

ROCKY POINT CIVIC ASSOCIATION MEETING MINUTES

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Civic Meeting Minutes

Date: September 3rd, 2024

Time: 7:30 PM

Location: Rocky Point VFW

1. Call to Order

- The meeting was called to order by Vice President Jennifer Hald.
- The Pledge of Allegiance was led by the participants, followed by a moment of silence.

2. Roll Call

- President: Gary Pollakusky, absent.
- Vice President: Jennifer Hald, present & acting Chairperson.
- Secretary: Thomas Buttacavoli, present.
- Treasurer: Position vacant.
- Membership Secretary: Kathy Weber, present.
- Sergeant at Arms: Tina Bogart, present.
- Trustees: Leah Buttacavoli (present), Alicia Palifka (present), & Quentin Palifka (absent).

3. Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes

- The minutes from the August meeting were presented, read out loud and reviewed.
- A motion to accept the minutes as read was made and seconded; the minutes were accepted as presented.

4. Report of Officers

- **Secretary's Report:**
 - Reported by Thomas Buttacavoli.
 - No mail or emails received. Requested forwarding of RPCivic emails to his personal email for better access.
- **Treasurer's Report:**
 - **No financial changes** were reported.
 - The ending balance remained the same as the last reported balance: **\$11,712.69**.

5. Report of Committees

- **Membership Secretary's Report:**
 - Kathy provided an update on current membership status, with one new member added, bringing the total to 35 paid members.
- **Land Use Committee Report:**

Fairfield Development Project:

- The committee discussed the longstanding Fairfield Development project, originally proposed in the early 2000s, which has faced multiple changes and delays. Initially zoned for 48 single-family homes, the project has evolved, with current plans to build

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40 houses. The land, once considered for multi-family homes, was met with significant opposition from the community, particularly due to concerns about school capacity and overdevelopment.

- The community's input led to changes in the plan, but concerns remain about the high price point of the homes and the overall impact on the neighborhood. The committee aims to gather more information on the latest developments to provide a comprehensive update to residents.

Site Visit and Community Involvement:

- A site visit is planned to assess the state of the construction site and to gather detailed information about the progress. Thomas is leading efforts to communicate with the project manager overseeing the site. However, there have been challenges in obtaining detailed updates from developers due to their hesitance in sharing information with civic groups.
- The committee emphasized the importance of keeping the community informed about the development's history, zoning changes, and the impact on local infrastructure. The goal is to provide a thorough report outlining how the project evolved from its inception to its current state, ensuring that residents are well aware of any potential implications, even though the project is likely too far along to influence major changes.

- **Beautification Committee Report:**

- Updates on watering the planters and baskets.
- Plans for holiday window painting were discussed, along with potential involvement from local students.
- Discussion on reigniting the holiday lighting tour for Christmas and gathering interest to ensure greater participation this year.

- **Police and COPE Report:**

Report of August Crime Statistics:

- There were 548 reported crimes in the 7th Precinct as of the end of August. It was noted that this figure represents the entire precinct and not just Rocky Point.
- Comparisons were made with the previous year's statistics, where there were 291 crashes in 2024 versus 295 crashes in 2023, indicating a slight decrease in the number of crashes.
- Officers issued 1,129 tickets within the precinct, but these tickets are not exclusively from Rocky Point; they cover the entire 7th Precinct.

Specific Incidents in Rocky Point:

- Rocky Point experienced three larcenies from vehicles during the month of August. It was noted that if a vehicle is left unlocked and items of value (e.g., money, iPhones, AirPods) are stolen, it is classified as a larceny rather than a break-in. COPE advised that residents should ensure their cars are locked at night to prevent such incidents.

Overdose Report:

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- There were zero reported fatal overdoses in August, though no specific number of non-fatal overdoses was provided. This was highlighted as a positive statistic.
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6. Old Business

- No old business discussed.

7. New Business

Discussion of August 19th Flooding in Rocky Point:

1. Storm Impact:

- On August 19th, a severe storm brought approximately 11 inches of rain within two hours, causing significant flooding in several areas of Rocky Point. This was described as the worst storm some members had ever seen in the area.
- Many residents reported water levels rising as high as eight feet in some places, with cars being lifted and homes heavily damaged by the water. Photos of flooded homes showed waterlines over windows and extensive property damage.

