

East Ocean View Civic League

Minutes of meeting held May 5<sup>th</sup>, 2016

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by John Greene, President.

**Treasurer's Report** was given by Jeffrey Lewis:

Total Assets	\$4397.23
Total Liabilities and Equity	\$4397.23
Net Income	\$ 182.34

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

**Police Report**

The Police were not available tonight as they had special duties downtown. Officer Folscher, one of our CROs, gave John Greene the following information regarding crime in our area the past month: there were 12 auto larcenies, one stolen bicycle, and one home invasion. The home invasion was on 10th Bay and the residents are “cooperating.” The police were also able to identify the juvenile(s) responsible for spray painting graffiti on the bridge over Pretty Lake, and arrests have been made. The beach patrol has begun with five officers, ramping up to 10 as the season progresses.

**Guest Speaker: Delegate Chris Stolle, 83rd District**

Delegate Stolle is a graduate of the Naval Academy, William and Mary, and a medical doctor, in addition to being a member the Virginia House of Delegates for the past seven years. He serves on several committees: Appropriations; Transportation; Capital Outlay; Health, Welfare, and Institutions; Counties, Cities and Towns; and is also involved in the committee dealing with coastal floodings.

He reported that he is very involved in both transportation issues and in coastal flooding now; the State is developing a 25 year fiscal plan for transportation; Interstate Route 64 is being improved; a new crossing is being funded; the State is now doing environmental impact studies; the Virginia economy is still struggling: the State has lost over 150,000 jobs over the last few years and recovery is very slow; teachers in grades K-12 have been awarded a 2% pay raise to be paid for by increased funding; Medicare spending will also be increased.

During Q&A, Delegate Stolle reported that nothing has been done regarding flood mitigation since the Federal Government took over the issue. He said the State will *not* be able to regain control of the issue, but we *are* in a positive place to get the work done by local entities. The focus on dealing with flood issues is on *adaptation*. ODU has a group that is working to find fixes; flood gates, e.g, and we may be “trend setters,” as other areas are asking how Norfolk is solving its flooding problems. We *do* need Federal Grant money to help move this issue along.

He also said that, as far as Transportation is concerned, the State has totally redone its plan over the past five years. House Bill 2313 passed that allowed a tax increase via gas tax. Hampton Roads also gets money for Transportation from a portion of the Sales Tax. This money stays right here for Transportation projects in this area. Delegate Stolle's House Bill 2 also passed and changed the way different road projects will be prioritized using specific criteria that "rate" road projects. The Bill provides accountability and transparency to prioritizing and funding of transportation projects.

In response to a question from the floor about Short Term Leasing of Rental Properties (AirBNB, e.g.), and, if approved, would it take precedence over the City of Norfolk's rule that one could only rent a property for thirty days or more, he said the short answer is "yes," as it is very hard to regulate. The first meeting to discuss this will be next week in Richmond. This will be studied "off season" and it is expected to be very controversial, as there is little or no way to enforce regulation (The Virginian Pilot did a major story on this issue this last week).

Also, in response to a question on "impartial redistricting," Delegate Stolle responded that non-partisan redistricting is really an impossibility, as "everyone is partisan." He reflected that, as a whole, the western part of the State is very heavily Republican and the northern part of the State is definitely Democratic, so there is "no sane or easy way to accomplish redistricting."

### **Guest Speaker: Mr. Gabriel Phelps, Norfolk Department of Utilities**

Mr. Phelps is a Civil Engineering ODU grad who reported that the laying of 12-16" sewer lines on 17th - 18th Bay streets is just about complete and will be finished by the end of June. 20th Bay is considered paved but needs the final, "finish coat," that will come up to the level of the manhole covers. He said the next phase will be 11th through 17th Bay streets and Pleasant Avenue. He added, in response to a question, "there is no plan or money to put in sidewalks and gutters." Also, there is "no plan" to go further east than 11<sup>th</sup> Bay (Pump Station 89 area), because there "aren't any complaints," which a couple attendees disagreed with (as reflected in the October nor'easter flooding coverage).

