

HJWA Membership Meeting
May 15, 2007

Meeting opened by Charles Finley, Board President who initiated introductions of board members and guest presenters.

Minutes of the April 2007 HJWA membership meeting reviewed and approved.

Donald McEachin, Democratic candidate for the Senate shared his vision for the state of Virginia.

City Council President/Second District Representative Bill Pantele:

Council is working on the budget which involves school funding and facilities. A special budget meeting is scheduled for Friday 5/18/07.

Jackson Ward projects are going well in reference to the budget with funds directed towards infrastructure.

A six month audit was conducted revealing \$14-20 million surplus. A fleet audit is due for release on 5/16/07 that will show a severe waste of funds.

Council has set aside \$4million to cover a proposed real estate tax decrease to below \$1.10 for every \$100 in value of property.

Council is in agreement to work towards quality of life for all of the city's residents. Re-development plans hope to accommodate all public housing residents.

Council has proposed flat-funding for schools and ways in which it can work with the schools to identify resources they can put back into the system.

There is recommendation for a bill to create an office of Inspector General.

In the coming year Council's focus will be on not to funding projects that don't have adequate plans.

There are four (4) new downtown high rises; Mead Westvaco is in the process of building its 300,000 square foot facility.

There are some problems with vandalism on Broad Street yet, there is so much more activity there which is a good thing.

The Mayor's tax cap plan wasn't really a tax cap.

Complaints about the Eggleston service station with exposed toxic waste. Citizens must keep putting complaints on the city's web page system.

There is money for spot-blighted properties. Some of these properties may have been foreclosed upon by a bank.

Problems with limited parking on W. Jackson St., call Gary Duvall, Dep. Dir. of Public Works.

HJWA Chair Finley recommends reporting those buildings to CAP, download the complaint forms. Judges sometimes give owners too much time to get it together. These properties should be reported to multiple city agencies.

Lt. Ladin of Sector 413

Lt. Ladin thanks the Association for donation its donation to the PAL golf tournament.

A boxing event for the youth is scheduled for this weekend on 5/18/07 at Maywill; teaches respect, restrictions and rules. Transportation may be provided.

Spike in aggravated assault, based on weapon type, 2 in last 30 days, arrests made in both.

Area remains flat in incidents of violent crime.

Property crime is down by 7%.

Six items shoplifted in last 30 days from Rite-Aide.

License plates being stolen,

Several incidents of etching graffiti on Broad Street however, there is a process to repair the damage.

First Fridays are going well. June's will be even bigger with the Performing Arts Kick-off on the same night. Good comments on light trailers. May request it for Abner Clay Park. Trying to enhance lighting at Jefferson and Foushee, Marshall and Grace Streets. *End of Report*

Chairman Finley asked the membership to think about whether to have a meeting in August and it was agreed to have an August 2007 Membership meeting. The remaining agenda items were discussed after which came questions/comments from the membership.

Nikki Colomb, Bio-Tech Representative, is considering a tour of the Park during the August meeting. The membership agreed and there will be food and drinks.

Janine Bell, announced the upcoming 17th Annual Down Home Family Reunion, the third week in August 2007. Ms. Bell is requesting financial and volunteer assistance. Ron Stallings agreed to assist as a volunteer.

Reverend Tyrone Nelson resigned from the HJWA board thus, his seat needs to be filled for the remainder of his term. There is a call for nominations and the individual nominated is requested to attend the June 2007 Board of Directors' meeting. Marilyn Milieu nominated Cassandra Blakeney. There were no other nominations.

Pat Smith, Treasurer of the HJWA Board, attended the *Greater Richmond Challenge*, sponsored by the Richmond Chamber of Commerce. There were 110 people in attendance whose goal it was to visit certain areas of the city and learn what their challenges are. The visiting group wanted to learn what would attract folk to these areas and the specific issues that hurt the unemployed in those areas. The group visited the Good Samaritan on Hull Street in the city's south side and the students there prepared lunch for the group. Ms. Smith stated that it was a moving experience that will open your eyes to how other people live and survive. She encourages others to participate next year.

Tripp Longest, HJWA Board Member, gave an update on the Gateway Signs Proposal. Phillip Morris, USA has donated funds for this project. The following streets are the proposed sites for the signs: *Adams and Broad, Belvidere and Marshall*, next to Rite Aid (There is some question as to whether or not the city still owns this land), *Belvidere and Leigh, 3rd and Jackson*...however, the only good spot may be the Bethel A.M.E. Church at 3rd and Jackson Streets. The city designed signs may be an alternative to major landmark kinds of spaces. We continue to pursue locations, maybe somewhere near the Tucker Cottage.

Green Space Proposal: Bill McGee and Leighton Powell, HJWA Board members, Kim Gray and Ron Stallings make up the committee working on the Green Space proposal. They are still waiting on additional estimates. To replace the present fencing with a new one just like it is estimated at approximately \$8500. University Of Richmond representatives visited Martha Suber and Bill McGee, Principal and Assistant Principal of ACDC. The group from U of R confirms they will design but are not paying for the green space project at ACDC. The question arose as to whether a fence is needed to go all around the property and does it need to be as high as 6 feet. Richmond Public Schools' Plant Services Department wants input on this plan. It was noted that other Richmond Public schools don't have fences. U of R will come back with a design and will suggest planting shrubs that will deter pedestrian traffic. U of R is interested in

doing another project. The Architectural Review **Committee (Commission?)** may have to have input. City Lights and Ron Stallings have offered to contribute funds. It's hoped that the decision will be finalized by next month.

The Armory Project: Ron Stallings of Walker Row, based on feedback from the public meeting, is looking at a more public use of the Armory. The proposal includes the following possibilities:

On the first floor catering on one side and a café and the other side can be used for events/meeting space
The upstairs area can be set-up as a research/ gallery/type facility and possibly a resource facility with the Freedman's Bureau along with a place for exposition of some JW artifacts.

Create space in the back that is 2 stories tall for weddings, receptions, parties, etc.

Continue a working relationship with ACDC to use their parking area when the school is not using it

There can be some parking on the street

The building must be in private hands to get tax credits. Ron Stallings and Kevin Hansen are able to serve in this capacity.

Finley: As the last item of business for this meeting announced that the Department of Community Development will now post ABC license applicants on the web site. No longer will these requests come before community organizations. Members voiced concern about this turn of events.

Meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Demmie Murray, HJWA Board Secretary

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