

West Central Neighborhood Association

Meeting Minutes

October 21st 2024, 7:00pm

Attendance: 28

Joel Sauer (President) welcomed everyone to the meeting, introduced board members, and reviewed the mission and vision of the WCNA:

The vision of the West Central Neighborhood Association is to create a friendly environment that is rich in history, culture, diversity, and community that is valued by its residents, business owners, and visitors.

Joel reviewed qualifications for voting (attendance at 3 neighborhood events) plus current paid membership.

Agenda change: Charlotte Weybright is not able to join for the history presentation

Guest Speakers: Antonette Payne, Fort Wayne Community School Board

- She is the Representative for District 4, which includes West Central. She replaced Rohli Booker (now on City Council, replacing Mayor Tucker).
- Wanted to come and introduce herself. She started in June.
- Major changes this year included the cell phone lock bags.
- Updates: 3rd graders can now be retained– major focus on reading. Volunteers needed.
- Looking at truancy. State involved after 10 truancies
- School safety referendum allowed for more safety measures- open gates/metal detectors, more resource officers.
- Questions: There is no flashing light on Washington Blvd in front of Washington Elementary to help slow traffic. What can we do to get the flashing lights? There is one crossing guard, but on Rockhill. Nothing on Washington Blvd.
 - Answer: She asked to send her an email with the information for her to follow-up on.
 - It is a problem on Jefferson (in front of Emmanuel Lutheran School)
- Questions: What is FWCA doing to make the schools better?
 - Answer: The Career Academy (new this year- schools of success), Amp Lab, Family and Community Center, special education programs. We are the largest school district in Indiana and the most diverse. More than 20 (maybe more than 50) languages spoken!
- Questions: How can we help?

- Answer: Neighbors can volunteer with [Project Reads](#)– 1 hour per week (with Literacy Alliance) or [Study Connection](#). Search on FWCS – ADD LINK

Guest Speakers: Joe Giant, City of Fort Wayne Planner

- Urban Trail Updates for West Central
- What is the Trail?
 - Its purpose is to make the downtown easily navigable
 - A pathway along Harrison St to connect Parkview Field to Riverfront, and hopefully down Washington and Broadway
 - It's an extra-wide sidewalk with decorative pavers
 - Some of the trail already exists north of Main Street on Harrison and Superior
 - Modeled after Cultural Trail in Indianapolis: connects downtown destinations to help with wayfinding, and served as a boost for economic development, and helps with safety
 - Urban Trail is mean to increase safety for the “last mile” off the greenway to the final downtown destination
 - The hope is to repurpose Washington Blvd from Visitor Center to Broadway/EW, down to three lanes from four– this is the only design phase section
 - One lane was already removed on Jefferson, and it worked!
- Questions: What is the current level of support?
 - Answer: Can probably get design contract approved
 - Would then have to take it back in a year (ish) to get funding for construction
- Q: What can we do to support?
 - A: (from Joel) The Board wrote a letter to City Council. It is on our website. Feel free to take it and use as a template to send your own!
 - A: (From Joe) Contacting City Council is the best thing you can do. And focus on safety– traffic slowing, etc.

2025 WCNA Officer Elections

- Acting Past President, Ben Walhi runs the elections as the Nominating Committee
- Minimum of 5 officers, according to the bylaws.
- Nominations will also be taken during the November meeting
- To vote: must be 18 yrs or older, resident, property, or business owner in the neighborhood, paid member, attended 3 meetings. Proxy is available
- Presented slate of candidates: (everyone currently serving is re-running)
 - President: Joel Sauer
 - Vice President: Kelly Benton
 - Treasurer: George Taylor
 - Membership: Anita Kuker

- Secretary: Bethany Pruitt
- Q: Do we have term limits? A: Ben will read through bylaws to confirm that they were removed

Announcements

- Record attendance, revenue, and profits for the Home Tour!
- WCNA Spending Policy at our November Meeting
- WCNA Holiday Party: Monday, December 9th, Location TBD (not our usual meeting date, but in place of the December Meeting)
- Holiday Cookie Exchange: TBD
- Mechanic's Street Bridge restoration is underway! Joel shared a photo update.

Other business: Steve Miranda shared that the Settlers are not hosting their plant sale any more, it was one of their only fundraisers. He is going to take it over. Anyone with extra bulbs, etc, can donate to Steve. They are going to decorate for Christmas– Steve will put info on BPP to ask for volunteers

He asked for the WCNA to donate \$1000 to help them pay for electric bills. Connie made a motion, Jo Buffalino seconded. Joel asked to table until next month when the new spending plan is announced.

Concluded: 7:52 pm