### **Old Business**

President John Greene thanked everyone involved in the area clean up last month. Our effort was part of the *Keep Norfolk Beautiful* campaign. Dozens of bags of debris were picked up from Harbor Walk, East Beach, and the beachfront all the way down to 1st Bay. Also included were the streets around Pleasant Avenue. A special thanks to the Sheriff and his department for sending crews to work the 1st through 10th Bay Streets as well as the staff at the Recreation Center, who urged the children to come out and help as well. Bay Oaks volunteers worked that area and trimmed trees and picked up trash in the Park.

President Greene also reported on the Community Garden, which is a joint effort with and sponsored by Bon Secours and the Civic League. Sadly, vandals, under the cover of darkness, did a lot of malicious damage. The police were called and new signs have been posted that say no one is allowed in the Garden after dusk. Ann Bolen and Debra Lutz, Chair of the committee, also talked to the City about installing lights and we will go ahead with that plan beginning with one strategically-placed lamp that will cost \$300 a year to operate. The City will install the light

for free, and the Civic League will assume that cost. If we need additional lighting, we will install on a second pole, and may ask for donations to defray the cost of the lights, which members can make a tax free contribution through our 503C. Cameras have also been placed in the area.

Thelma Drake, Chair of the Beach and Sand Dune Advisory Committee, reported that the work of the committee is nearly complete. The plan has been presented to the City Council and moves next to the Planning Commission, May 26, 2016 at 2:30pm. The overall focus and goal of the committee and plan is to manage sand movement, and to protect residents' property rights. A Review Board will be established and they will cover vegetation; what can and cannot be planted; walkways, sand fencing; public and private property. A letter of support is on our Civic League Website, at [www.livingeov.com](http://www.livingeov.com), under Items of Interest. The full plan is on the City's Planning Department/Environmental website.

President Greene also reported that he attended a Board of Zoning Appeals hearing that was scheduled to deal with the tearing down of the Amstar Motel. The lawyer for the motel owners was unable to attend the hearing, however, and received a continuance until May 19th. A petition was circulated at our meeting that supports tearing the motel down.

### **New Business**

President Greene congratulated our newly elected Norfolk officials, Mayor Kenny Alexander and City Councilwoman, Andria McClellan.

Please check our website and our newsletter for information on coming events including, Save the Bay Day, June 4th from 9 to Noon; and the Strawberry Festival, Community Garden, Saturday, June 4th, 10am to 1pm.

There was a meeting to unveil the new Ocean View "rebranding" campaign held May 2nd at the Pretlow Library. Although it is sponsored by Councilman Tommy Smigiel, it is currently a private enterprise that will have to go to the City when the time comes for ultimate approval. The new "Positioning Statement" says: "We embrace and celebrate diversity to grow our community of families, businesses, and neighborhoods." The citizen committee that worked hard on this to determine a focus and a plan is made up of people from the Ward 5 Partnership. We will hear more of this venture in the future.

President Greene and several Board members attended the City Budget hearing held at Granby High May 4th. Vice President Ann Bolen and Amanda Skupin urged the Council to follow the 'Green and Complete Streets' initiative they have adopted, and add curbing and sidewalks to Pleasant Avenue during this infrastructure construction.

Our newest quarterly Newsletter was published in time for the May meeting. All previous copies may be found on our website, along with our Meeting Minutes, at [www.livingeov.com](http://www.livingeov.com).

Our speakers next month will be Kevin Page, ExDir HRTAC; Chuck Joyner, City of Norfolk; and Ann Marie Dori, to discuss the funded wetlands initiative behind the Rec Center.

Please check our website regularly for information about our area and what is occurring here.

A motion was made and the meeting was adjourned at 8:30 p.m.

Submitted by,

Ann M. Freeman, Secretary