



**Westview Community Organization
Monthly Meeting Minutes
January 5, 2015**

1/5/2015

Ayana (President) opened the meeting at 7:05.

Main Meeting

Invocation

Sean (Chaplain) gave an invocation.

Approval of Minutes

No discussion. Ms. Chambers motioned, John seconded. Approved: 22 ayes. 0 nays. 0 abstentions.

Police / Public Safety

Lt. J Ellis: This month the issue is larceny from vehicles. Don't leave anything in your car (laptops, cords, chargers, etc). The club at 792 Cascade is currently closed. The next license review board is in a week so they will have more information. I am going to day watch. New major: Major Moore.

Major Vince Moore: Very much to the point and a bottom line person. I am server of the city of Atlanta. My job is to make you feel safe. The way that has worked for me is to come together with the community, find out what the concerns are, have the community come up with a plan, and merge it with the plan of the police. At the end, you have a product that you would like to see for your neighborhood. I just got here Friday. I'm going to all of the community meetings. Our overall goal of this year to concentrate on underlying crimes that plague different communities. Communities that are willing to sit down is where I'll spend all my energy. Whatever you need, that's what I'm here for: I am a city servant. If we can't help you, I'll help find the person that can do it.

Sammie: On Rogers Ave, they treat it like the Atlanta motor speedway.

Major Moore: The city of Atlanta just renewed our certification for the radar. DOT is trying to approve new streets where we want to run radar. Ellis will find that out and get together with me. Do you have signs up? We could do some checkpoints over there. I'll report back to Darrick (public safety chair). We'll go by on the way back from this meeting.

Rebecca: There has been a lot of gunfire this week. After New Years as well. I don't know what the answer is, but we're concerned about it.

Major Moore: We don't have a "shots fired" system in the city, unfortunately. But I can go back and pull the crime pattern statistics from the 911 calls and see if we can figure out where we can send officers to drive around.

vmoore@atlantaga.gov

Josef: As a community, what can we do to help put that back into the financial ring.

Major Moore: Send me an email. When I present it, I like to have a list of people that support it. Then the issue is to find a funding source.

Darrick: Do you remember rough numbers?

Major Moore: No. More expensive for initial expense, and then maintenance is more reasonable.

Old Business

2015 Officers and committee leaders stand and introduce themselves.

New Business

- Reverend Willie Clyde to speak about PAC initiative. From Pathways Christian church. Through collaboration with some of the local residents, we have created: Pathway to a better Community. Pathways is at 1517 Ralph David Abernathy. We are inviting you to come join with us. The goal for PAC: a collaboration of several organizations. There are 8 right now. We are feeding people within the community every Wednesday. Anyone can walk in off the street and get a free meal at no charge. Feeding 40-60 people every week. At Thanksgiving we fed a lot of people, but also had a lot of volunteers from the community. We also want to empower the people who come. The social issues that people are struggling with, we're forming committees out of PAC and will have one for each issue: drug issues, homeless issues, youth issues, etc.

We also have an after school program we are working on. As part of that we are going to have a summer food program. It's not accidental that we have a no-cost meal program in our public schools. During the summer the kids are missing those healthy meals.

The other issue is to create a summer camp. Most issues occur during the summer month. PAC wants to organize activities in the summer months, because that's one of the times when kids run into trouble.

We also have a GED program that is working quite well. Crem(?) high school is an alternative school. A lot of kids aren't making it in public school or in the alternative school. So we have organized a program to help youth get their GED, but also to get into other programs to help them develop their productive lives.

We also has a clothing bank.

Worship is at 10am on Sundays. Bible study at 7pm on Wednesdays.

Ayana publicly thanked Pastor Clyde as well for all of his work. Many community members also donated toys. We had toys for around 70 children. Quite a few came from people in this room and people in this community.

