

WISPPA
Women Involved in South Pasadena Political Action
February 4, 2017 Minutes
Cavalry Presbyterian Church

Attendance:

Bianca Richards, Barbara Sinclair, Mary Urquhart, Ellen Daigle, Betty Emirhanian, Ron Rosen, Dollie Chapman, Lissa Reynolds, Tracy Van Houten, Maryanne, Reyes, Tricia Sjogren, Suzie Abajian, Sean Abajian, Gloria Kilian, Paul Kilian, Howard Spector, Kelly Koldus. Gretchen Robinette, Katrina Ferguson, Sally Kilby, Leslie Lehman, Grace Kung, Mureya Chaffee, Craig Phillips, Judith Harris, Janet Braun, Bill Cullinane, Ed Donnelly, Connie Wardlow, Steve Lawrence, Becky Thompson, Mary Ferrero, Linda Wah, Kim Hughes

Welcome

Dana Farrar opened the meeting and welcomed everyone at 8:53 a.m. She introduced Lissa Reynolds who then introduced her niece Terry Van Houten, who just announced that she is running for the 34th U.S. Congressional District. She is looking for support. Ms. Van Houten is a rocket scientist who has worked for JPL. It is a good opportunity to put more women into government. Currently, the U.S. Congress is comprised of only 19% women.

The special primary is April 4th. The special election is to replace Congressional Representative Xavier Beccera who was appointed to be the State Attorney General, replacing Kamala Harris who was successful in her run for U.S. Senate.

WISPPA Reports

General Plan Comments

Dana introduced Kelly Koldus who made a brief presentation about the City of South Pasadena's General Plan process. The city is in the process of updating the General Plan and the Mission Street Plan. These plans have not been updated in about 20 years. The plans help to guide the growth and development of the city for the future.

Kelly shared that there will be a number of community meetings to seek resident and business input about the new plan. A survey is available on-line and everyone is encouraged to complete and submit a survey about their thoughts about the city and its future.

There is a core and advisory groups that will part of the process. WISPPA members are encouraged to check out the process and participate. There will a week-long series of critical meetings in April 2017.

City Council Liaison Report

Ron Rosen attended City Council meetings and shared that at the January 18, 2017 meeting, it was discussed that the construction going on at Garfield Reservoir will be complete in June 2017. The design plans for Graves Reservoir will follow.

The council discussed a "Complete Streets" Policy. The South Pasadena City Council adopted the policy, which requires that all users of roads be considered for any street project. By adopting the policy, the city will be eligible to qualify for Metro grants.

At the February 2, 2017 meeting, the council talked about a "Community Choice" Program that would allow for renters to be able to participate in solar energy projects. This would be a pilot effort.

There was also a discussion about a property that has a fall-down wall that could be a public safety issue.

The Landscape and Lighting District election results were discussed by the City Council. The proposal to increase the fees lost. 60% voted against the increase, with 40% voting to increase the fees. The results were weighted by the fact that many of the multi-family properties voted against the increase. These types of properties carry a greater weight in the voting. The current 1997/1998 fees will remain in place and since, they are not enough to cover the current costs, funds will need to continue to come out of the General Fund Budget.

Public Safety Commission Report

Ellen reported that there had been three openings on the commission, due to members being termed out. The new members are getting approved. There have been concerns about the Windsor Place property, where squatters were moving into vacant properties and homelessness. Some people are concerned about an anti-homeless effort. There is discussion about RVs in parking lots. A final ordinance has not been completed.

There is a concern about the parking contractor. Chief Miller is looking into the situation. It might be better to have a South Pasadena Police Department person oversee the parking. The issue of parking was brought up as part of the General Plan. The SPPD will have a representative to be part of the planning process.

The South Pasadena Fire Department has a concern about fire trucks having emergency access in the hills, where it is very hard for the trucks to maneuver the roads.

The SPFD is working with the community to have ride-alongs and such, so the residents can see the access problems.

