

SMILE GENERAL PUBLIC MEETING

November 2, 2016

SMILE Station

Blog

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Procedural

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OFFICERS PRESENT: Corinne Stefanick, President; Eric Norberg, Secretary

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT: Nancy Walsh; Elaine O’Keefe; Miriam Erb;

Bob Burkholder; Timothy DuBois

President Corinne Stefanick called the meeting to order at 7:34 p.m., with an announcement of the special nature of the “themed” meeting tonight – she and Crime Prevention Committee Chair Patrick Morton together have planned an evening devoted to providing resources to help neighbors prevent or respond to crime in various forms.

Before beginning the program, and noting the presence of a quorum although not all present had signed the attendance sheets, she asked that the minutes of the October 5 General Meeting be reviewed. Two minor errors were found; Nancy Walsh moved the minutes be approved as amended, Elaine O’Keefe seconded the motion; the motion carried unanimously.

Patrick Morton stepped forward to begin the program. He started by observing that the “police non-emergency” telephone line lately has not been available on weekends, being answered by a machine advising to “call back Monday”, without even an option for leaving a message. Since this phone is normally answered by the Bureau of Emergency Services personnel (not the police) who also answer 9-1-1 calls 24 hours a day, in such a circumstance if a delay till Monday is not desirable, just call 9-1-1, he advised. Eric Norberg pointed out that another alternative is to call Central Precinct directly. Patrick indicated that handouts and printed resources relating to the parts of the program that were to follow were arrayed across the top of the SMILE piano in the rear of the room, and were free for the taking.

Morton advised that there is a city program to install secure deadbolt locks free for qualifying senior citizens. He went on to reveal that teen “police cadets” work with the police, and will do vacation home checks, investigate traffic issues, and otherwise assist police. He reminded that there is still a grocery cart retrieval service that you can call to come get some abandoned grocery carts, but it is contracted to specific merchants and will not retrieve carts for other merchants. In our neighborhood, the participating merchant is QFC Market; the service will not retrieve carts from New Seasons or Goodwill. Morton concluded by describing and praising a city “PDX Reporter” crime-reporting telephone application, available through the Apple App Store at no cost. And, he gave additional information about online reporting of matters to the police, within specific guidelines.

Next to present was Teri Poppino [accent on the first syllable], the Crime Prevention Coordinator at the Office of Neighborhood Involvement (ONI) in Portland. She explained how Central Precinct interfaces, at S.E. Chavez (39th), with East Precinct; since our

neighborhood is west of that street, we are served by Central Precinct downtown. She discussed services provided by her office, and remarked that she was concerned by these reports that the police non-emergency line is sometimes giving “call back later” messages. She advised if you do decide to “wait until Monday” to call again, you should write down everything you were going to report, so no details will be lost in the delay.

R. Corless, a Neighborhood Watch coordinator, gave details on how to begin a Neighborhood Watch in the neighborhood [additional information on this subject is posted online by SMILE at: www.SMILErecords.org], and shared personal experiences in doing setting one up, spurred by suspicious activity, thefts, and drug activity, all of which were mitigated by the instituting of a Neighborhood Watch.

Jody Pettit followed on the agenda, presenting her invention – a large metal lockable security box with an electronic pushbutton lock embedded in its lid – intended to provide a secure lockable receptacle for receiving delivered packages. It bolts to the front porch of a home. It is waterproof, comes in a variety of sizes, styles, and colors, and the various models are all made in Portland. Pettit lives in the Irvington neighborhood.

Next to present was Bryan Hance, proprietor of the free service “Bike Index”, an online resource for bicycle registration and recovery. He gave a PowerPoint presentation to acquaint those present with the website and its functions; over 98,000 bikes have been registered on it so far, and some 2,800 stolen bike recoveries have been accomplished through the website. “Bike Index” is operated as a nonprofit organization, and offers free bike registration “pre and post theft”. He pointed out that stolen bicycles are often sold on Craigslist, and (an even worse problem) on a site called OfferUp. He was contemptuous of OfferUp because of the way it facilitates crime, and the fencing of stolen goods. For questions or more information, Hance can be reached at: bryan@bikeindex.org.

Ed LeClair, a SMILE Transportation Committee member, was next – discussing the best bicycle locks to use. “A U-lock is the top-of-the-line defense,” he said, naming Avis as the brand he considers the most secure. He went on to give a variety of bike-related tips.

Following, on the agenda, was Juliette Muraccioli, who is with the Portland Graffiti Abatement Program at ONI. Her program is specifically oriented to helping people remove graffiti. Police reports are helpful in getting insurance reimbursement for graffiti removal, she advised. Reporting and photo-documenting graffiti is also important, since evidence of several different graffiti vandalism instances by a person arrested for the offence can greatly increase the penalty meted out upon conviction, and photos provide needed proof of that. She concluded by giving tips and describing resources.

Ending the special meeting program was Hannah McMullen, an instructor for the upcoming SMILE Station “WomenStrength” self-defense training classes. This program is run through the Portland Police Bureau, but the instructors are all volunteers; each training consists of three three-hour sessions. The first-ever SMILE-sponsored class starts Monday, November 7; the class is already fully subscribed, but there will be another on February 6, 13, and 20, at SMILE Station. Registration for that opens January 3. She ended by answering questions.

Whereupon, President Corinne Stefanick declared the meeting adjourned, at 9:13 p.m.