- Westside Education Forum. Mariah Armstrong and Tanji Allen. Cofounders of "Raising Expectations" Tigus is a member of WEND and an educational advocacy organization. We are hosting a forum Saturday 1/17/15 at 8:30am (8:30am - 2:00pm) at John F. Kennedy middle school (225 James P Brawley Dr NW). We have invited the school board president and our school board representative. Atlanta is moving towards a charter program. We have an opportunity to chart the course for our educational community. We need to change the Washington Cluster. All schools in Georgia had to choose an operational model. APS chose charter (rather than IE-Squared or status quo). Charter is full flexibility. Charter is a loaded word; what it means for us is that this could be the chance we have to rewrite and redesign what this cluster looks like. Schools, curriculum, focus.

A survey was passed out to assess the current quality of the education and our vision. The forum is another good place to come voice your opinion.

Pat: What timeline are we talking about? 2016-2017 school year.

Our goal is to make sure the youth are protected while creating such a dynamic feeding system that we draw people to the community.

Pat: Is this the only forum? No. We would like to have more as well.

Ron Shakir: I think it's kind of disenguous and unfair. The presentation slants itself to charter systems. While (?) that was on the job for 70 days, and then decided to change to a charter system with no thought about the effect it would have on the communities or considering the data available about charter schools. Charter schools have a high suspension rates in communities. Almost a plan to create public/private schools. Taking those resources from needs that haven't been addressed in the cheating scandals. I think this is a very dangerous precedent we set. I would hope that the information you have here will also have citizens realize that there are serious things going on here.

Darrick: So you're saying that APS is planning to change to a charter operating system. And Westside Education Forum is an entity put together to organize and get the communities and the cluster schools involved?

We are not proponents of charters, necessarily. Here's what we know. The recommendation has been made and is moving forward with full steam. Here's what we think is prudent: to come up with a plan that works on a parallel track so we can be ahead of the game. If not, the peril is the people you're worried about will be marched out of our community. So it's important to us that we be proactive in coming up with an alternative as opposed to continue allowing APS to continue making decisions without doing their due diligence. We have taken on that responsibility. When people are not engaged in the conversation, decisions will be made on your behalf. And the people that don't feel confident to engage in these conversations, with young children, single parents, will be the ones most affected by this. We are committed to making sure the interests of our children are protected. We get your concerns, but we have to be smart about this. Note that this is not an APS initiative, we are a group of concerned people. What we're here to do tonight is to try to get the community together. Trying to bring everyone into this forum, so we can be in a big room and we can decide where we would like APS to go.

Evelyn Battle: Apparently this all happened in 2014. Were the PTAs involved?

We were part of a conversation the Thursday before Christmas, the opportunity we had to interface with the PTAs. There were a few parents there. Unfortunately in our cluster we don't have a great deal of parent participation.

There was clarification about the fact that the group speaking today is not APS, and are not part of the decision-making process for choosing whether or not to go charter. These women are here as part of a community group that is forming to respond to it.

- Westview Village Mural. Patrick Berry introduced Michael Jones. We have been discussing a mural on the side of the building containing Denny's for a few years. A neighbor brought it to our attention that there was a grant available. Michael had expressed interest.

Michael: First I would like your blessing/approval. My plan is to try to design something that would be very appealing, would speak to the neighborhood. I would give 100% effort to try to make the best piece I can. It's just in the beginning stages.

Claudia: When would we find out about the grant?

Patrick: We haven't filled out the application yet. We got permission again from the owner.

Pat: Is this going to be an expense to the neighborhood?

Michael: I hope not. Hopefully if we get the grant, that will provide money to pay for the process. I told my boss about the situation, and he offered to give some money as a donor to possibly be able to help with providing some of the finances for me to do the work. My plan is for it not to impact the neighborhood finances.

Pat: Which side?

Patrick: It's the end of the building on the side where the tattoo parlor is.

Pat: You will present the sketch to the committee?

Kenneth Elsworth: Do you have a portfolio where we could see some of your work?

Michael: the series of work I would like to be presenting is the streetscapes. <http://www.letter75.com> There is also one up in Westview Pizza.

Ron Shakir: Just last week I saw the two rats on the bridge by Kroger. I would like to keep an eye on how money is being spent.

Elijah: I need a motion extend the meeting by 30 minutes. Rebecca motioned. Someone seconded (Sean?) 21 ayes. None opposed.

Thomas: Once the application gets going, is there something the community can do?

