

Edgewater Neighborhood Association

Board of Directors

Minutes of Meeting August 20, 2014, Rockford Country Club, taken by Secretary Bill Simpson

Present---John Beck, President; Tim Moore, Vice-President; Bill Simpson, Secretary; Dick Berman, Treasurer; Drew Williams, Webmaster; Stan Arnold; Barb Berman; Michael Goddard; Jake Hamil; Mark Podemski; Lucretia Ristin. There was a quorum. RPD Officer Eric Jones. Guests: B. J. Alexis, Ken and Michelle Jubeck, Michael Smith, Robert and Megan Smith.

1. Meeting called to order at 5:35 p.m. by President John Beck.
2. Secretary's Report---Approved.
3. Treasurer's Report---As of August 1, \$3,657.00 "pledged to snow"; total value of assets (popcorn machine, sound system, two tents), \$905.19. Approved: Bill Simpson so moved, Mark Podemski seconded.
4. Police Chief Controversy, Open Forum---Barb Berman said that Rockford Chief of Police Chet Epperson, Winnebago County State's Attorney Joseph Bruscato, and 17th Judicial Circuit Chief Judge Joseph McGraw all spoke clearly; the whole hearing was quite civil. John Beck remarked that Chief Epperson has used FBI criteria in reporting crime, so that the numbers may be misleadingly higher than they would be elsewhere.
5. Community Services Report---Group A offenses were up from 10 in June to 12 in July; Group B offenses, up from 4 in June to 15 in July; "Additional Department Activity," 5 in July, same as in June. Officer Jones described numerous crimes, especially attempted burglary at Olympic Tavern. There were four armed robberies elsewhere, apparently by the same thugs. 6 Group B and at least 3 Group A offenses were aspects of the Olympic incident. Mark Podemski inquired if the monthly report can be made to indicate the number of offenses generated in a single criminal occurrence. . . . Panhandler Douglas Jones has returned to the neighborhood.
6. Newsletter---Editor Juanita Hickerson was not present. John Beck spoke of the financial saving realized by changing from regular mail to e-mail.
7. Webmaster's Report---278 Facebook fans; also 278 NextDoor, up from 199 at the time of the June board meeting. Drew Williams explained that not all the NextDoor posts characterized as "inappropriate" were offensive; some were just purposeless. Drew, John Beck, and Mark Podemski have been supervising the Web site and social media.
8. Neighborhood Cleanup---John Beck asked if there should be a cleanup in the fall as well as in the spring. It was agreed that, if there were a fall cleanup, it should be fairly late in the season.
9. Fourth of July Committee---Tim Moore reported the festival's first profit in five years, mainly because cotton candy was sold rather than given away as in the past. . . . Two portable toilets will be needed next year. . . . In response to Barb Berman's suggestion of live music, Tim said that he does not want a carnival atmosphere. . . . A genuine committee will be created, probably in April, to organize the 2015 event---also a suggestion of Barb Berman. Up to now, the "committee" has been Tim's family. . . . Contributors' names will be posted on the Web site.
10. Edgewater Membership Card Program---John Beck informed the guests about the benefits supposed to be conferred. He acknowledged that the program has not developed. Michael Goddard

estimated the annual cost of the cards at \$300. Mark Podemski advocated an overall discount of 10 per cent to be granted by restaurants and other businesses to card holders.

11. Other Business---Gary Caruana, candidate for Winnebago County sheriff, has asked Cyndie Hall whether political candidates would be welcomed as speakers at board meetings. John Beck made clear that those candidates' opponents would have to be notified of the upcoming event, so that, if they also wished to speak, they could. Drew Williams emphasized that the speeches would follow the meeting proper, so that board members and guests who preferred not to listen could leave without missing anything. . . . Barb Berman revived the subject of moving the North Main-Auburn sculpture to Memorial Hall. . . . Contrary to a letter sent by the city, the bricks on Clinton Street will not be covered with blacktop. . . . October 3 will be the opening date of Lucretia Ristin's Rockford Roasting Company, 206 North Main Street. . . . Michael Smith advised the board and guests that Welsh and West View schools will be closed in the near future, whereas Walker School will remain open for several years while new schools and additions to existing schools are under construction. If the Walker building is razed and the block becomes green space, who will maintain it? insure it? John Beck said that the Park District's existing properties are too expensive. . . . Jake Hamil reported that the public address system's batteries have run down, largely due to non-use (only Easter and July 4), and will be costly to replace. The system can be run off a power cord, but the cord would have to be extremely long. It was agreed to expend \$75 on repairs; Jake so moved, Tim Moore seconded.

Meeting adjourned at 7:29 p.m. Next meeting: Wednesday, September 17, 5:30 p.m., Rockford Country Club