

HJWA Membership Meeting

June 17, 2008

Review of Minutes:

Special Introductions/Announcements

Dave Ruth, Super of National Park Service: Mr. Ruth is new to this position, states there have been a lot of personnel changes at the Maggie L. Walker House. He's trying to rebuild staff and wants to work more closely with community organizations. There's a current move to do a national postage stamp for Maggie Walker and would like to have involvement from HJWA to advocate on behalf of this cause. Visitation is increasing and the sight is looking for volunteers. He would like to do group volunteer training with the minimum age to volunteer is 18 but he will work with younger youth as volunteers with close supervision by their parents. Mr. Ruth passed out his business cards and his phone number is on the sign-up list. Mr. Ruth is thinking about having a reception in the Maggie L. Walker courtyard for business owners which could be sponsored by HJWA and Economic Development. Tour times can be flexible.

Delegate Jennifer McClellan: She distributed the "Session Highlights" newsletter. The number one challenge was passing the biennial budget of \$77 billion; with a downturn in the revenue due to the housing market slump. The General Assembly was unable to give any funds to non-state agencies this year. A big issue, due to the Virginia Tech University, is to overhaul the state Mental Health system and to designate \$44 million to focus on hiring more clinicians and to have a mental health system employee present at every commitment hearing. The next important issue was fully funding K-12 public education to provide a 2% salary increase for teachers and reduced and free lunches for every child eligible to receive them. Delegate McClellan sits on the Commerce and Labor Commission and this year worked to limit, to one, the number of payday loans n individual can have out at one time. This was found to be a necessary mandate because the average borrower gets up to 18 payday loans a year. Another issue was making it easier to put a freeze on your credit report and appealing the abuse of drivers' fees. They did not increase funding for transportation this year. However, next Monday, June 26, 2008, there will be a special session the Governor's PowerPoint presentation on his transportation plan that looks at not raising the gas tax, the shortfall in the transportation maintenance fund, adding \$10 to vehicle registration fee, developing plan fund a transit rail system that would offer innovative ways to get folk out of cars and the possibility of increasing the tax on cigarettes. The focus of next week's meeting is to determine the least painful, most logical and most efficient way to pay for the Governor's plan. The House, clearly, does not want to do anything to raise taxes. Delegate McClellan thanked the HJWA for the support of Harvest Fest through money and volunteers.

Terry Moore, City of Richmond Code Enforcement: Not present

UPDATES

Financial Report, Pat Smith of PES: HJWA still has the \$60,000 money market account at Consolidated Bank that made \$800+ in interest that will go back into the operating budget that is now \$20,804.24. There is \$33,999.61 in the Capital One fund. The Association gave \$500 to sponsor a hole in the Chief's Challenge Golf Tournament held by the Police Athletic League PAL). The Membership account balance is \$10,543.86. There has been no activity in the Philip Morris, USA account that has a current balance of \$37,078.17. HJWA is currently holding a balance of \$162,411.88 in the bank.

Police Report: Lt. Lisa Drew of Sector 413 thanks HJWA for its donation to PAL. For the month of May 2008 violent crime was down 85% with only one violent crime reported for the same period. There were four property crimes, only five thefts from motor vehicles and two bikes and two mopeds stolen in last 30 days. There were five copper thefts in Sector 413 but, only one was in Jackson Ward. Lt. Drew distributed key chains inscribed with "Put Your Junk in Your Trunk" and she continues to advise that folk call the police emergency number, 646-5100 if anything looks suspicious.

Councilman Pantele's Report: The city of Richmond budget was passed that included a cost of living increase and real estate taxes were reduced by 3%. The city has some flooding and erosion problems that need to be addressed. It would cost \$5 million to provide funding to build new schools and physical changes to old schools addressing access needs to remain compliant with the requirements of the American Disabilities Act (ADA). Future funding for the redevelopment of the Hippodrome is also a plan in the budget because it is important that the city show it is supportive of the revitalization of Second Street. Sector policing and community involvement has helped reduce crime. A member of the Association questioned if there were funds in the budget designated specifically for the Hippodrome project. Mr. Pantele's response was, "There are funds in the budget for North Jackson Ward and some Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds in the budget are allocated for Jackson Ward that would include addressing various spot blight areas. The Marshall Street condominiums are done."

Board Vacancies: Only one person has expressed an interest in fulfilling one of the board vacancies through the end of the year. If anyone else is interested, please get in touch with one of the board members.

Jackson Center and the City of Richmond Health Department: The Department of Housing and Community Development has extended its lease for another five months. The clinic of the health department will not move into the building but it has been discussed that the administrative offices may move into the building.

Gateway Signage: The design has been done with a proposed production and installation cost of \$3400 per sign. Warranty information is pending on feedback from the Cornerstone and the city is still working on encroachment activities. There has been no further word from the city Economic Development Department on the banners.

Restricted Parking: Manisee Boswell has agreed to take over this project and would like to move in a direction psychologically advantageous to everyone. He is looking for folk who would like to volunteer to work on his committee. Mr. Boswell will give a copy of the city ordinance on restricted parking to Association members.

City Lights: HJWA president, Finley continues to work with the other partners. He says the partnership is beginning to work on what happens at the end of the third year of funding. Another meeting of the City Lights partnership will be held on 7/2/08. We still have money left and need to spend it on other revitalization efforts that are restricted to neighborhood projects. We must make sure we look at the HJWA Funding Guidelines. Association members suggested looking at decorative trash receptacles, pooper scooper signs maybe have Recreation and Parks do some classes for children and adults.

Ebenezer Baptist Church and Community Fair: June 28, 2008 11 to 3 p.m.

National Night Out: We are registered for August 5, 2008. Vicki could use assistance with children's activities. There was discussion of partnering with Sixth Mount Zion Baptist Church. Sixth Mount Zion Baptist Church does not mind partnering with HJWA but does not want to move its activities to Abner Clay Park. It was decided to look at working together for the 2009 National Night Out activities.

Jackson Ward Business Association: It will meet on June 25 at 6:00 at 533. HJWA is sponsoring this meeting and there will be a special celebration of Officer Bond who walked downtown for many years.

Financial Request Guidelines: No Report

Membership: Marilyn Milio requests folk get more involved with HJWA activities and buy T-Shirts. Hanson suggests marketing the T-Shirts to Realtors to give to folk who buy property in Jackson Ward.

Kim Gray: Brought a guest from Gilpin Court in North Jackson Ward, Lillie Estes; they had just left a meeting on a discussion of the RRHA plan to revitalize Gilpin. Kim Gray announced her candidacy for the Second District City of Richmond School Board seat.

Community Yard Sale: working with Carver, New Town West and HJWA. Each community responsible for organizing their own tables. Charles spoke with Ron Brown and thought to do it in their own neighborhood but, maybe on the same day. Looking at having it in October.

Gilpin/Jackson Summer Program: Enrichment activities with 76% total participation. This year's theme is, "I Can Be President Too." Children will learn about leadership. Planning trips to the State Capitol and the Unveiling the Slave Memorial

Friends Family Center and the Bike-a-Thon

Meeting tomorrow June 18, 2008 at 1:30 on the **Walking Tours** project. There is a plan to color-code and coordinate signage. Planners want more visible signage for the entire city.

Ron Brown: **VCU celebrating its 40th Anniversary** and would like for us to participate as a part of their village. Carver, Fan, VCU, Monroe Park, Oregon Hill. June 26, 6 p.m. is the Planning Meeting.

For the Good of the Order

Respectfully Submitted,

Demmie Murray, Secretary
Historic Jackson Ward Association
Board of Directors