

# Eastgate Community Association

## Meeting Minutes – June 12, 2019

**Next Meeting – Wednesday July 10, 2019 at the Newcastle Library, 12901 Newcastle Way, Newcastle**  
<https://kcls.org/locations/1564/>

Attendees: Karol Brown, Stella Cordes, Leslie Geller, Michelle Wannamaker, Ann Michaelson, Julia Tai, Carol Ross, Tzachi Litov, Lara Litov, Mary Banbury, Tracy Bury, Susanna Chung, Barbara Garcia, Lisa Leitner

**Action Items:** Karol, Lisa, Leslie, Tzachi, Julia, Michelle have specific action items. Names highlighted in **red**.

### OLD BUSINESS

#### Debrief on the first ECA gathering on June 8<sup>th</sup>

We spent time reviewing how our first event went. Tzachi and Leslie think there's nothing that didn't go well. In short, we put on a successful event! The turnout was great. Tzachi and Karol estimated perhaps 100 attendance overall, throughout the event duration. Many people came because of the flyers posted on mailboxes. Having a sign-in was good, both laptop and paper. We could have done a better job of collecting contact info—capturing people when they walk in. Carol said when the City does events, there's one person stationed at the front to collect names and contact info, and to get a headcount. Lara found that some people didn't want to sign up initially but after she spoke to them and talked about issues, they went back and signed because they wanted to be on a mailing list.

Tzachi's intermittent announcements to the room were really helpful to provide brief information about the Eastgate Community Association, calling attention to the Vision and Pillars that we posted on the boards, encouraging feedback, introducing Carol Ross, Heather Wong (Fire Dept, Public Education Officer), and Sophia Vackimes (Office of Emergency Management), and of course the fabulous food spread. We (with printed name tags – thank you, Karol) engaged our neighbors in conversation and got great feedback on their concerns, as well as what they thought about the event. Very positive comments about the event! Carol noted that the gathering was very welcoming. The library turned out to be a good location because we generated curiosity among library patrons, some of whom ventured into our room to learn more.

The flyers about Bellevue that Carol brought were well-perused and taken home to read. Carol made a point to tell people about the MyBellevue app (she had brought a flyer specifically about the app). Teens, especially, responded quite positively to the app. Our neighbors appreciated having a representative from the Fire Department and from Emergency Preparedness to talk with.

Local businesses were generous with their donations. We received coffee from Starbucks at Factoria Blvd. and Cypress Coffee; ginormous cinnamon rolls from Lil' Jons; rolls from Great Harvest Bread; an assortment of bagels from Panera Bread; Safeway provided a plant for our welcoming table and a gift card, and Rick Thomas contributed the balance of his UW/Bellevue NEP survey project funds to provide juice. Thanks to Lisa, Julia, Tzachi, and Farida for reaching out to the businesses. Julia noted that she had to explain what ECA was about when she approached the businesses, and as soon as she mentioned safety (one of our Pillars), the businesses were all in. They are having issues with theft and safety. Ann mentioned that she went to Great Harvest and thanked them for their donation. Several of us who lingered after the monthly meeting adjourned signed the June 8 event flyers with a Thank You note, which will be delivered to the businesses.

#### Eastgate Neighborhood Walk

Neighborhood Walks are an annual City-sponsored event, an opportunity for residents to interact with City Management. Carol passed out the City's flyers and will send a PDF to the ECA group. The Walk is Thursday July 18 from 6:30-8:30pm, starting and ending at Eastgate Elementary. It's important to know that people can join at any point; you don't have to do the whole walk. Mark Heilman, the City's Neighborhood Walk coordinator, is working out parking

arrangements. Carol said that it would help for us to give him ideas of where chairs can be set up mid-walk for people to sit, since there is not already anywhere to sit along the route. Mark's email is [mheilman@bellevuewa.gov](mailto:mheilman@bellevuewa.gov). Tracy wondered if we can wear nametags that say something like "Ask me about ECA" with a half sheet of info about ECA. The Walk is a City-sponsored event, so we can't formally call attention to ourselves. But Carol said that if, during our conversations with other Eastgate residents, we could mention the ECA.

## NEW BUSINESS

### ECA Structure

We had a lengthy discussion about a structure for the ECA. Leslie, Tzachi, and Julia voiced the desire to have a structure. Roles and responsibilities are defined; it helps with accountability for keeping the ECA alive and healthy into the future. We could have officers and other positions. We need to define officer roles and terms, and our bylaws. This will help with longevity of ECA, e.g. if someone leaves ECA, it's easier for someone else to fill in. Leslie said that the discussion about structure, organization, and bylaws should be a separate one for whomever wants to be a part of the discussion. Carol told us about a guide to forming a Neighborhood Assn on the City website. It needs updating but it's a good starting place. **Tzachi, Julia, Karol, Leslie, and Lisa** will come to the July meeting with draft structure and bylaws for discussion by the group. There was a suggestion about having committees that focus on certain areas, e.g. Communications or Event Planning. We will include this in our structure discussion.

