



3RD WARD MEETING MINUTES – ALDERMAN DENISE RODD

July 10, 2013

AGENDA

- Welcome.
- Foxes and Wildlife in neighborhood. Information provided at Ward Meeting.

TOPICS

- Bangkok Belly – Menu handed out by neighbors at Ward Meeting.
- Garbage Company
- Sidewalk Replacement and Neighborhood Grooming
- Railroad and Westfield Garden Park
- Residency
- Downtown Signals/ Fireworks/Restaurant and Banquet Hall

FOXES AND WILDLIFE

Des Plaines has an abundance of wildlife (3rd Ward has the most Red Foxes). Animal Control Officer Jeff Paul provided tips on how to live peacefully with a fox in your yard. Foxes are considered crepuscular – meaning they are most active at dawn and dusk. Foxes are protected by State Law and cannot be interfered with in any way. It is also illegal for the public to trap and relocate them...so sit back and enjoy! Foxes are good at controlling rodent population in neighborhoods.

Warmer weather increases wildlife activity. Feeding wildlife is prohibited; such as squirrels, raccoons, skunks, opossums, fox and coyotes. Animals will not linger in an area if not fed and will relocate naturally to other areas in search of food and shelter. Coyotes have been around a long time. Not sure if there is anything we can do or if they are protected by law.

Skunks are not considered a nuisance until they “burrow.” Skunks can be trapped and do not require a trapping license but there are fines if trapping animal on your own and keeping it in the trap for more than 24 hours. Traps can be obtained from the Police Department and will be picked up by “When Nature Calls” for a charge of \$50. This also works for opossums and raccoons. Skunks are required by law to be put down because of rabies. A second option is to call a service that will come out and for a fee will set up a trap and haul away. “When Nature Calls” is a trapping service that sets up traps for \$100 with a \$50 removal fee.

BANGKOK BELLY

Residents, Lily and Dave handed out menus from a new 3rd Ward Restaurant serving Sushi, Thai and Chinese cuisine.

GARBAGE COMPANY

Republic is the Garbage Company in Des Plaines. ARC became Republic in 2009. Resident reported that Republic was not very responsive when called regarding an issue. Resident is trying to get smaller cans for parents but keeps getting a recording when he calls Republic. Is Des Plaines going out to contract for a garbage company this year? A suggestion made to have Garbage Contact information added to the City Calendar. Denise will follow up on issue with Republic and contract information. [Follow up: Republic has offices in Elk Grove, Mt. Prospect, and Melrose Park. The City has had other complaints about Republic's customer service and is working with Republic to improve this area. They're still dealing with a high volume of calls after the 2 spring floods, and recently installed new software in their call center that was merged from two into one. They are working out the kinks and will be hiring 3 more call center operators. New

procedures have recently been put into place to address the issue of not returning calls - another item the City addressed with them. Their contract expires on March 31, 2014, and an RFP for a new contract will go out this fall.]

SIDEWALK REPLACEMENT/NEIGHBORHOOD GROOMING

Many neighborhoods are having sidewalk replacements done. These were requests made by the citizens and are not being paid for by the residents (this time). Funding is coming from Casino revenue. Question is why is it taking 3-4 weeks to complete? [Follow up: The sidewalk replacement program will be finished in October. This is the largest project Public Works/Engineering has taken on in some time. If you wish to get on a list for sidewalk replacement in the future, email engineering@desplaines.org.]

Complaints were submitted regarding long grass at foreclosed homes. City cuts grass and charges title holder and can put a lien against property if bill not paid. City was notified and owner of property ticketed but city no one has mowed lawn.

Des Plaines has codes on how a property is to be maintained. Residents can notify the City, and a letter is sent to the homeowner with a reference to the specific code. The letter states work required and a completion deadline. City has a contact system on website called Citizens Action Request (CAR) which can be anonymous and available to residents. A ticket number is assigned to the request that stays open and tracked until completed. CAR provides quick action on getting low branches trimmed, trees and bushes hanging over sidewalks and long grass. Cars continuously blocking sidewalk can be handled by CAR or by calling police non-emergency number.

RAILROAD AND WESTFIELD

Railroad workers are driving through Westfield Garden Park at Walnut and Warrington leaving tire marks and tracking mud. Trees are being cut down and left on private property. Park District was notified but not responsive. [Follow up: The City has notified the railroad.]

RESIDENCY

A referendum voted on in 2001 to have a residency requirement that department directors live in town was reversed recently by city council. Reasons included the narrowing of hiring pool, not attractive in the market, turnover high within city. Initially, the request was made for department directors to live in town for emergency reasons. Today, there are so many ways to be in touch it isn't necessary to live in the city. Residency law affects 7 to 8 people. Recently lost Economic Development Director and have had a high turnover in City Manager position.

DOWNTOWN/FIREWORKS/RESTAURANTS

Finance Committee Meeting July 17 at 6:30 p.m. City Hall; Chamber 102. Alderman Sayad is Finance Chairman and is hosting an open forum for all Des Plaines Residents.

Why is Des Plaines replacing sidewalks in downtown area with bricks? Didn't we learn from last time that winter and snow blowing does not work well with paved bricks? Hopefully, these are improvements over years ago.

Walk Signals in downtown do not tell blind when it is safe to walk. Is it possible to install a sound to tell a blind person when it is safe to cross street? [Follow up: I have brought this up with Ald. Patti Haugeberg, chair of the Public Safety committee.]

Fireworks: Des Plaines has not had fireworks for 3 years due to budget cuts. Poll taken at meeting shows majority would attend fireworks. A suggestion was made to have them at another date other than the Fourth of July – maybe Labor Day. Illegal Fireworks are a concern especially those that fall under the consumer and commercial grade. A question for the Police Department on what authority illegal fireworks becomes a ticket or greater offense.

City met with Mr. Diamond (Fountain Blue) regarding tent. Permit expired in January and because tent is not permanent, tent will be coming down for 2014. The City has enforced the ordinance and will allow 9 events scheduled to be take place in 2013. Revenue lost by city is food and beverage tax.

Black Ram will be opening as a family restaurant. Council is to vote on liquor license.
Tap House Bar & Grill will be opening in the old "Cheeseburger" location in Metropolitan Square.

NEXT MEETING

Wednesday, August 14, Prairie Lakes Center
Agenda: 2014 Budget and Vehicle Stickers.

TO CONTACT DENISE

- Phone Number: 847.514.6318. Please call Denise at this number with issues, questions and concerns.
 - Facebook is set up for the 3rd Ward. Search DP3 in Facebook.
 - Twitter's hash tag is @Denise Rodd
 - Web Site: www.3rdward.org