



MOUNT WASHINGTON
Mt. Washington Community Council

2/21/2024 Meeting Minutes

Jaime Castle called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm.

Michael Gray led us in the pledge of allegiance.

A quorum of board members was present. Board members present included Jaime Castle, Michael Gray, Priscilla Elgersma, Margeaux Selig, Rick Meador, Jack Diesel, Karen Luken and Julie Rimer. Absent: Kristina Kew.

Jaime introduced each member of the board to the membership because the board had elected officers since the last membership meeting. Jaime Castle is president, Karen Luken is vice president, Kristina Kew is treasurer, Julie Rimer is secretary, Priscilla Elgersma and Margeaux Selig Pumpkin Chuck co-chairs, and Karen Luken is our NSP manager.

Cal Johnson made a motion to approve the minutes of the last meeting, Jack Diesel seconded the motion, and the minutes were unanimously approved.

Michael Gray made a motion to approve tonight's agenda, seconded by Priscilla Elgersma, then approved by all.

Community Reports

Sergeant Linda Sellers explained that Officer Jason Rice has moved on to another unit. Officer Christine Barry will be our new neighborhood officer. Officer Barry has filled in for Officer Kevin Butler in the past in Mt. Washington. Officer Barry reviewed the most recent Neighborhood Crime Report. You can find the latest Mt. Washington Neighborhood Crime Report at this link: <https://cpdmobile.cincinnati-oh.gov/Neighborhoods/Reports/D2/MountWashington.pdf>

Officer Barry said there were no violent crimes in Mt. Washington in the past month. There were four stolen Kias and Hyundai vehicles and three attempts to steal additional Kias/Hyundais. Officer Barry stated that even if you have updated your Kia or Hyundai with anti-theft software, the kids that try to steal these cars do not know that. Therefore, it would be a good idea to get a steering wheel club if you own one of these brands of cars. Furthermore, Officer Barry advised everyone not to leave anything in their car, especially guns.

We did not have a fire report tonight.

Amy O'Meara, the Early Childhood Resource Coordinator of the Mt. Washington School, told us that the school is currently enrolling children for kindergarten and pre-school. Also, this Saturday is Family Fun Day in the gymnasium at the school from 10am to noon. Children from 0 to 5 years old are welcome to come play.

Priscilla Elgersma gave the Sands Montessori report tonight. Sands needs volunteer tutors. Sands is doing the math magicians challenge for ten weeks for children from kindergarten through sixth grade. The challenge runs through March 15. If you can stop in for 20 or 40 minutes, Sands will provide you with a student and all the materials you need to tutor a student. You can volunteer to work with students once, weekly, or pop in whenever you are available.

Jason Richards, director of the Mt. Washington Recreation Center, stated the CRC is offering an all-day Spring Break Camp from March 25 to March 29 for children 6 to 12 years old. There is a core camp from 9am to 4pm for \$180 and an extended camp from 7am to 6pm for \$200. Please bring a packed lunch and snack every day, as well as a water bottle. You can register online at info.crc@cincinnati-oh.gov or call (513) 232-4762.

The rec center is offering two new classes that begin on March 1. On Fridays from 10am to 11am, for \$10 per class, Dianna Laurence will teach a belly dancing class. On Fridays from 11am to noon, for \$10 per class, Larkin Sell will be teaching adult ballet. Both classes will be held in the dance room of the rec center.

The rec center is already at capacity for the 2024 Pre-school Summer Camp and has a wait list. There are two 4-week sessions for children aged 3 to 5 years old. The sessions are from June 3 to June 27 and from July 8 to August 1. A four day per week session is \$375. A two day per week session (Monday and Wednesday or Tuesday and Thursday) is \$250. The sessions run from 9:30am to 1:30pm.

The rec center needs \$10,000 worth of new chairs and lounges for the pool. They need twenty-five new chairs and twenty-five new lounges. Jason said he did not know if NSP dollars could go toward this purchase.

Jason stated the rec center is always looking for more staff that are 18 years of age or over.

