-mails and posts on next door.com.

Delegate Mark Sickles attended and gave a presentation. He thanked the group for inviting him.

- His district has changed a bit—he no longer has any of Springfield, but now has all the way south to the end of Lorton. He provided some perspective on how districts are drawn, and how they have affected the way the government is run.
- Mark discussed the recent election, including the election of Terry McAuliffe for governor of Virginia.
- Mark also discussed the Affordable Care Act (ACA), Medicaid expansion, and other health care issues that are hot topics at the state and federal level.
- Transportation. Last year, as Mark told us the last time he was here, the state legislature passed the most significant transportation bill in 27 years. Mark discussed the details of this bill, including some of the details of its evolution. Sales taxes have been raised (except for food), so there will be approximately \$300 million per year raised in Northern Virginia. A lot of money has been dedicated to rail and transit. The state House Speaker deserves credit for leading the state house to approve the bill. He has received a lot of criticism from Tea Party members in the state.
- Virginia has a two year budget. It is the only state that allows only one term for a governor. The governor inherits and executes a budget from the previous governor, creates and executes his or her own budget, and then prepares a budget for the next governor to execute. Mark's opinion is that this should be changed.
- Other budget details:
 - Virginia is in better shape than others with regards to the economy, but there are unmet needs. One of these is higher education. An example is that the average student at GMU used to receive an average of \$8K in aid; they now receive an average of \$4200. Half of all students from Northern Virginia attend community college after high school, and one big reason is because college costs are less affordable for many.
 - Pre-K is another need that is being addressed.
 - SOL reform. There is a movement to reevaluate this program, and we should see a lot about this coming up.
 - Ethics. Gift limits will be added; reporting frequency will be increased.

Questions:

1. Why has there not been legislation introduced to regulate gerrymandering?

2. Medicaid: please clarify what you said about the state not taking the \$2 B from the feds for Medicaid? The majority in the house said that the feds can't do that indefinitely, so the state should not take it and get accustomed to having it.
3. What exactly did California do to improve how their government functions? They reestablished rules for drawing districts where there was less attention paid to how to get the most votes for one party. The goal is more to attract centrist votes in the primaries. This helps avoid extremist leanings, which largely impedes consensus and compromise.
4. Discussion on state Senator Creigh Deeds' condition after the tragedy at his home this morning.
5. Comments on energy sourcing issues? One reason Virginia is friendly to business is because of relatively low electricity costs. Wise County has one of the cleanest-burning coal companies in the country. Dominion now owns the rights to wind power off the coast near Virginia Beach. Mark stated that customers should let Dominion know if they want this. The process of bringing the electricity to the shore, however, is very expensive, so the downside is that costs would rise if this happens.

Ian Munro, Troop 301, presented his idea for an Eagle Scout project. He wants to build a path from Woodside Road (cul de sac) to Fort Hill Dr and shadow Walk. A discussion followed on exactly who owns the land, as well as potential legal liabilities.

GWWCA Business

- Elections. All current board members agreed to run again, with no new nominations offered. The election was unanimous. Larry (President), Parry (Vice President), Monica (Secretary), and Carol (Treasurer) remain on the Executive Board.
- Treasury report. Balance is \$6,966.64.72 as of 11/19/13. Larry showed a slide with detail on the year's expenditures.
- Sidewalk on School St. Construction should begin by first week of December, but might not begin until January. It will begin at the top and go to Breezy Terrace. It will begin on the church side, but cross over to other side somewhere on the way down. Insight is paying for this as a proffer. They cannot move anyone into their building until this is complete.
- School St. traffic calming task force is still working on this issue. schoolstreetinfo@gmail.com.
- Penn Daw update: 10.4 acres. Melissa presented the drawings of what is planned. The task force has pushed for a grocery store, and the county has agreed to the task force that it will check up on the developer to ensure they do a good search. A big issue is overflow parking for townhouses: the developer says they have addressed this, but the task force is skeptical. There could be spillover parking on Shaffer and Poag St., causing problems for the existing neighborhood.
- Home inspections. Larry has reserved several days for these.

If you have any questions for GWWCA, please feel free to contact Larry at gwwca.president@gmail.org.

Next meeting is Tuesday, February 18, 2014. Elections will be held.

The meeting adjourned at 9:30.