

## **IRVINGTON COMMUNITY COUNCIL MINUTES**

**October 20, 2020**

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Matt Pleasant, Lesli Gibson, Charles Miller, Robert Uhlenhake, Chad Cerda, Jake Walker, Kyla Thompson, Liz Lauer, Dawn Briggs, Caitlin Luebcke, Andrea DeMink, Francine Lee, Roxanne Hilton, Larry Messing, Sue Beecher

**GUESTS PRESENT:** Hannah Harper Morrison, Jason Larrison

The meeting was held via Zoom and called to order by Lesli Gibson. She opened the meeting by welcoming Council members and guests.

**Hannah Harper Morrison, Mayor's Neighborhood Representative** – Hannah reported that she is working to ensure that adequate lighting is installed on the Pennsy Trail. The City of Indianapolis is seeking input from neighborhoods on the final disposition and future of the former Blue Indy parking spaces. Trail. Leaf collection season begins on November 9, 2020 for the City of Indianapolis and will continue through December 4, 2020. Hannah was informed that Lowell Avenue needs to be finished with paving all the way to Arlington Avenue to the west and Kitley Avenue to the south. It appears that the work has stopped for some reason. Hannah will check on the project and provide the Council with its status at the November meeting.

**Jason Larrison, City County Councilman** – The City Council passed the budget this past week in a session that lasted until 1 am. The Council approved the addition of citizen members to the General Police Orders Board.

Ambrose, who purchased the Harvester property, has had conversations with city representatives as well as seeking community input via a recent open house held at Bona in the pursuit of moving their plans forward for redevelopment of this property.

Extra police patrols are to be added in Irvington. He recently shared the community concerns around a recent carjacking, shootings, and robberies with the East District IMPD Commander at their last public meeting. Unfortunately, these concerns exist for several adjoining neighborhoods as well. When asked what Irvington could and should do in an attempt to prevent future crime from occurring, Jason offered the following suggestions: use porch lights and leave them on at night, keep your valuables out of sight, be seen and do as much activity as you can to show potential thieves that your community keeps watch, keep a watch out for your neighbors, if you see something say something or in other words “call it in”, be aware of your surroundings at all times and be a good neighbor. It is believed that the recent spike in crime is due to the recent increase in unemployment rather than gang activity. We should not only inform Hannah and Jason of what is occurring but also invite IMPD to our meetings. We should try to attend the monthly IMPD meetings to share information. Per Charles, incarcerations rates are down by 40% which may be contributing to the increased crime. Jake offered several helpful suggestions including the use of motion sensor lighting, “ring” doorbell camera and the use of any technology to keep yourself from being a victim of crime.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

**HALLOWEEN FESTIVAL**

**Jake Walker, Lys Lauer, and Francine Lee Halloween Committee Members** – Jake reported on the **Window Painting Contest**. There are 619 spaces which can be used for the window painting. The activity is being done virtually with participants picking up kits at the library and returning them to be displayed in the Irvington business district. Two additional businesses have agreed to participate: Percolate and the Art Gallery. All spaces are marked off in a landscape view. At this point in time, 213 kits have been picked up with 8 being returned. The deadline to return the kits is today, 10/20/20. The Council discussed how the contest has been advertised and if more awareness is needed. The businesses are happy that this year's contest involved displaying pre-painted kits versus actual painting on their windows. He has approximately \$55 left from the \$400 budget. The Council agreed that the date for kit submission should be extended in the hope of obtaining more entries. Everyone on the Council is encouraged to share the Window Painting Contest with others.

Lys Lauer reported on **Spooky Stories**. This event is being videotaped and will be dropped for viewing on 10/29/20. Lys is ensuring that this event is linked to the Halloween Festival page.

Francine is coordinating the **Vampire Run** and has switched it to Eventbrite format which allows us to pay for all race expenses. Registration is at 70+ individuals. Tee-shirts for the event are being sold at Black Acre as opposed to being given for free to all participants. The race begins and ends at Black Acre with participants following the Pennsy Trail and turning around at Shortridge to return to the start. Caitlin reiterated the importance of preventive measures due to the presence of COVID including social distancing.

The **Pumpkin Carving Contest** will proceed with entrants picking up free pumpkins in Irving Circle Park two Fridays before Halloween and bringing their carved creations back to the Park the Friday before Halloween. These will be lit each nightly from Halloween through the Tuesday after Halloween.

**Indiana Arts Commission Grant** – Lesli indicated that we were awarded the grant for \$17,517.12. The only eligible expenses that money can be used for is to pay Halloween Festival contractors.

**Request for Support of a New Business on South Audubon Road** – Lesli previously shared, via the HICC Internal Discussion Facebook page, the letter from Jordan Gleason who is representing Great Day Tattoo, a proposed business that is seeking a variance from IHPC for 204 S. Audubon Road and requesting a letter of support from the Irvington Community Council. The group discussed their request for a letter of support. Past efforts by proposed tattoo businesses to locate in Irvington have failed. One of the concerns is operating hours as this proposed business space is close to residential homes. Some members of the Council expressed support for a public hearing on the issue and believe that Jordan should be responsible for scheduling this on behalf of his clients. Caitlin recommended the use of a short survey on the Irvington Neighbor's Facebook page as a potential activity to obtain neighborhood input. The Council discussed parking as a potential concern without concluding as to whether this is an issue identified by the neighbors in the proximity. Lesli stated that Great Day Tattoo does not have an actual hearing date for the IHCP. Lesli will invite Jordan to attend our November Council meeting.

**New Council Members:** Lesli stated Francine Lee Calvert, Larry Messing and Roxanne Hilton have all expressed interest in serving on the Council. All three provided the Council with some background information.

Roxanne is an attorney who has lived in Irvington for three years. She has fundraising and Halloween Festival volunteer experience.

Francine Lee Calvert has resided in Irvington for eleven years and has spearheaded the Vampire Run for the last three years. Francine is a community advocate and has local Firefighters Union contacts.

Larry has lived in Irvington for six years and works as a fundraiser for the Society of Professional Journalists. He coordinated the Halloween Festival pumpkin carving contest last year and has experience in fundraising.

Both Roxanne and Francine stated that they would like to be added to the Council. Larry stated that he preferred to remain peripheral to the Council assisting with fundraising efforts. The Council unanimously approved Roxanne and Francine to serve on the Council

Larry informed Lesli on November 11, 2020 that he would like to be an official Council member. A virtual vote as allowed by Council by-laws overwhelmingly approved Larry to serve as a member of the Council.

**Future Meetings** – The Council meets at 7 pm on the third Tuesday of each month with the December meeting not being open to the public as the Council conducts internal business including the election of officer.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:38 pm

Respectfully submitted by Sue Beecher