

Minutes of GRANT NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION

Annual Meeting May 4, 2023 6:15 pm Broadway Commons and online via: Zoom video conference

AGENDA ITEM

#1 Introductions

BOARD MEMBERS:	PRESENT - P	ABSENT - A	EXCUSED - E		
JEANNE BOATWRIGHT	P	TINA HANSEN	P	AARON TERPENING	E
MARK DECOURSEY	P	TERESA JOSLIN	P	MARISSA THEVE	P
TIM FRANCE	P	NICK MASELLI	P	PAUL TIGAN	E
CHRISTOPHER HACKETT	P	SUSAN NAPACK	P		
LOLA HACKETT	P	SAM SKILLERN	P		

Others present, or on Zoom: Heather Feeney, David Feeney, Chris Hoy, Nicole Utz, Linda Nishioka, Virginia Stapleton, Ray Quisenberry, Anne Colao, Cynthia Kavanagh, Ashley Dalen, Carolin Van Ordin, Anthony Gamallo, Elisa Anguiano, Wes Porter, Carol DeCoursey, Laura Herrmann, Charlotte Scott, and Scott Munford.

Social time was set aside from 6:00 to 6:30 for neighbors to grab a dessert serving(s), visit, and get to know each other, and to get settled for the meeting.

Consideration of the April minutes was deferred to the June meeting.

#2 Great Story from Grant Neighborhood

- Laura Herrmann reported that the spring cleanup at Grant Community School on April 22nd was a great success.
- Mayor Chris Hoy said he was very excited about the redevelopment of the Truitt Bros. Cannery site; especially for the reopening of the east-west street grid to extend to the Willamette River.
- Sam Skillern said that an old neighbor moved away, but the home was sold to a nice young couple.
- Elisa Anguiano commented on all of the friendly neighbors she has met since moving into Grant.
- The US Market on Broadway has been repainted and also upgraded their marquee. It is a nice fresh-up.

#3 Election of Board Members

Jeanne reviewed the list of current board members, none of whom have expressed an intention to remove themselves from the board, and confirmed that there are two vacancies. Susan nominated Laura Herrmann for a board position; noting that she was the instigator for the street painting program that has been adopted and codified by the city. Laura is also a teacher at Grant Community School. Teresa nominated Elisa Anguiano who has moved into the neighborhood and is eager to join and help the neighborhood. Lola moved that ***“We accept the slate of nominees, which includes the current board members and the two new nominated individuals.”*** Tina seconded the motion. Vote was 21 in favor, 0 opposed, 0 abstentions.

#4 NEN-GRANT Spring Clean-up, May 6th

Susan brought flyers publicizing the event and Sam spoke about the items that can be brought to the site and how they are collected and recycled. Items accepted are: metal; large residential trash items that are too large to fit in a household garbage bin; bicycles; tires; wood furniture; electronics and some appliances. There will be a free swap table for unwanted items that are still useable. Items will only be accepted from the Grant and NEN neighborhoods, and identification or a utility bill are required to confirm residency. It will run from 9:00 am to noon. Volunteers are still welcome to join and help and can arrive as early as 8:00 am.

#5 Mayor Chris Hoy

Mayor Hoy introduced himself and reminded us that he was elected Mayor of Salem in the November 8, 2022 election and was due to begin his term in January. Mayor Chuck Bennett resigned his position when his home sold earlier than expected, so Chris was appointed interim Mayor by City Council. Prior to election, he was president of City Council for the previous 4 years. He is a 4th generation Oregonian. He attended Willamette University, was a Deputy Sheriff for many years, and a State Representative for 1-year to serve for the remainder of Brian Clem's post.

He discussed the following items:

- Micro-shelters set up for the unhoused community:
 - o The ones that had been located at the Portland Road-Silverton Road intersection have been moved to Center Street across from Safeway. The original site, has contamination issues so the duration was limited to a specific time frame.
- The city's budget issues:
 - o Most of the revenue comes from property taxes. In the 1990's statewide Measures 5, 47, and 50 capped the assessed values and limited the rise in assessed values to 3% per year, no matter where the true market value went. Since 2009, Salem has added population of the equivalent of the whole city of Woodburn – 23,000. City staff levels, including some current additions, equal that of 2009. There is a \$19 million shortfall in the budget. Options being considered are: 1) a monthly \$5.50 operation fee, collected through utility bills; and, 2) an employee paid payroll tax for workers employed in Salem city limits. This is not an income tax. The rate would be 0.064%, which equals an average of about \$250/year, or \$20/month. The city needs 60 more police officers. Fire response times to some areas are too long and more staff is needed.
- The Mid-Willamette Homeless Alliance is a group of city, county and tribal members. They are supported by a grant from the Kaiser Family Fund. They keep a list of names of those who are most in need. Work on the Yaquina Hall historic building on the former State Hospital campus has just finished and has 52 units reserved for those on the list. Redwood Crossing on Fisher Road is another housing project. Salem Hospital funds some beds in the community for folks who are released from care and need a place to stay. The Sequoia Crossing development focuses on families in need.
- While the crime rate feels like it is on the rise, violent crime is up some, but all others are actually down. Chief Womack is working to implement a plan to reinstate community policing. The challenge to that is finding enough hires.