Julia feels very strongly that ECA should not take an official position with the City on controversial issues that divide the Eastgate Community (e.g. what we experienced with the effort to site a homeless shelter next to the P&R). ECA's credibility would be compromised if we take a stance (i.e. at City Council meetings) and Eastgate residents/business then state they disagree, and ECA's position does not reflect their view. She wants this clearly spelled out in the bylaws. Some of us questioned how this would allow us to do advocacy. Tzachi said that we've learned in the past several years that it's important to provide a forum for education. We could offer opportunities for neighbors to weigh in on issues. Tzachi wants a formal structure for Eastgate to have a voice at city hall. He thinks it's impossible to have advocacy if we have something in the bylaws about not taking a stand on issues. Others agree. Michelle added that no one from ECA should go in front of Council speaking on behalf of ECA unless we all agree. Of course, we could speak in front of Council as ourselves, individually. Karol said we could consider having separate meetings/forums with City or Council members to discuss issues and concerns specific to Eastgate.

### Future Activities

We had another lengthy discussion of possible activities and events we want to plan. Some options we discussed:

1. Emergency preparedness training with Bellevue Fire Department
2. Potluck dinners – Michelle said that she, Micki, and Farida tried to have a community potluck a few years back, and they had a hard time getting people to participate. After the turnout at the June 8<sup>th</sup> event, she thinks the potluck may have been an impediment. Like putting cart before horse – a potluck with people that you don't know.
3. National Night Out. This is the evening of August 6<sup>th</sup>. Groups have to register with Police/Fire department that we want to have a formal gathering for National Night Out. We could have it at a park eg Lattawood or Sunset, or on a street, like Leslie's dead-end. Carol said it doesn't have to be a lot of people who show up. Police and Fire show up to 10 families who are getting together on a block. They spend about 30 minutes at each gathering. They're looking for groups to sign up. We can post on Facebook, NextDoor, pass out flyers that Carol can provide. Karol and Barbara are interested in organizing it. Many others are hesitant to plan for this – some are on vacation, it's summer, August 6 is less than 2 months away, and we already have the Eastgate Neighborhood Walk to promote and attend. In the end, we decided not to do this as it's too much.
4. Candidate forum. Again, it's too soon to have our own forum. We talked about piggy backing on another neighborhood association's already-scheduled forum. **Michelle** will ask Lake Hills Community Assn if we can piggyback on their forum.

We moved to a general discussion of event planning. Tzachi got a lot of questions at the June 8<sup>th</sup> event about what the ECA is all about. He's not interested in ECA being primarily an organizer of events for the community. Tracy noted that events can encompass multiple pillars, not just community building. There's opportunity for community members to

have occasional participation at events, and for those who want more formal participation in ECA. Tzachi suggested that any event we sponsor should have a social component. Carol noted that having a Fire and Police with trucks is a great way to bring out kids and adults. Lara talked to us about businesses being concerned about safety and shoplifting. Lara wondered if we should invite representatives from businesses to our events. Carol said we might want to sponsor Coffee with a Cop and invite the small businesses because they may not be aware of these type of City events. She said that some neighborhood associations do something for National Night Out and invite the local businesses. Sometimes they have a table.

We decided to wait to plan more activities/events until ECA is more formalized. Carol said that once we have a firmer structure and draft bylaws, the City can do a mailing to all Eastgate residents in advance of a larger ECA monthly meeting. Kind of a second kickoff, we say we're organizing and looking for more community members to participate.

## **NEXT STEPS**

Web Presence – We do not have a Facebook group or any other web presence. We talked about the need to have multiple vehicles of communication to reach everyone in our community. Lara said that her area has lots of elderly who aren't on the internet, so paper e.g. on mailboxes is important also. Neighborhoodlink.com is a platform for neighborhood groups to create webpages, that we might be able to utilize. For now, **Tzachi** will create a Facebook group so we have an official web presence. He will contact Colin who expressed interest in helping with our web presence.

NextDoor—NextDoor's Eastgate neighborhood does not match the City's official Eastgate neighborhood boundaries. **Lisa** will research which NextDoor neighborhoods we need to select when we post about ECA. The City will be posting notice of the Eastgate Neighborhood Walk shortly.

Bellevue Reporter – Karol will post the ECA July and August meetings on the Bellevue Reporter events calendar. Lisa alerted that Bellevue Reporter only delivers hardcopy newspaper to single family residences.

Locations where we can host events—**Leslie** will check if we can use school playgrounds for public events. Eastgate doesn't have a plethora of places we can host events!

ECA Meetings—Meetings are held on the second Wednesday of every month from 7-8:30pm. We start promptly at 7pm. July and August meetings are at the Newcastle Library. **Leslie** volunteered to be on top of reserving the Newport Way Library as soon as the booking window is open. It's a popular meeting room!

The meeting adjourned at 8:30pm.