

MNA Town Hall Meeting

December 5, 2018

Attendance: 26 people, not counting the RPD speakers

Notetaker: Amie Alscheff

Wayne Williams (MNA President) started the meeting at 7 pm.

Report from the Rochester Police Department, Lake Section

(Officer Maldonado and Captain Dearcop representing RPD)

(Sorry, I missed the opening of their report because I was still setting up the snack table when the meeting started.)

- Shots fired at West Ridge Hots (December 2). This is believed to have started as an argument between four mail customers earlier in the evening. Still under investigation.
- There have been 7 burglaries and 13 car breakins since last month. Advise not to leave packages in cars, or leave cars unlocked.
- Raines Park raid. This was part of a long-term state police investigation. They raided about ten locations across Monroe County. RPD assisted in serving search warrants, but they have little info about the scope or goals of the investigation. Couldn't tell us what contraband was taken from the Raines Park address. The officers did not confirm the address, but others in the room are pretty certain it was 221 Raines Park (the stucco house on the west side, between Albemarle and Alameda.)
- An Amber Alert was issued earlier this week for Rochester teen Joanna Coates, who went missing from Lasalle Street and was later found safe in NYC. According to social media posts, there was more to the situation than a simple abduction. The case will go through Family Court because there are issues between the girl and her mom. The man she was with is in custody in Rochester, with charges pending. Officers from Rochester went down to NYC to transport him back here.
- Questions from residents:
 1. Is there an increase in trouble at businesses on West Ridge Road that stay open late (ie, Bathtub Billy's, California Brewhaus)?

A: Officers say the bar owners are very cooperative, and the businesses themselves don't seem to be a direct problem. RPD usually monitors social media to keep track of where events (like concerts or themed club nights) are happening, and individuals who plan to attend. Any businesses that stay open late are likely to be the scene of incidents that happen late at night. For instance, there was a fight recently at the Fast Trac gas station, which is a spot lots of people stop when they are out late. West Ridge Hots is considering whether they may start closing earlier, in light of the shooting incident, but they don't usually have problems like that.

2. Was there something specific happening at Bathtub Billy's early last Saturday morning (approx. 1 am)? Resident had noticed a large number of police cars.

A: Nothing they remember, but there was an event happening that night so they may have just been keeping an eye on the parking lot.

3. People have been riding snowmobiles in Maplewood Park (Rose Garden and along the Riverway Trail). A second resident added that they have also been riding on Lakeview Park. Is there anything RPD can do to stop this?

A: They will try to patrol more often (weather permitting) and keep the Rose Garden gate locked overnight. That's about all they can do.

Guest Speaker: Mitch Gruber, Rochester City Council member at large

Mitch introduced himself and his legislative aide, Beth Sieber. She's active in the Beechwood Coalition. Mitch says he's somewhat familiar with Maplewood from having worked with his mentor, Tom Ferraro, who lived on Seneca Parkway. His organization, Foodlink, also operates the Lexington Urban Farm. When he was elected to City Council, he made it a goal to attend the meetings of all the neighborhood associations in the city to meet the people and see how the organizations work, so that's his purpose in being here tonight.

Report from Molly Clifford, NW City Council Representative

- The series of Northwest Walks is over, and now Molly's coffee meetings will resume for the winter.
- Eastman Business Park is opening a new [Visitor Center](#).
- Some items of interest from the City Council agenda:
- St. Bernard's senior housing complex may be changing ownership. The current owners have run into problems with delinquent debt (including debt to the City, which is why City Council has to agree to the transfer). Residents have also complained that they are not responsive in dealing with maintenance issues. A company called CB Emanuel, based in NYC, is considering taking over the management and assuming the outstanding debts. St. Bernard's has an active tenants association, and they are very supportive of this change.
- The Lilac Brownfield (Lyell and Lake) will be part of a state grant to assess cleanup of the brownfield and creation of a trail through the JOSANA neighborhood.
- Blue Cross Arena is getting new management. It will be a [15-year contract](#) with a company affiliated with the Pegula family (owners of the Sabres/Amerks teams). Some City Council members feel like this is too long a contract, and may be restrictive for future mayors. Molly thinks overall it's a good deal for the City, because the annual subsidy the City pays to operate the arena will drop substantially. Also, the new company will take over responsibility for operating the parking. Other than the Pegula-owned company, only the previous operator, SMG, made a bid for the contract.
- Discussion:

1. A resident brought up issues of speeding and speed limits on Lake Avenue, mentioning a recent incident where someone was driving far over the speed limit early in the morning

A: Molly says she can request a patrol detail. RPD has only one of these that moves around based on reports of trouble spots. Mitch Gruber added that he will bring this up in an upcoming meeting he is participating in.

