

JULY 2021– MONTHLY MEMBERSHIP MEETING MINUTES

Downtown Residents' Council, Inc.

Date: July 13, 2021 @ 6:00pm

Place: First Financial Bank Innovation Room, 1 E. 4th Street

New Members: Christina Anez, Alana O’Koon, Julia Sullivan, Beth Thompson, Kathryn Wallace



President Alan Bunker called the meeting to order at 6:00 and welcomed new members.

Monthly reports:

Captain Doug Wiesman said that again this month crime statistics are up compared to the pandemic-quiet 2020. Compared to 2019, some categories are up and some down. Theft from autos is up sharply all over the city, but some arrests have been made. Doug addressed the July 4 shooting in Smale Park, in which two teenagers were killed by each other and three bystanders were wounded. Officers in the park heard the shots, ran to the scene, and were able to offer assistance to the wounded. The guns were evidently taken by others in the crowd. Doug said that cameras are actually in the process of being installed in the park, but were not yet functional that night.

In response to what is officially defined as a “mass shooting” (i.e., 5 or more victims), police patrols will be increased on weekends. Doug warns, however, that CPD can only get so far with rearranged schedules and overtime and will be stretched as the summer goes on. He gave the example of September 19, when there will be a 14K run, a Reds game, an FC Cincinnati game, a Garth Brooks concert at Paul Brown Stadium, another concert at the new ICON center, and Oktoberfest.

Doug then raised the issue of loud motorcycles and their scofflaw riders, a perennial complaint at DRC meetings. He showed pictures of many motorcycles that have been impounded and mentioned warrants that extend into other districts. CBD officers have collected a lot of videos recording license plates and driver faces which are enabling investigation and pursuit. Scooters are another frequent complaint. Scooter companies Lime and Bird are able to take some action centrally, for example forcing computer-imposed slowdown in the DORA area and stopping the scooters altogether in the pedestrian-only section of Freedom Way. While some citations have been issued by police, Doug asked for understanding that officers frequently have higher priorities than enforcing the ban on scooters traveling on sidewalks.

Cate Douglas of 3CDC said that Ambassadors are still engaged in much weed removal around the city. They are coordinating with other city departments to facilitate tree and limb removal and the replacement of streetlights. DRC members are urged to call the Ambassador hotline, 513-623-3429 if they see trees or lights that need removal or repair. Cate drew members’ attention to a new mural at Pete Rose Way and Mehring Way.

Nicole Smith of the Social Outreach Team announced that so far this year housing has been secured for 84 homeless individuals. She is not aware of what some audience members have observed, which appears to be a regular rotation of panhandlers, i.e., panhandlers being picked up at their location and driven away after handing over their sign to another. Nicole asked for anyone seeing such an exchange to call the outreach hotline (513-498-6192). Outreach team members are on the streets daily, within the boundaries of Eggleston Avenue, Liberty Street, Central Avenue and the river.

Doug Weisman stood up to give the outreach team a ringing endorsement, saying that they are a great help to the homeless population and to the CBD police.

DRC Report

Treasurer Tricia Lynn reported an opening balance of \$20,231.19 and a closing balance of \$16,531.46 for the month of June. There were no questions

Old Business

Mary Jacobs made and Craig Hudson seconded a motion to approve the previous meeting's minutes; it was approved unanimously.

New Business

A member complained about the state of city sidewalks. She and others agreeing with her were advised to contact Fix-it Cincy (<https://www.cincinnati-oh.gov/cityofcincinnati/cincinnati-city-hall-mobile>) and also to let Alan know so that DRC can consolidate complaints and communicate with the city as a group. Another question was raised about the status of repair to the Purple People Bridge. Cate volunteered to make inquiries. Resumption of Southbank Shuttle service is also in question; evidently, drivers are needed.

Speaker

Phil Aftuck of The Bernstein Companies was connected by phone to talk about plans to restore and renovate the Textile Building at 4th and Elm. Plans call for the 2022 debut of 282 apartments, with ground-floor retail and a rooftop deck. Work will be done under the terms of a historic preservation tax credit, which limits how much can be changed, e.g., no balconies can be added. Rents are expected to be compatible with other apartments in the vicinity, such as the Radius and City Club.

Announcements

Ed Ratterman drew the group's attention to Rebel Mettle's Sunday night small-group jazz performances from 6:00 to 9:00. It was announced that Cincinnati World Cinema has reopened, currently featuring short films from the Sundance Film Festival. A question was raised about plans for the Western & Southern space on 4th Street where a building is being demolished. People have heard tales of both a high-rise office building and a green space; the final disposition remains to be seen.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:50.

Next meeting: Tuesday, August 10, 2021 at 6:00 p.m., again at the First Financial Bank at 4th and Vine.