

BASWA MEETING

JANUARY 16TH, 2008

Present: Chris Jones, Bob Boyd, Brian Pincelli, John Roth, David Halter, Peter Saxe, Brad Goater, Rick Saltreli, Ed Schram, Rose OKeefe, Philip Duquette, Molly Clifford, Lori Bryce, Joe McBane, Eileen Thomas, Cheryl Stevens.

Agenda Items: Graffiti along South Avenue.
Swing in the New Year 2207
Parking Meter Totems

1. Graffiti along South Avenue.

Molly Clifford began the discussion regarding the graffiti problem along South Avenue. Comments as follows:

- Citywide problem. Significant increase since Spring 2007.
- City of Rochester has formed a task force to look at the problem. They will be looking at other cities to explore how they are dealing with the same issue.
- 3 kinds of tags.
 - Gang Tags – gangs marking their area
 - Name Tags - tags defined by a symbol or design to identify a certain person
 - Murielist Tags – individuals who make a living at.
- It is believed the taggers are between 14-23 years of age and are not related to any gangs.
- City of Rochester's goal is to get graffiti removed as quickly as possible. This has proven to be the best course of action to deter further tagging.
- The city's first priority - tags that are obscene and offensive.
- The city added a second clean up crew in August for graffiti removal. The city's first priority is for public spaces. Private spaces (business owners) are responsible for their own buildings although the city's crew will help when possible.
- Task Force will do as much as they can but there are budget limitations.
- Task Force would like to create a central data base to get a handle on where and when graffiti is taking place.
- The NET offices would like to make graffiti clean-up part of Clean SWEEP days.

There was considerable round table discussion regarding the graffiti problem. Comments as follows:

- Increase enforcement – extremely difficult to catch person/persons responsible. They move in quickly and gone very quickly.
- Surveillance Cameras – once data base has been established the city can zero in on sites that get hit frequently
- Legal Walls – there was discussion regarding legal “graffiti parks”. There was a legal wall established at Village Gate that got “out of control”. Legal wall created other problems and has been removed – taggers spread out to other non legal areas and started tagging outside their targeted area.
- Chris Jones - What help can business owners and residents do to help?
Call 311 immediately if anyone sees anyone tagging.
Take picture of graffiti and send to Pete Saxe at the NET Office.
- Chris Jones – What is the average response time from the city for clean-up? Can more money be allocated to the task force?
30 days response time.
Molly – objective for Task Force is to get better funded.
Chris – why can’t money come from “Zero Tolerance”? (not sure what the response was)
- Bob Boyd – Need to develop long and short-term solutions between city, business owners and residents. Residents and business owners assume responsibility for clean-up of anything that can be painted; utility boxes, control boxes, light boxes, signs. City would be responsible for power washing and sandblasting.
- David Halter – Enforcement. Identify a couple of repetitive tags and who is responsible. Go after them and arrest.
- Eileen Thomas – work with families to better educate their children.
- Richard Saltreli, Operations Director for the Department of Environmental Services, City of Rochester explained that there is a solution with an anti-coating sealant that when applied to surfaces it makes cleaning off the graffiti much easier. Solution if very expensive.

Summary and Conclusion:

- Best solution to deter taggers is to remove graffiti as quickly as possible. Goal of taggers to have their work seen. If removed immediately they will give up on the site and move on.
- Educate business owners on how to remove graffiti and the importance of removing it quickly.
- Education programs in schools.
- Involve students from schools in community service/clean up days.
- Use data base to identify areas that are hit constantly and install video cameras.
- The city would like property owners to take a more active role in covering up the graffiti right away. City has limited resources.

Action Item:

- Bob Boyd will work with Chris Jones to put a process together to educate business owners on graffiti removal.
- Develop a brochure to hand out to business owners and residents on how to remove graffiti.
- Obtain more information regarding the sealer and how to apply.
- Next Clean SWEEP is on May 10th. Begin now to develop a volunteer base to help with the next Clean Sweep.

2. Arts Council Grant

The Arts Council has awarded BASWA a grant for the parking meter project. The design deadline is February 15th.

3. Swing in the New Year, 2007

Swing in the New Year was once again a great success. 300 plus tickets were sold and the silent auction was a great success. Total: \$8200 Expenses \$5600.

4. School 12

Lori asked business owners to help support the PTA of School 12 by selling note cards that the school has started selling. Proceeds from sales helps buy books for the library, contributes to the Staff Appreciation Breakfast, helps with basketball expenses and helps to buy text books. Cost: 5 cards per pack for one dollar. Many business's offered to sell the cards.

Meeting adjourned at 8:15pm.

(For corrections, additions and deletions please do not hesitate contacting me. Cheryl Stevens clswedge@juno.com)