2. Hallock House Flooding:

- The Hallock House was among the buildings affected, with severe flooding in the basement. Members spent seven hours cleaning up, using four vacuums to remove the water.
- The town has been involved in adding additional sewer drains, but the drainage efforts have not sufficiently mitigated the flooding issues in the area. Some residents noted that while new drains were installed, they have not prevented further flooding.
- FEMA assistance was a major topic of concern, with some members noting that although FEMA had declared the storm an emergency and Governor Hochul and President Biden had signed emergency declarations, many residents were still being denied assistance when they applied.

3. FEMA and Assistance Challenges:

- Several members reported conflicting information about whether FEMA claims were approved or denied. Some were told their claims were denied despite the emergency declaration.
- Members discussed the need for clearer guidance on FEMA's criteria for approving assistance and suggested reaching out to Congressman LaLota's office for additional information and support.
- The idea of inviting a representative from Congressman LaLota's office to the next Civic meeting was raised, in order to provide residents with more clarity about the available options for assistance.

4. Concerns About Future Flooding:

- The issue of drainage and sewer systems was a recurring concern. Residents voiced frustration over the town's proposed solutions, which included running sewer lines across private properties to a sump location. Some residents expressed their opposition to giving up parts of their property for this project, as they doubted the effectiveness of the plan in preventing future floods.
- Specific mention was made of one homeowner who lost a brand new generator, chairs, and other equipment due to the flooding. Despite the severe damage, FEMA denied their claim for assistance.

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- Members also highlighted that the affected areas, including backyards and basements, often pool water during heavy rains and that previous storms had caused similar damage.

5. **Suggestions for Action:**

- Members discussed the need for ongoing outreach to both town officials and residents about flood mitigation and assistance. The importance of involving elected representatives was stressed to ensure that residents have access to the resources they need.
- Additionally, members expressed a desire to prepare for more frequent severe weather events in the future by advocating for better drainage systems and infrastructure improvements in flood-prone areas.
- It was suggested that affected residents continue to apply pressure on local and federal authorities to receive the assistance needed for recovery and mitigation efforts.

Speeding on King Road:

- Concerns were raised about speeding on King Road, with requests for additional stop signs. Members discussed the possibility of requesting a traffic study from the town to assess the need for more stop signs and patrols.
- The difficulty in getting additional police presence due to limited resources in the 7th Precinct was noted. Suggestions were made for community members to file more complaints to prompt additional patrols.

Deer Population Control:

- Discussion about the growing deer population and the impact it's having on local vegetation and the tick population. Members noted frustration with the lack of political will to support culling the deer population, and concerns were raised about residents potentially poisoning the deer if no official action is taken.

Lanternfly Invasion:

- The community noted the increasing presence of the invasive Lanternfly species in the area. Lanternflies are known to cause significant damage to trees and vegetation, including oak trees and vineyards. The board encourages residents to report sightings and take steps to eradicate the insects when possible, as they pose a serious threat to the local ecosystem.

8. Community Events, Announcements, & Initiatives:

Meet the Candidates Night:

- An invitation was extended to attend the Meet the Candidates Night hosted by another civic group on **September 18, 2024**. The format will allow candidates to introduce themselves and engage in informal discussions with the community.

Historical Society Announcements:

- The annual tea event will be held on **October 27, 2024**, featuring a guest speaker on

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women's fashion in the 1930s and 1940s.

- Fourth-grade field trips to the Echo House are scheduled for October, with students attending for an educational program followed by a picnic at the beach.
- A recent art exhibit at the Historical Society was successful despite the community facing multiple floods.

9. Volunteer and Community Involvement:

- **Calls for volunteers for upcoming community projects, including the garden tour and holiday decoration efforts.**

11. Adjournment:

- A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Trustee **Leah** and seconded by **Kathy Weber**. The motion was carried, and the meeting was officially adjourned.

Next Meeting:

- The next scheduled meeting will be on **October 1st, 2024**, during which the Nominating Committee will introduce a slate of candidates for the Civic's upcoming election at the annual meeting in November.
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