

APRIL 2019 - MONTHLY MEETING MINUTES

Date: April 9, 2019

Place: Public Library, 800 Vine Street, Tower Room

Welcome: Sue Byrom, President

New Members:

Karolyn Alexander, Erika Bussard, Juliana de Costa, Elliott Jordan, Melinda Kruyer, Marco Triglia

Monthly Reports:

Fire Captain **George Haralamos** reported on behalf of the Cincinnati Fire Department. The Department made 300 runs in March, a number he noted will trend upward with the advent of warm weather. All city fire hydrants are being opened and tested to ensure clear flow. Department members have recently received Advanced Life Support training and are also undergoing training in connection with the city's new fireboat. It is hoped the boat will soon be docked in the Smale Park vicinity. George gave the group a few reminders/exhortations: Clean your dryer lint! Change your smoke alarm batteries! He was pleased that many DRC members are registered for Smart 911, and reminded them that information needs to be updated every six months. George introduced District 1 Chief Raffel Prophett and new firefighter John Baer.

Captain **Doug Wiesman** gave the Cincinnati Police Department update, noting that he would mark a one-month anniversary in his position the next day. He said that crime statistics are still quite good, and shared new Central Business District/Riverfront crime report that presents current statistics in comparison with year-to-date incidences. This form of reporting can turn up apparent anomalies; for example, robberies show an increase of 100%, which can seem alarming but actually documents an increase from 2 to 4. Doug reminded members that the Flying Pig Marathon is coming up. While participation might not match last year's 20th-anniversary run, it will still be a big crowd. He noted that last year's race was ranked number one in the country in a survey of runners nationwide.

On behalf of the Downtown Ambassadors, **Derek Chance** reported that the group has been painting light poles around town and cleaning tree grates and replacing gravel around the Banks. The Opening Day parade route was pressure-washed after its conclusion and other pressure-washing is ongoing. Four homeless individuals were moved into housing in the last month, with three more in the process. The Ambassadors have so far served 50 of the heater meals donated by DRC members. The meal manufacturer donated an additional three pallets of the meals for future use.

Speakers:

Paul Grether, Director of Rail Services with Cincinnati Metro, gave a presentation of options that the City of Cincinnati and Metro are proposing for changing the Cincinnati Bell



Connector streetcar service hours and frequency. They have targeted proposed changes to reflect time periods of greatest and least ridership, with a preferred alternative that would increase car frequency on Saturdays and end service slightly earlier (12:30 v. 1:00 a.m.) on Fridays and Saturdays. DRC members and others are invited to view the proposals and offer comments at www.cincinnaticonnector.com. In Q & A, Paul explained that funds to increase service for special events (such as Reds home games) have not been approved by City Council. He noted that the streetcar system has a very low payment evasion rate, less than 1% where 1.5 - 3.0% is the norm for comparable systems. (Caution to riders: a ticket for payment evasion carries a price of \$100, so pay your \$1 up front.)

Jenn Loechle, Senior Event Manager and Event Innovation Lead with the Cincinnati USA Regional Chamber, gave the group a preview of the 2019 edition of the Blink Festival, so hugely successful in 2017. Bigger and better can be expected, with an expansion to Covington sites and a better sense of the volume of attendees expected. Dates are October 10-13.

Old Business: A motion to approve the March meeting minutes was made by Andy Riess, seconded by Chris Smith, and passed unanimously.

New Business:

A motion to allow non-resident members to vote in the imminent election of board members was made by Rick Dieringer and seconded by Mary Jacobs. This refers to people who are DRC members but do not live in the designated DRC neighborhood. The motion was carried 32 to 4.

Sue Byrom introduced the slate of Board candidates: Jackie Bryson, Jan Hirlinger, David Ostrander, Carol Parobek, Barbara Smurda, and Esther Wing. Mary Jacobs moved that the slate be accepted; Gary Bryson seconded. The vote was 58 for, none against. Congratulations to the new Board members.

Sue gave a brief President's report, telling members about DRC's participation in Mayor Cranley's new Downtown Cincinnati Pedestrian Task Force, created with the purpose of making the city more pedestrian-friendly. Its initial focus is the Court Street area, with consideration also of street traffic, e.g., should Vine Street become two-way between Central Parkway and the river?

The meeting was adjourned at 7:05. The next meeting is scheduled for May 14 at 6:00 p.m.