



**Audubon-Downriver Neighborhood Council
Membership Meeting
Shadle Park Library, Event Room
Thursday, April 18, 2024**

Meeting was called to order at 6:30pm by Chair Jeff Stevens. Welcome and Introductions were made.

Board members present: Jeff Stevens (Chair); Steve Cox (Vice Chair and Traffic); Fran Papeleur (Treasurer); Gayle Swagerty (Membership); Andrea Kilgore (Secretary). Victor Frazier (WCCC & COPS NW liaison) not present.

Guests: Pollyanne Birge, ONS Liaison; Christopher Savage, Balboa/South Indian Trail NC; Zack Zappone (City Council rep).

Administrative Reports:

Secretary: February minutes provided by email. Majority vote approved minutes.

Treasurer: Fran reports current balance is \$4006 total. \$2006 in bank account and \$2000 in a CD investment for 1 year with Umpqua Bank to generate income for ADNC. Changing bank account from Umpqua to Global Credit Union which will save money and work with a bank located in Shadle Center.

Membership: Gayle reports meeting attendance total 31; Voting members 41; Quorum 13. Quorum present.

Guest speaker: Nick Hamad, Spokane Parks & Recreation, presented on park upgrade plans called *Healthy Parks, Healthy Neighborhoods*. Focus has been on Riverfront Park for many years. Now that it is completed, focus is shifting to neighborhood parks. A levy is proposed to pay for projects and staffing.

- Expanded and repaired play equipment at parks like Audubon, Webster and Shadle.
- improved restrooms to attract more visitors
- Add trailheads and walking paths through parks.
- Add and expand sport facilities, including All Weather fields at Dwight Merkel. Residents want pickle ball courts, volleyball court, etc.
- Attract more visitors to local parks to increase safety and decrease vandalism.
- Add park rangers that patrol parks for safety.



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- Increased maintenance staff for caretaking and locking facilities at night.
- Add parking lots at river access points.
- Purchase vacant lots to expand natural area at Drumheller Springs. City already owns several vacant lots that will not be developed. Some are currently for sale.
- The plan and budget is available online or by request.

City Council report: Zack Zappone reports City is finishing American Rescue (ARPA) funds received during COVID. Mayor plans to re-allocate most of it toward homelessness. Council approved free bus rides to Expo events on Sat/Sun, May 4-July 4. 50-cent rides on the bus to the Arena and Podium events. Will promote the Park levy. Also working on \$50 million deficit from the City general fund. Public Safety levy would help balance the budget. If levy fails, City will need to cut costs by \$30 million to balance the budget. 200 staff, including cops or firefighters, would be cut as a result. City already froze hiring for non-essential positions. Voters have to decide if we raise taxes to pay for services or cut those services. Salary Review Commission is meeting to decide how much City Council members make. Their salary is currently \$50,000 while County Commissioners make \$125,000 a year.

- Concern about asking voters to approve two levies at the same time. Is it best to do the Parks levy vote first or wait until after the Public Safety levy? Some of the funds affect the other. For example, some Public Safety money would go toward Parks. Some Parks money would address crime and safety in parks. Zack is seeking feedback on what residents prefer. Email zzappone@spokanecity.org with feedback or use the new Council Considerations page online.
- Resident asked how City pays for legal payouts resulting from lawsuits, for example when court awards damages to a victim of police brutality. Zack reports City and Police Ombudsman office funds insurance so money is not drawn from general fund. However, lawsuits result in increased insurance rates.
- Resident asked about increased property taxes. Most property tax goes toward state and schools, not City funds. The portion that goes toward the City does not increase unless approved by voters and it can only be 1% per year. This is why City runs levies instead.

Office of Neighborhood Services (ONS): Pollyanne Birge, ONS Liaison, announced Public Safety meetings. Mayor is seeking a new police chief. Next meeting is virtual on Tuesday April 30th.



- Street sweeping started. Map shows street sweep activity at <https://spokane.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=8ce6ad87bcd44d00a92cbd0815dd87b7>
- ONS is offering up to \$1,000 for residents to organize special neighborhood cleanup events (e.g., graffiti, trash, etc). ADNC will host another major roll-off event in Fall.
- Volunteers needed April 29-May 3rd for special downtown clean-up in preparation for Expo 74's 50th celebration.

Community Assembly: Fran reports relationship with CA and City Council has greatly improved under leadership from Council President Betsy Wilkerson. Fran is representing District 3 at *Neighborhoods 3.0* workgroup, which includes 3 City Council members. She also reported that District 3 recommendations regarding Community Development Block Grant projects back in 2019 are now going forward: roof repair for Transitions EduCare building and replacement of a heat pump and water heater at West Central Community Center.

Public Safety

- **Spokane Police Dept:** not present.
- **COPS NW:** John Schwartz reports Shred Day is next Friday, April 26, in the parking lot. He noted that if you are going to be gone for vacation this summer, you can register your home with COPS to drive by your home. Also calling for more volunteers. They do not have enough volunteers at this time, which limits the hours the office is open.
- **Homeless Issue:** Resident reports issue where a homeless person uses drugs, defecates outside and dogs are getting sick. Identified the person in question because he is well known to neighborhood residents for many years. Residents want him to get housing or mental health treatment, but he refuses everything offered. Jeff and John encouraged everyone to call 311 to report code enforcement issues so the City can send homeless outreach services.

Traffic: Steve reports mobile speed feedback signs will be placed in 2 locations. Several traffic calming projects were completed in the past year in our neighborhood. Cycle 12 and 13 do not have projects scheduled for District 3. Residents are concerned about speeding near Flett Middle School, as well as traffic issues during special events. Council plans to host meetings to gather feedback and approach the City about



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potential solutions. Steve is advocating for a flashing beacon to alert drivers going around the corner on NW Blvd about crosswalks installed around the corner. Concern is that kids who start crossing will not be seen by drivers speeding around the corner.

Ash Place Development: Jeff reports agency review period was extended to the end of April. Public Comment period will probably occur in May. Drumheller Springs neighborhood group met to review the position that ADNC prepared at the last meeting; they will also be crafting their own statements. Group is very interested in the possibility that the City will purchase the vacant lots for sale near Drumheller Springs to protect the natural area.

Next General Meeting: Thursday, May 16th, 6:30pm, Shadle Park Library, Event Room.

Meeting adjourned at 8:07pm.

Meeting minutes recorded by ADNC Secretary Andrea Kilgore.