

Downtown Norfolk Civic League

June 21, 2010

Mission Statement:

To be a collective voice of the residents, dedicated to the quality of life issues unique to Downtown Norfolk.

I. Welcome

II. Introductions

III. Financial Report

- Kevin Murphy reported a balance of \$1,005.28.

IV. P.A.C.E. Report – Officer Richard James

- The Union Mission has started the move to their new location ... mostly staff is still at the downtown location. There are 5 or 6 chronically homeless left and the NPD is engaging these folks.
- There were two robberies to individuals in May: One victim was leaving a nightclub at 1:45am and had a cell phone and cash taken. Some Hurrah Players were approached by a man with a pipe who took their bags. Officer James spoke with the students and suggested how to handle late afternoon transit to parking safely.
- Two stolen autos: One was a moped missing from MacArthur Center parking garage. The other was a car reported missing on Granby Street after midnight ... keys to the auto were lost in a nightclub.
- Larceny from autos: This included stolen license plates. Two purses taken that were in plain sight, one GPS unit and one laptop. Suspicious activity is being reported and the police are responding.
- Two burglaries have been reported since the Union Mission closed. DNA evidence from blood at the scene links the two.
- There were two charges during Harborfest ... one DUI and one BUI in the harbor.

V. Downtown Development/Construction Report

- No report this month.

VI. Guest Speaker – Dr. Whibley, City council representative for downtown

- The DNCL and Dr. Whibley's office started at about the same time four years ago.
- Typical civic leagues are resident-oriented. DNCL is a mix due to issues of noise, parking, refuse collection, etc.
- Dr. Whibley cited two important issues ...
 - The Elizabeth River project and the Chesapeake Bay Foundation ... reclaiming the Lafayette River as a precursor to reclaiming a healthy Elizabeth River and Bay is essential and citizen oriented.

- Flooding is a continuous problem. Norfolk is going to attempt to mitigate ... this is a regional issue as our seas rise.
- Dr. Whibley would like to see street parking available and free on the weekends.
- Net Bus service expansion ... there is no answer yet for connecting to Ghent. Prices quoted so far are prohibitive.
- State legislation to reduce the BID tax was successful. Now it needs to pass City approval and it issue missed this budget year.
- Light rail construction is almost done.
- High speed rail is also an issue.
- Dr. Whibley mentioned more bike lanes for the city and possibly closing some streets for exclusive bicycle use.
- Question: who pays for the light rail budget over-runs? Extra funding at the state and federal level will keep this off the city budget.
- High Speed rail will come to Norfolk within three years.
- The advantage of using Norfolk Southern routes is that having the land and rail beds is critical.
- The HSR will stop at Staples Mill in Richmond and at Harbor Park in Norfolk.
- Regarding an extension of the light rail to Virginia Beach ... Mayor Will Sessoms is in favor.
- Virginia Beach also bought the right to the rail bed in the city, plus the old Circuit City site.
- Question: will there be more incentives for retail infill? The city is anxious to bring in retailers and provide incentives.
- There still is no parking director, although the position has been funded for the last two years.
- Meter enforcement may be relaxed on Saturdays to attract shoppers.

VII. Old Business

- Light Rail work schedule:
 - Electrical Systems September
 - Control Systems Fall/Spring
 - Stations September/October
 - Vehicle Maintenance Fall/Spring
 - Street Lights July

VIII. New Business

- Stay and Play (last event)
- Bayou Boogaloo ... Thursday night is free
- Art /Everywhere ... 07/21
- Great American Picnic ... 07/04
- The FRED transport will not run and ambassadors will not be out on Sundays. However, the clean team will perform services on Sunday mornings. Due to budget constraints, \$15k is needed to fund the FRED.

IX. Upcoming Speakers

- None mentioned at this time.

X. Open Discussion

- None

XI. Adjourn

Please join us for the next DNCL meeting on Monday, July 19, 2010.

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