A neighbor asked about how the city's focus group is going to utilize the comments received regarding shifting means of communication. Chris said the council wants a strong communication program. That has become more difficult with the scarcity of local community news providers, including newspaper and radio stations. More communication relies on social media platforms. The neighbor followed up by asking if there will be dedicated city staff to oversee communications. Chris said "yes."

A neighbor asked about the homeless situation at Mission and 12th Streets that gets swept and then almost immediately returns. Chris said the ownership at that site is split between ODOT and Tokyo University which complicates the efforts. Citizens can go to cityofsalem.net to report a concern about a particular site. A neighbor commented that with the population increasing and the tax system artificially limited, the services that people expect cannot be provided.

A neighbor asked if the city has considered a vacant lot tax. Chris said "yes." The neighbor followed with "A full consideration?" Chris again said "yes." For clarification, the vacant lot tax would aim at encouraging owners to develop empty property that would then increase the property tax, which is based on land value plus improvements. The development could add commercial space or housing to the community while providing a return to the owner from leases or rents.

A neighbor asked "What do you love about being mayor?" Chris answered that he most enjoys having conversations with people; not making speeches. He visited Harritt Elementary School and met with 1st, 2nd, and 3rd-graders and loved their questions. The other exciting thing that he experienced was a visit to the White House, and meeting with President Biden, along with 13 other small city mayors.

#6 **Councilor Virginia Stapleton – Housing Update**

Councilor Stapleton said that when she attended the November NEN meeting, there were lots of questions about housing. For the last few months, she and Nicole Utz, Housing Administrator of The Housing Authority of the City of Salem, have together been preparing a PowerPoint presentation, which they brought for us. They also brought paper handout of the PowerPoint slides. The current waiting list for affordable units is around 1000. The HUD federal voucher program does not meet the current increases in rent that the area is experiencing.

Nicole reviewed:

- The local overall population, the number of Salem households, median income, persons per household, and persons in poverty
- Housing units that are owner-occupied, median home value, and median mortgage payments compared with rentals, and monthly rent.
- National housing supply and demand. Supply has fallen way short of demand. In 2006 supply was 1-million more than demand. By 2020 supply was 3.8-million short of demand.
- Salem’s analysis estimates that, by 2035, there will be a need for 3,100 more housing units than what is currently under permit.
- Definition of affordable is typically no more than 30% of household income spent on rent or mortgage payments.
- 2023 rents in Salem Range from \$1,067 for a studio to \$1,600 for 4 bedrooms and 1.5 baths.
- Income levels and those jobs which are paid within certain brackets. These charts show that those with full time jobs often cannot find a place to rent or a home to buy with a monthly bill that does not exceed the “30% of income” threshold.
- Types of housing, which are: homeless, emergency shelter, transitional housing, community housing, affordable rental, affordable homeowner, market value rental, and market value home. (Market value is based on supply and demand)

At this point, time was running short and Nicole switched to answering questions. A neighbor asked if Section 8 waiting lists will be open. Nicole said that on May 6th they will reopen after more than 10-years of being closed. A neighbor asked how increasing density within already developed areas affects school class sizes. Nicole said that each land use application that comes in to the city also goes to the School District for comment. The district has never said that they won’t have room.

#7 **Anthony Gamallo, Senior Transportation Planner – Capitol Street**

Anthony brought and shared copies of maps and a curbside view of a transit stop that illustrate a proposal to put a “road diet” on Capitol Street from Center Street to Market Street. The “diet” will reduce the travel lanes from three to two and add a buffered bike lane along the east side. Reducing the number of lanes helps to calm the traffic flow by narrowing the view. Traffic studies were done to collect use volumes and patterns. The project is in the planning stage. No funding has been earmarked or acquired, but they are looking at state and federal programs for assistance. Funding is easier to get if the proposed project is design ready. A neighbor mentioned a concern about safety where right turns on red will cross the bike lane. Others asked about the traffic congestion with one less lane. Anthony said that commuter traffic will still be able to function at safe levels. Their monitoring counts revealed that during commute hours, some lanes were lightly used and some were hardly used at all. The current use is mostly vehicular because there is no safe biking lane. The changes would encourage bicycle use. The issues at Parrish Middle School, with school pick-up times and visibility, are being worked out. A neighbor suggested that education and information is needed for cars that drive too fast on both Capitol and Summer streets. A neighbor commented that there really are not enough speed limit signs posted and more should probably be added. In Seattle, a decrease in speeding was observed when signs were closer together to continually remind drivers of the limit. Another neighbor asked about the Winter Street conditions. This is an identified bikeway, that invites folks to use and enjoy it, but the pavement is so rough, potholed, and poorly patched

that it almost requires a mountain bike to navigate it – never mind the danger of having to swerve to miss the worst of these issues while also trying to avoid encounters with vehicles. (GNA sent a letter to the City last November asking for these conditions to be addressed in the CIP)
Anthony said that Public Works is kicking off their Neighborhood Traffic Management Plan that is aimed at calming traffic on neighborhood streets. He welcomes neighbors to take an active participation in the process.

Meeting adjourned at 8:35 pm
Respectfully submitted by: Jeanne Boatwright

Thank you to all who attended and to those who brought desserts and goodies to share with your neighbors!