The MWCURC (Mt. Washington Community Urban Redevelopment Corporation) let all know that the next spaghetti dinner will be held on March 2 from 4pm to 7pm. The proceeds go to lighting the tower. The dinners are held at American Legion Post 484 at 1837 Sutton Avenue.

Bob Wetterer will begin planning the July 3rd parade soon. If you can volunteer, please contact Bob Wetterer by email at bwetterer@comey.com or call or text him at 513-884-8326.

Joe Sandmann of the MWDC (Mt. Washington Community Development Corporation) sent a note that the business parking lot is still being worked on, as is the former Mt. Washington Ice and Beer.

Priscilla Elgersma of SPAC (Stanbery Park Advisory Council) said ideas for movies in Stanbery Park are welcome. SPAC has three bands booked. Depending on whether there are NSP funds, the park may host Shakespeare in the Park and/or Madcap Puppets. Pumpkin Chuck will be held on November 2 this year.

Rick Meador of the Mt. Washington Cares Coalition said the DEA has announced a new program: Every day is drug takeback day. At last year's drug takeback event, 130 pounds of drugs were collected in Mt. Washington. You do not have to wait until this year's takeback event if you need to dispose of drugs. Rick told us there is a drug disposal box at District 2 headquarters which is located at 3295 Erie Avenue, Cincinnati, 45208.

Rick also told us it is time to "Report your favorite pothole." You can do that in three ways: 1) Call 311 to report a pothole over the phone; 2) Go to the 311cincy.com website and click on "service request" and "potholes," then enter the location information; or 3) download the 311cincyapp to your phone. When using the app, click on "service request" and "potholes" to report the pothole. There is no need to enter a location because the app will use your GPS location. You will get an email telling you when the pothole is fixed. Julie Rimer will provide the drug takeback information and the report your favorite pothole information to Phil Roberto for posting on the MWCC website.

Glen Johnson, drill sergeant for the American Legion Post 484, told us about the high school winners of the 2023 American Legion citizenship test. Glen passed out copies of the test to those interested in assessing their citizenship knowledge.

General Business

Pumpkin Chuck Planning

Priscilla Elgersma and Margeaux Selig are co-chairing this year's Pumpkin Chuck. Priscilla Elgersma said that Gary Noll has already volunteered to help. She said it takes a lot of volunteers and time to make the Pumpkin Chuck go smoothly. There is a great deal of work to be done in preparing for the Pumpkin Chuck. We would like to start that work earlier this year to reduce the level of stress that goes into planning.

Priscilla gave examples of the types of volunteer opportunities available: 1) Volunteer organizer: Many UC students volunteer that day, but we need someone to organize the activities of those volunteers. 2) Food and vendor chair: approaches businesses that will provide food, beverages, and other merchandise at the event. 3) Logistics manager: arranges for rental of items from the Tool Bank, schedules snow fencing to be erected and taken down, plans when the trebuchets need to be moved, etc. 4) Seeking sponsorships: Asking local businesses to sponsor the Pumpkin Chuck to offset costs. 5) Chair of Go Green activities: We would like to go green again at this year's Pumpkin Chuck, so arrangements will need to be made with the food vendors to use recyclable materials, to have three different types of collection containers (trash, recyclables and compostables), etc. Please see Priscilla or Margeaux if you are willing to help.

How to Increase MWCC Membership Survey/Questionnaire

Jaime Castle distributed a survey for members to fill out that investigates how we can increase participation in MWCC. She stated you could fill the survey out and give it to Julie Rimer before leaving the meeting or email it back to MWCC at info@mwcc.org. You can also bring it to the next MWCC meeting.

Jaime Castle has already received feedback on the survey from the Mt. Washington Library. Some of the ideas are to please share our website with others on your social media. There was a suggestion to go “old school” and have signs posted at the rec center and library that remind all of the dates and time of MWCC meetings. A community newsletter is a possibility, although it could be costly and we would need someone willing to write it. We appreciate anyone who invites others to MWCC meetings; it is one thing to be welcoming, but another to be invited. Jaime Castle suggested we should reach out to attendees of the spaghetti dinners because there are people who attend those dinners regularly, but do not come to MWCC meetings. Perhaps more guest speakers of interest to the community would draw people in. There was a suggestion to have flyers at the rec center with MWCC meeting information. Another option suggested was to have flyers in the windows of Mt. Washington businesses with a QR code that would allow people to scan the code and see information about upcoming meetings and other events. Another suggestion was to have someone man the live Facebook feed at MWCC meetings to forward questions from those who are watching at home. A further suggestion was to have light refreshments and to have some city council members attend the meeting; this has worked well for MWCURC in the past.