The results of the recent homeless count on January 24th showed that the city has 9 homeless people residing in the city and some that come in just for the day. The counts will help in cities receiving funds.

There are organized assemblies that have been taking place protesting President Trump. The assembly group has notified that SPPD about the events that have taken place at the corner of Mission and Fair Oaks. David Beatle is organizing these protests.

There has been an uptick in property crimes and car break-ins. It is important to lock cars left unattended.

Women's Self-Defense Classes are being made available. There will also be a "Citizen's Academy," which will be a 10-week program, where citizens can learn about the workings of the SPPD.

Membership Report

Dollie Chapman reported that we had added some new members. There is a thought about developing an informational card about WISPPA that can be handed out to potential members. There are approximately currently 70 members and we are gaining about 2-4 members a meeting.

Community Connections Forum

Dana welcomed our guests and each group provided a brief overview of their organization.

DUDES

Ed Donnelly provided an overview of the group that was formed about 5-6 years ago. It started with a group of father's who were committed to their kids. The men would get together and help with projects. They started with 6 members and now have over 300 members. They do everything from setting up chairs at a school for a meeting, to raising funds to re-surface the Marengo Elementary School playground. Activities tend to be focused around the schools.

The group does have a Poker Night as a fundraiser and a paintball event, the "Camden Classic" that also raises money for the organization.

It is a way for a man to be involved in activities other than just sports. The goal is to have fun events and give back to South Pasadena.

Preservation Foundation

Steve Lawrence represented the South Pasadena Preservation Foundation. The organization was started 47 years ago to help support the city's museum. South Pasadena Beautiful became an off-shoot of the group. The key focus was to help develop and preserve our museum. The museum offers a connection to generations, linking the past to the present to the future. There is a goal to develop more connections to the South Pasadena schools. Recently, there was a flood at the museum, so the needs are great to help fix the damage and to overall improve the museum.

The organization is looking for donations and volunteers to help. The museum is open during the Farmer's Market nights. There is a goal to develop more open days for the museum and create more connections with the community.

Oneonta Club

Bill Cullinane represented the Oneonta Club. The organization was developed in the 1920's. It was developed as a place for men to come together to help the community. The club provided music and entertainment as part of the club activities. It is one of the oldest clubs in the area. In the 1970's the club created a foundation and endowment that would assist in funding scholarships to high schools students. Each year, 3 seniors receive a \$10,000 scholarship.

The group is a men's organization and currently has about 80 members.

Parent and Teachers Association (PTA) Council

Leslie Lehman and Grace Kung represented the PTA. They shared that the organization is a bridge to the schools. There is a focus on connecting to the needs of the schools. There is also a focus to help the schools raise funds for their needs. The organization focuses on the three elementary schools, the middle school and the high school.

It was shared that the schools would most likely be facing a reduction in state funding of approximately, \$900,000 and this would have a severe impact on the schools. The schools and the district are reviewing the budget and costs to see where cuts could take place.

The PTA is open to new members and donations. The overall PTA is 120 years old. It was mentioned that if the PTA has upcoming event, to let WISPPA know, so we can assist in promoting the events.

Review of Minutes

A motion for the approval of the January minutes was made by Dollie Chapman and seconded by Gretchen Robinette. The minutes were approved by membership oral vote.

Development Committee Report

Becky Thomas shared that there is pending development that planned for the site of the former Orowheat building and site of the Fiesta Grande restaurant. The plan is to have residential housing on the top and commercial business on the street level.

There are concerns about the size of the development, but this is a private development. There are concerns about grading that will be needed to build the complex and its associated underground parking.

Announcements

The next Art Crawl is planned for February 25, 2017

The League of Women Voters is having a forum event on March 16, 2017 at All Saints Church and WISPPA has been asked to assist.

The Rotary Club will host the "Taste of South Pasadena" event on April 15th.

SPARC is sponsoring a Byrds Tribute at the SP Library on February 25, 2017.

The WISPPA cocktail party is planned for June 19, 2017.

Meeting was adjourned at 10:51 a.m.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Kim Hughes.