Patrick: A letter of support from the community is always beneficial.

Ayana: When is the grant due?

Patrick: February, I think.

Pat: If the grant is not approved, I would love to see something of yours in this community.

Elijah: When do you think you would have a sketch ready?

Michael: I'm in the process of trying to creating something now. Also in the process of looking for a studio.

Elijah: How many are you going to present to the community so we can vote on them all?

Michael: I hadn't thought about that. Maybe one real good one, and maybe a couple of other rough ones.

Elijah: If you have more than one sketch, then the sketch can be submitted with the grant and could all be submitted at once. If you show them where the money is going, they're more likely to understand the vision and make it likely it would be approved.

Pat: Will you take suggestions?

Michael: I'm less inclined to do that since I'm not actually being paid.

David: Perhaps you could post something on Facebook asking for comments that can be used as inspiration, rather than "requests".

Treasurer's Report

Claudia: Not much activity this past month. The Westview pizza party put on by the Public Safety committee, and the membership committee putting out the newsletter. Balance: \$3092.70

Committee Reports

Beautification

John: Not much this time because of the weather. John gave his report (uploaded to DropBox).

Kevin Carroll suggested calling Deal\$ ownership to complain about the trash at Deal\$.

Pat: I would suggest a letter from this group, including pictures.

Ayana: Join the committee if you can.

John Davis: 404-758-7639

Business Committee

Keitra couldn't be here.

Community Affairs/ Special Events

Kendall thanked everyone for their contributions to a successful holiday dinner.

Development

Patrick: Enota Park. They only have one parcel left. The city has to do due diligence on the final parcel to figure out who really owns it. Ownership is being contested.

Garden

Abbey Henderson couldn't be here.

Membership

Rebecca: It's a new year, which means it is time for membership renewal. We had 59 members. Membership is key to our programs. We need someone to spearhead getting advertisements.

Public Safety

Darrick: If anyone is interested in becoming a neighborhood ambassador (watching out for neighbors, your block, etc.), see me and we can go from there.

Youth

Ms. Catherine: So excited with what is about to happen with our youth. We have a great committee that is working towards the camp. We already have our grant in place and are really excited. I need support from adults. If you see kids in the neighborhood, please get a name and a number and I will visit the parents. Without the parent support, there are no kids. So when you see kids doing things, stop them. They want structure. So let's not call them bad so quickly. If you see them, start with a little calm conversation. Get a name and number, and I'll visit.

Thomas: What ages?

Catherine: Kids like 5 and under should be with their parents. But at least 10 and up. Keep an eye out. My focus is not on the camp. My focus is on making Westview children an example for other communities.

David: Remember to bring cans to the WCO meetings.

Zoning and Code Enforcement

Sherry Bailey couldn't be here.

Community Concerns/Questions/Announcements

Ron Shakir: I had a business that I grew up here on Evans St. that came from street vending. I saw some of you at a public hearing for Enota Park. I was concerned that eminent domain was taking place. We need people of higher consciousness to come in and save these communities. We need to start thinking about what's happening in our community.

He passed out copies of a statement made today in a council meeting.

Ron asked people to come together and think about where we stand on gentrification.

Pat: March 22nd would have been my husbands 72nd birthday. We will be at the Hammond House. Some of his friends that were part of the Civil Rights movement are coming in from all over the country. We would like people to be supportive. From 3pm till 5pm. Displaying articles his mother saved (newspaper clippings). Also, it will be a fundraiser for the summer camp.

New people:

- Shika: New resident. 1754 Rogers Ave.
- Katie and Kenny: Haven't moved here yet, but they feel drawn to here.

Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 1/5/2015 8:34:09 PM.

Contact Information

www.westviewatlanta.com

Frequently Called Numbers:

- Zone 4 Police: 404-756-1903
- Pothole Posse: 404-768-4653
- Code Enforcement: 404-330-6190
- Sanitation: 404-330-6333
- Tax Assessor: 404-612-6440
- Watershed Mgmt: 404-658-6500
- Major Vince Moore: vmoore@atlantaga.gov
- Pastor Willie Clyde from Pathways: 404-274-1810