

Lakewood Community Relations Advisory Commission Minutes

August 17, 2017; 6:30 PM; Lakewood City Hall, 12650 Detroit Ave.

In attendance (members): Erik Meinhardt, Jessica Sloan, Rachel Donaldson, Chitra Walker, Gary Rick, Barbara Howell, Gabrielle Jackson, Harry Lader. Cindy Marx (City Council Liaison), Melissa Garrett (Community Relations Specialist). April Stoltz (visitor).

New member welcome: Eric Meinhardt

Welcome to Lakewood event: Possible dates for Welcome to Lakewood event: October 11 or 18. October 18 looks more probable at this point. Rachel will speak to Garfield school to confirm date.

We want to draw in new residents and give them a reason to attend. We discussed possible entertainment by children performing, possibly show a movie Metropolis, which was the impetus to create the Welcome to Lakewood event. Other ideas discussed were drawings, baskets. Chitra will send out an e-mail to create a subcommittee for this event.

Election of officers: The following people were nominated: Rachel and Jessica as Co-chairs; Harry as Secretary. No other nominations. A voice vote was held. None opposed. Rachel, Jessica, and Harry were voted in as officers.

Changes to Community Relations Advisory Commission Ordinance:

Previous to the change, actions needed to be referred to us before we can act on them. Now, we can work on issues without being advised by the mayor or council. See attached Ordinance No. 26-17.

City issue 1: Madison Library Incident. April Stoltz summarized the accident which occurred in November, 2016, but became public in June, 2017 after a complaint was filed. There were various concerns about how and when the City, Police Department, and Library responded to this incident, not knowing about this incident until many months later, and the apparent lack of severity of punishment for the officer. Melissa responded that the news report was triggered by the lawsuit. A hearing was held on December 19 where the police officer was reprimanded, received punishment of 40

hours of unpaid suspension, is not allowed to work off duty at the library, and received additional training. Gabrielle commented that as a teacher, if she were to do something far less severe than what occurred, she would lose her teaching license forever.

There were discussions about the training of police, delayed response of the city, how the city and police communicate with the public. April discussed how the Cleveland Carnegie branch library builds relationships with the kids and their parents. Barbara noted that this incident was mentioned in a national library journal and was critical of having uniformed officers work at libraries. Discussions included how we can help inform the public, have community conversations, bring the community together, what can be done to avoid this kind of incident from happening again.

We discussed having Tom Bullock (Lakewood City Council at Large) and/or the Mayor talk to us. Jessica and Rachel felt that it would be better to have informal meetings first with Lakewood officials such as the mayor, city council, library and the police department to understand policies and procedures.

City issue 2: Swastikas painted on Lakewood driveway, Aug. 16. We discussed sending a letter to the family to condemn this incident. We also discussed welcome signs and having an art project to create a welcome sign for Lakewood.

Action Items:

- The Co-chairs will draft a letter to send to the family that had graffiti painted on their driveway
- The Co-chairs will try to have informal conversations with city officials such as the Mayor, Police Chief, Library to decide how to proceed
- Chitra will send out an email to create a Welcome to Lakewood subcommittee

Respectfully Submitted,

Harry Lader, Secretary

Dated: September 18, 2017