

East Ocean View Civic League

Minutes of meeting held March 1, 2012

Meeting was called to order at 7 PM by John Greene

Treasurer's Report was given by Jeffrey Lewis:

Total Assets	\$2,990.85
Total Liabilities and Equity	\$2,990.85
Net Income	\$-195.27

A detailed statement is available on request of John Greene, President

**Police Report**

Officer Warren Snyder reported that the crime stats for our area were about the same as last month: mostly property crimes, and the numbers are steady – 25 to 30 reports a month. The Annual Saint Patrick's Day Parade will actually be on March 17<sup>th</sup> this year, a Saturday. Police will have a presence there and also at the After Party. Officer Bill Cogswell was also present.

A request from the floor was raised: with the good weather, there have been lots of youngsters out later than usual, and could the police make contact with them to build a rapport. Officer Snyder said he and his partner do this but not all teams do – he will encourage that they do so. Another member reported gun fire (the 17<sup>th</sup> – 19<sup>th</sup>), mostly mid-day. Police were aware and feel it is some person just firing a gun. Officer Snyder urged we keep calling them (NOTE—subsequently Officer Cogswell sent a note that an arrest had been made). Another concern was raised regarding speeding on East Ocean View Avenue and Little Creek Road. The member asked the officers for more speed enforcement, which Officer Snyder acknowledged.

**Speaker: Mr. Barclay Winn, City Councilman**

Councilman Wynn represents SuperWard 6, which includes half the city and has 130,000 people within its borders. Mr. Winn owns Winn Nursery with a partner and the nursery has been in existence since 1885.

Councilman Wynn states his biggest concern is education and that we have to do whatever it takes to have a great school system. He reminded us that they let the Superintendent go because everyone felt Norfolk schools were going in the wrong direction. Mr. Wynn thought it was a good move, but with bad timing. He feels elected School Boards are neither good nor bad; there are problems with both approaches; and would support either. He feels School Boards should not have the power to tax whether elected or appointed. The State is cutting \$20 million in school funding for next year, which exacerbates declining revenues. He believes both teachers and other public servants should be given raises, as their pay has been frozen for a while.

Mr. Wynn is working with Councilman Tommy Smigiel (Ward 5) to identify surplus City properties so they can be sold and that money be used to develop blighted properties so they can be put back onto

the tax rolls (the former Ramada Inn property, for example). Development in the City has slowed down or stopped except for East Beach.

Real estate assessments will probably drop 3% to 5% and that hurts the City revenue.

Codes: more money is needed to get a handle on code violations, many of them are blatant. Courts are not always supportive and are slowing the process.

Flooding is a big problem, especially Pretty Lake. City Council has identified four areas of concern: Spartan Village (over by Norfolk State) drainage; the Hague, Mason Creek, and Pretty Lake. Congressmen Bobby Scott and Scott Rigell are working with the City to get more money. As Councilman Wynn states, we cannot wait for a disaster to take action, and the Corps of Engineers has a plan and is ready to move when they receive funding.

Councilman Wynn is also on the HRT Board (transportation) and reports that The Tide is 40% over projected revenue. Stores and businesses are actually moving to be closer to rail. Ridership still needs to be increased and would love to see the route expanded. There is talk of such expansion to Wards Corner and the Naval Base.

AMTRAK is coming to Harbor Park and that is a great thing for this area.

In response to a question from membership regarding the Waterside Project, and how or why the City Manager seems to be better informed than the Council, Councilman Winn responded that five proposals came to the City Manager as part of the process. The two best will be given to the Council (NOTE—they were subsequently presented on Tuesday, 6 March). Mr. Wynn says the process is 'murky' and they are working to fix it.

#### **Guest Speaker: Mr. Rock Bell, General Manager of the East Beach Development Corporation**

Mr. Bell has been with EBDC since 2003. East Beach has, generally, been less affected by the recession than other parts of Norfolk. In fact, the area has generated \$3M in tax revenue for the City, and there has been a dramatic swing upwards in the number of lots they have sold in the last six months. Mr. Bell had an impressive slide show of the recently-announced Home-a-Rama this fall and a cautiously-optimistic future growth projection. This is their third Home-a-Rama; others occurred in 2004 and 2010. EBDC views Home-a-Rama as a way to promote Ocean View, to include various social events open to the public (a symphony presentation and a Speakers Forum), and a Farmer's Market for this summer, which he is working with the Bon Secours group to consolidate efforts.

#### **Old Business**

Councilman Tommy Smigiel's EOV Civic League-centered Steering Committee is still in the formative stages, with nothing further to report from last month.

There will be a block party on 19<sup>th</sup> Bay Street on 31 March. This is a Bon Secours, New Life Christian Church project. The goal is organizing neighbors to look out for their area and their neighbors. There will be food, games, and activities for everyone. The City is fully cooperating, with Fire and Police participation in the event. One person will be the block Chair and hopefully will join the Civic League. There are plans to move this 'party' from block to block.

Board of Directors member John Hadfield is in the last phases of rewriting the Civic League By Laws. The Board felt some further revision was needed, and the final document will be presented to the Civic League members in April to vote upon.

### **New Business**

The time and date of the presentations for the redevelopment of Waterside to the City will be publicized (time and date). Watch your newspaper for details.

The Norfolk Federation of Civic Leagues Meeting on 8 March will sponsor a free Health Fair.

Great American Clean Up is in April as well as Keep Norfolk Beautiful. Clean the Bay Day is in June.

Road work on East Ocean View Avenue continues but is nearing completion.

The building of Pump Station 88, near the bridge, is scheduled to be built this summer.

According to Pam Todesco, Chair of the Code Committee, the best way to get results from the City is to call Norfolk Cares, at 664-6510, with your concerns. There is also an online form to report complaints on the City web site. You do get a response!

Senator Ralph Northam will be our speaker in April.

Marcus Calabrese, candidate for City Council Ward 6, had asked to update the Community on his campaign, but spoke longer than the 'a couple of minutes' requested. John Ameril has also declared as a candidate for this position.

Our newsletter is available on line. [eovcl@eovcl.org](mailto:eovcl@eovcl.org) Check out all the other information on the site.

Submitted by,

Ann M. Freeman, Secretary