2. A resident asked why there are speed humps at one end of Flower City Parkway but not at the other end. Her vehicles have been hit more than once by speeders, who then leave the scene.

A: Molly will follow up with her after the meeting to go over the process for requesting installation of speed humps with the City. Another resident from the same area stated that they have tried to get speed humps installed there at least twice over the years (once about 10 years ago, and then as recently as two years ago). The process requires a certain number of residents to sign a petition, and many residents have been opposed to the idea.

Report from Monroe County Legislator Cindy Kaleh (28th District)

- Monroe County spending plan for 2019: still more information needed to know whether individual property owners will pay more or less in property taxes (see last month's notes: tax rate has been decreased, however, assessments may have gone up)
- Another budget issue is the [waitlist](#) for early intervention services for special education students, which the Monroe County Department of Health announced in November. The County doesn't have enough early intervention service coordinators to assess students, but there is question about whether the County will allot funding to hire more staff. The County wants NYS to provide funds.
- Concern about opioid overdoses: there is discussion about a program that will provide Narcan kits at small businesses and install signage to identify businesses which have the kits on hand. Cindy says Devon Reynolds from Brothers & Sisters Unisex Salon brought this to her attention.

Report from Monroe County Legislator Tony Micciche (26th District)

- Tony missed the last meeting due to the death of his brother in Seattle
- The County Ways and Means committee will meet December 6 to discuss the early intervention issue
- Monroe County Budget for 2019 will be complete next week
- He has been appointed to the Public Safety Committee
- Child Protective Services is still short of staff to handle caseload, an issue that is very important to him. (A resident asked here why that is? In addition to needing more funding to create additional positions, there is a great deal of turnover for existing positions and a long training process needed to prepare new hires. It's a complicated and difficult job.)

Bruce Wilder, City of Rochester (Northwest Neighborhood Service Center)

- Snow and snow removal: he encourages all residents to take care of your driveway and sidewalk. Also, be considerate and help out neighbors who may not be able to shovel due to health issues, family emergencies, or other reasons.
- Leaf removal: as usual, a lot of leaves were still on the trees when the City came through to do loose leaf pickup. Because of the early snow, he's not sure whether they will be able to come back for a second pickup as they often do. If you have a large pile of leaves in front of your house, call 311 and they will send someone out to your address.
- Dewey Avenue Business Association has restarted. Meetings are the first Tuesday of the month at Salvatores at 9 am.
- Merry Christmas and Happy Holidays, and safe holidays to everyone.

Announcements and discussion

From Wayne Williams: Barb Ann Kupiec has stepped down as chair of the MNA Public Safety Committee. Jahmar Elliot is taking over as Chair.

From Andy Raus:

- He has brought in brochures and other information on how to start a block club. If anyone is interested, please pick up some of that literature or speak to him.
- Coat Drive: collecting donations of new and gently used children's coats, hats, gloves, scarves, etc. Bring them to City Hall (30 Church Street) on December 15.
- Health insurance: he wants to remind everyone that coverage is still required by law, and the penalty for not having coverage is also costly. He has information on signing up through [New York State of Health](#) for anyone who needs it. Deadline for Open Enrollment for 2019 is December 15.

From Kim Hare: shop at [New Life Toys](#) during their holiday season. They provide job training and employment for their seasonal workers, and also a source of good-quality used toys. (The toy store is open at People's Ministry in Christ Church, 516 Dewey Avenue, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Saturdays until Christmas.)

From Jahmar Elliot: his fraternity is also collecting toys in conjunction with the Coat Drive on December 15. He will come pick them up from you if anyone wants to donate.