

Meeting Minutes for Neighbors in South Roanoke

Minutes from the South Roanoke Neighborhood Association Meeting; Wednesday, January 18, 2006

President Bill Thomasson called the meeting to order at 7:05pm. Speakers addressed concerns regarding crime in our area. Police Captain Tim Jones reminded residents to keep an eye out for suspicious activity and to report anything unusual to the police department. Lt. Chris Perkins, the officer in charge of the Criminal Investigative Bureau, reported on the recent incidents of graffiti in the neighborhood. He stressed that this was not gang related but part of a school "project" on the history of graffiti. Two juvenile suspects from the county have been caught; search warrants have been issued and arrests are expected on at least nine incidents. The recent newspaper article reporting that Roanoke ranked second in the state for crime was also addressed. This number was reported by a for-profit agency that would not release its' sources; however, Lt. Perkins said that this is untrue citing a computer program as skewing the numbers. He said that Roanoke has an extremely high rate of "clearance" (crime solving); it is 20% above the national average. Repeat offenders make up a great number of the criminal offenders. Different parts of town have different criminal elements. South Roanoke's main trends are: loud music late in the evening, vandalism of vehicles, and the more recent graffiti. Officer J.T. Rogers patrols the South Roanoke area. He asked that anyone call him with safety concerns needing to be investigated, 853-1988. He reminded residents to lock their car doors, as officers patrolling have found many unlocked with valuables in the seats there for the taking. He said that many people have commented on the streets in South Roanoke being extremely dark; this is being addressed. New lights are going to be installed to correct this. Officer Parte also works this area; he said that complaint calls have decreased and that South Roanoke is a safe part of town. To track criminal activity, you can log onto the police department's website: www.roanokeva.gov; click on services, then departments and divisions, and police.

President Bill Thomasson reported on the latest on the Wilton issue; the lawyers involved will be gathering information to prepare for the trial which is scheduled to begin in July. He also said that the "traffic calming" for Avenham Avenue is progressing. City Council is expected to approve funds to proceed with creating a turning lane onto Avenham from Franklin Road. The idea of recreating the "Village at Crystal Spring" is also proceeding; the project will be put out for bids in February. Thirteen more parking spaces will be created between the post office and Lipes by angling the spaces. The sidewalks, lighting, and benches will be upgraded; trees will be added. The project will hopefully be completed by the end of the summer in time for what will hopefully become an annual event, "South Roanoke Days", chaired by Mrs. Anne Marie Poore, a South Roanoke Neighborhood Board Member. This family event to held on a Saturday in October would showcase the Crystal Spring shopping district; more information will come in the future regarding this. A resident asked about the problems of decaying sidewalks in the neighborhood; President Thomasson said that there is a master plan to replace broken places. Call the City Manager's office to find out when your street will be fixed.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:12pm with President Thomasson announcing that the next meeting would be the latter part of March or the first part of April featuring the candidates for city council speaking on their platforms for the upcoming election.