NSP Projects

Jaime Castle explained that MWCC can qualify for up to \$7300 this year in NSP funds (Neighborhood Support Program). We are looking for ideas from the community for how the funds should be spent. Please submit ideas for projects by March 1st. The very last day to submit is March 13th. To submit a proposal, email it to info@mwcc.org and please include the following:

Your name (and organization if applicable):

Contact Information:

The amount requested:

Date(s) of the project:

Estimated amount of outside money that will be used and from what source:

Estimated volunteer hours:

Summary of the project:

Benefits for the community gained by the project:

Proponents of each project will present at the March 20th membership meeting and then the membership will vote on the ideas. To vote on March 20, you must have a current paid membership.

Jaime distributed a rubric with which we will evaluate the proposed ideas:

Rate this project: 1- unsatisfactory, 2 – below average, 3 – average, 4 – above average, 5 – excellent

Benefits many people	1	2	3	4	5
Lasting benefits	1	2	3	4	5
Improves quality of life	1	2	3	4	5
Improves the neighborhood physically	1	2	3	4	5
Inclusive	1	2	3	4	5
Uplifts children	1	2	3	4	5
Connects people	1	2	3	4	5
Other revenue sources will be added to the project	1	2	3	4	5

Karen Luken, who is our NSP chair again this year, noted that tasks that beautify our community, such as regular cleaning, weeding, and mulching of the business district, are not done by the city. We have paid for these tasks with NSP funds in the past. The City of Cincinnati’s price for the planting and care of each of the twenty-two flowerpots in the business district is going up from \$200 per pot to \$330 per pot in 2024. In the past, MWCURC has paid for this care, but perhaps NSP funds can be used to pay the increased cost this year. MWCURC is currently securing sponsorship of the pots by businesses, but it is likely that there will be an NSP request for whatever MWCURC and business sponsorships cannot cover. Karen explained that when we vote, there is the option to partially fund some or all of the projects. She also asked that proponents of the projects try to figure out if there is a way to secure supplemental funding beyond NSP funds for these projects.

Potential Crosswalk Designation

David Haldeman, a resident of Coffey, stated that there is a new sidewalk on Coffey that is used by many children who are walking to school. There is a four-way stop at the intersection of Coffey and Sussex, but drivers frequently ignore the stop signs and fly through the intersection, endangering the children. David had a representative from Traffic Engineering come out to look at the intersection and he was told the city does not usually put a crosswalk at an intersection with four stop signs.

David was told that the city might consider putting a crosswalk there if there is a letter of support from the Mt. Washington Community Council. Julie Rimer made a motion to develop a letter of support from the MWCC to be sent to Traffic Engineering for putting a crosswalk at this intersection. Her motion was seconded by Priscilla Elgersma and approved by the membership. Julie Rimer will work with David Haldeman to draft this letter.

Treasurer’s Report: Kristina Kew was ill and unable to attend tonight’s meeting. She will provide the treasurer’s report at the next meeting.

Announcements/Upcoming Events:

Eric Russo of The Hillside Trust will be our guest speaker at the March 20 meeting.

Good of the Order:

Julie Rimer noted that David Haldeman is a 30+ year volunteer trustee of the Mt. Washington Cemetery. He is the person who mapped the cemetery and runs the cemetery's online website, cemeteryindex.org. David oversees all burials at the cemetery and does so many other tasks. He was the winner of the ServeOhio award last year which honors outstanding people who make great contributions to their local communities and the state through service and volunteerism.

Adjournment: Gary Noll made a motion to adjourn, and the meeting was adjourned at 8:07pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Julie Rimer

MWCC Secretary