

Minutes from OCCO General Meeting May 9, 2009

President Felicia Phillips called the meeting to order at Fire Station 14. There were ten people who signed the meeting attendance sheet.

Meeting Minutes

Minutes from the April 2009 meeting were reviewed, modified due to a few grammatical and spelling changes, and unanimously approved.

Treasurer's Report

Treasurer Henry Roque presented the latest account statement, which showed a balance of \$2021.54 as of April 30, 2009. There were deposits of \$275.00 for the Oakland City Security Patrol from neighbors in the Sandtown/Westridge community, and expenses of \$70 for keys for the Hartnett Community Garden.

Quality of Life

- Crime and Public Safety
 - The ***Oakland City Security Patrol*** is still in the planning stages. Meeting attendees were encouraged to take flyers and talk to neighbors about the Patrol. A minimum of 60 households are needed in order to launch the program.
 - Ms. Phillips stated that an **Operation Neighborhood Take Back** crime prevention session will be planned for June. She will notify residents once the date has been established. She also reminded meeting attendees that this program is separate from the Security Patrol. The Security Patrol is a community effort, while ONTB is led by the District Attorney's office. However, both programs are designed to address the same issue: reduce crime and finding ways to improve the quality of life in our community.
- Hartnett Community Garden
 - The \$25 annual fee for gardeners has been waived for 2009.
 - OCCO officers will soon meet with the Atlanta Community Food Bank, Park Pride, and the West Atlanta Watershed Alliance to discuss concerns related to management and oversight of the garden.

Presentation from State Representative Rashad Taylor (55th District)

- Rep. Taylor recently made a presentation at an NPU-S meeting summarizing activity during the state's 2009 legislative session. Handouts were available for meeting attendees.
- The boundaries of the 55th district run from North Buckhead to southwest Atlanta
- Major discussions included:
 - MARTA Funding: Rep. Taylor is the only legislator from the City of Atlanta that serves on the General Assembly's MARTA Oversight Committee, and he chairs the Maintenance and Infrastructure Subcommittee. The legislature did not act on legislation that would have allowed MARTA to use money designated for capital expenses for operating expenses; the Senate voted in favor of it but it never made it to the floor of the House. To close the \$45 million spending gap, MARTA will receive \$25 million from the Atlanta Regional Commission and \$20 million from the Federal stimulus package.

- Combating Copper Theft: A bill passed that requires secondary metals recyclers to ask for a valid ID from people seeking to sell metal. The bill also requires the recycling companies to pay people with a check rather than in cash (unless the seller wants to wait 48 hours for payment). It is up to local law enforcement personnel to enforce the law. There is a metro Atlanta Copper Theft Task Force that is also working on the problem.
- Property Taxes: The 2010 budget does not include a grant program that passed some property tax relief to homeowners; therefore, property taxes will increase for most homeowners. Also, the property value appeals process must now take into account the value of foreclosures in the immediate area; this is new for 2009.

Presentation from Councilmember Clela Winslow

- Councilmember Winslow has been in conversation with business along the Lee Street corridor regarding the creation of a Community Improvement District (CID). A CID is a public-private partnership created through taxes paid by businesses to help fund public safety, transportation, greenspace and other improvements. Businesses in City Council District 3 are involved as well. No timeframe was given for the implementation of the plan.
- In response to a resident's interest in having a clean up, Councilmember Winslow said that neighborhoods can ask Public Works to place a single dumpster to be in the neighborhood on a Saturday for a cleanup.
- Councilmember Winslow will look into residents' complaints about crime activity and code enforcement violations on Wilmington Avenue.
- She distributed information about summer programs for youth, the Atlanta Jazz Festival, and narcotics and prostitution arrests during 2008.

Administrative

- Election of Officers – Elections were held, and the following individuals will serve as officers for the remainder of 2009:
 - President – Felicia Phillips
 - Vice-President – Jamila Houser
 - Secretary – Amy Johnson
 - Treasurer – Diane Trimble

Respectfully submitted,

