

**Federal Hill Neighborhood Association
General Membership Meeting
Tuesday, October 15, 2019**

CALL TO ORDER:

Beth Whitmer called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

ITEMS OF DISCUSSION:

Crime /Safety Update – Three members of the Baltimore Police Department attended the meeting to address the community’s concerns about crime and safety - Colonel Rich Worley, BPD Chief of Patrol; Major Brian Conaway, Commander of the BPD Southern District; and Sergeant Christopher Warren of the Dirt Bike Task Force. Colonel Worley provided an update on the crime situation in Baltimore City. He stated that carjackings are up significantly but they are making a lot of arrests. He indicated that carjackings are down in the Southern district and it is the best performing district. The carjacking/shooting incident that occurred the prior night near Federal Hill Park is currently being investigated. A police car was parked at the park at the time of the meeting and coverage has been increased in the area until a suspect has been identified and removed from the streets.

A community member shared that people are in the park all hours of the night and move into the streets. The member indicated that the park needs to be better protected. Another community member that lives near the park shared that there are homeless people sleeping in the park and they have tried to get into nearby homes. There is an issue with 911 as it has been called several times with no answer. Members of the community are concerned that crime is being addressed reactively instead of proactively.

A community member asked Colonel Worley if he could pass one piece of legislation, what piece of legislation he would pass. Colonel Worley responded that it would be mandatory sentencing for handgun violations. Eric Costello was present at the meeting and shared that the city doesn’t have the authority to pass such legislation. There is a provision for mandatory minimum of one year jail time and \$1,000 fine if caught with a handgun within 300 feet of a church, school, park or government building.

Another community member expressed concerns over the quality of the police, the number of police and their professionalism.

Colonel Worley was asked the three main areas that he would like to focus on. Colonel Worley responded 1-mandatory sentencing for handgun violations 2-homeless people and 3-squeegee kids.

A community member asked what is being done to keep repeat offenders off of the streets. Eric Costello responded that the question needs to be answered by Delegate Klippinger and that Colonel Worley has no authority over legislation.

The issue of the camera plane “Eye in the Sky” was addressed. A community member asked why it wasn’t being supported by the Mayor or BPD Commissioner. Eric Costello said that it is a privacy and ACLU issue and the Mayor has deferred the decision to the Commissioner. Eric indicated that he supports Eye in the Sky.

A community member asked about the number of policemen on the streets and what is being done to address the lack of officers. Colonel Worley indicated that they received 3,400 police officer applications this year (double from last year). He recently certified 41 trainees to be officers and there is a new class every three to six weeks. It takes one year from date of hire for an officer to be able to patrol the streets. Colonel Worley stated that it would take 3 or 4 years for staffing levels to be where they need to be.

Dirt Bike Task Force Update – Sergeant Warren shared that they have made significant progress in getting dirt bikes off of the streets. They have reduced the number of riders from 100 to 10/15 and they have a conviction rate of 90%. There is a city ordinance on dirt bikes and it is enforced. A community member asked why there is a no chase policy and what the penalty is for having a dirt bike on the streets. Sergeant Warren indicated that the penalty is probation before judgment, or jail time. The police force cannot chase dirt bikes due to safety concerns for the rider as well as the general public. Sergeant Warren asked that anyone who sees a dirt bike to call the tip line 443-902-4474.

The members of the community thanked the members of the police department for attending the meeting and expressed appreciation for what they are doing.

Inner Harbor Group Reboot- Brook Bomberger of the Inner Harbor Group told the community members about her plan to reinstate the Inner Harbor Group. The Inner Harbor Group started in 2012 and encourages young peers to help address disruptive behavior in the city. It is youth led and adult supported and made a difference in the Inner Harbor when it was in place. The pilot program in Federal Hill was not as effective. The group disbanded in 2017 and Brook would like to reinstate it. She passed out a survey to the community and asked that they complete and send it back to her.

Volunteers/Committees – Beth Whitmer shared that the FHNA Board is looking at the committees and developing mission statements for each committee. We are looking for volunteers to join each committee. Sheri Hunt gave an update on the Social Committee. The committee is looking for volunteers and FHNA will have a table at the Jazz and Blues Festival. Faith Millspaugh gave an update on the Beautification committee and shared that she was working closely with Federal Hill Main Street to ensure neighborhood concerns related to cleaning up after the Hilloween Bar Crawl have been addressed .

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Cathy Rosenbaum shared Federal Hill Main Street's upcoming events.

October 26 - Neighborhood cleanup day

 Last day of the Cross Street Market Farmer's Market

 Hilloween Bar Crawl from 5 to 12

October 27 - Jazz and Blues Festival from 12 to 7

October 28 - International Downtown Association tour

NEW BUSINESS:

No new business

ADJOURNMENT:

Meeting was adjourned at 7:38 p.m.