

A neighborhood meeting of the Kalamazoo City Commission was held on Monday, September 21, 2009 at 6:00 p.m. in the Community Room at City Hall, 241 W. South Street.

Roll Call

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT: Mayor Bobby Hopewell  
Vice Mayor Hannah McKinney  
David Anderson  
Don Cooney  
Barbara Miller  
Stephanie Moore

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT: Sean McCann

Also present were City Manager Ken Collard, City Attorney Clyde Robinson, and City Clerk Scott Borling.

Commissioner Excused

Commissioner Miller, seconded by Commissioner Cooney, moved to excuse the absence of Commissioner McCann. With a voice vote, the motion passed.

Miscellaneous Communications

An opportunity was given for miscellaneous communications, but no communications were offered.

Neighborhood Communications

Representatives of the following neighborhood organizations were present:

Community Youth

**Ontrell Cortez-McKenzie**, Summer Youth Employment Participants  
**Javon Vincent**, Summer Youth Employment Participants

Oakland Drive/Winchell Neighborhood Association

**Larry Ross**, Chair

Vine Neighborhood Association

**Stephen Walsh**, Executive Director  
**Jennifer McVey**, Board President

Community Youth

The Community Youth representatives:

- described their experiences with the Summer Youth Employment Program (web design, publications, event planning, and landscaping).
- described new skills learned through Youth Opportunities Unlimited and FIRE.
- Mr. Cortez-McKenzie discussed his involvement with the Credit Retrieval Program and stated he was on track to graduate from Kalamazoo Central.

In response to a question from Commissioner Miller, Mr. Cortez-McKenzie stated he would be eligible for the Kalamazoo Promise, and Mr. Vincent stated he was not sure if he would be eligible for the Kalamazoo Promise because he had moved a lot.

Community Youth  
(cont'd)

In response to a question from Commissioner Cooney, Mr. Vincent stated he was currently working with FIRE and planning events to support musicians. Mr. Cortez-McKenzie stated he would graduate from Kalamazoo Central in January and intended to go to college.

Commissioner Moore congratulated Mr. Vincent and Mr. Cortez-Kennedy for their successful summers and encouraged them to tell other students about the Summer Youth Employment Program.

Mayor Hopewell encouraged Mr. Vincent and Mr. Cortez-Kennedy to stay involved in the community.

Oakland/Winchell  
Neighborhood  
Association

The Oakland Drive/Winchell Neighborhood representative:

- stated there were no complaints from neighborhood.
- expressed concern about the City-owned property at Oakland Drive and Parkview Avenue and the environmental impact of the former dry-cleaning business at that site.
- distributed and discussed the most recent issue of *The Advocate: An Assylum Lake Preservation Association Newsletter*.
- thanked Public Safety for their help and assistance.
- commended the Public Services Department for repairing pot holes, assisting with tall grass problems, and cleaning up trash and debris after storms.

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City Manager Collard reported the structure at the corner of Oakland Drive and Parkview Avenue was scheduled to be demolished by the end of the year, and he stated the City acquired the property to widen lanes and improve safety at the intersection.

Vine  
Neighborhood  
Association

The Vine Neighborhood Association representatives:

- thanked Public Safety Officers for their work to improve the quality of life in the Neighborhood.
- remarked on a new partnership between the Association and the Montessori School on Howard Street.
- reported on a successful Neighborhood open house held at the beginning of September.
- discussed the diversity of the Neighborhood.
- reported the Association had voted to support the Non-Discrimination Ordinance.
- stated he had talked with Kalamazoo County Treasurer Mary Balkema about the Kalamazoo County Land Bank and indicated she had expressed concern about lax code enforcement in the Neighborhood.

Vine  
Neighborhood  
Association  
(cont'd)

- reported great progress was made over the summer regarding code enforcement.
- expressed support for the youth party ordinance.
- stated the Association's primary role was to connect residents with resources and to advocate on behalf of the residents.
- indicated people in the Neighborhood were using social networking sites to organize activities like family gatherings.

In response to a question from Commissioner Anderson, Mr. Walsh stated the Association was working hard to promote the benefits of the Vine Neighborhood Enterprise Zone, and he had already noticed more moving families into the Neighborhood.

In response to a question from Commissioner Anderson, Mr. Walsh stated the El Sol School was growing and having positive effects on the Neighborhood.

Commissioner Anderson urged the Neighborhood representatives to be aware of opportunities for weatherization funding from Kalamazoo County.

Commissioner Moore commended the Neighborhood for its advocacy on behalf of the Anti-Discrimination Ordinance.

Ms. McVey indicated the Association Board of Directors would discuss the Metro Transit Millage issue at their next meeting.

Citizen Comments

Next, when an opportunity was given for citizen comments, the following citizen addressed the City Commission:

Terry Kuseske, City resident, stated there were many opportunities to work at El Sol School.

City Commissioner  
Comments

Mayor Hopewell urged all City neighborhoods to be involved with the Master Plan process.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 6:35 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Scott A. Borling  
City Clerk

For City Commission approval on October 19, 2009

Approved by: \_\_\_\_\_  
Bobby J. Hopewell, Mayor  
Dated: October 19, 2009