

# SMILE General Meeting minutes

December 5, 2018

SMILE Station

Main Website

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Procedural

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**OFFICERS PRESENT:** Joel Leib, President; Gail Hoffnagle, Vice President; Eric Norberg, Secretary

**BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:** Elizabeth Milner; Julie Currin; Bob Burkholder; Tyler Janzen

President Joel Leib called the meeting to order at 7:34 p.m., and began by asking those present to introduce themselves, around the room. Leib observed that a quorum of SMILE members was present, and asked for a review of the minutes of the November 7th General Meeting.

Bob Burkholder made a motion to approve these minutes as amended (removing a superfluous word). Gail Hoffnagle seconded the motion. The minutes were approved with one abstention.

First on the agenda was our Crime Prevention Committee Chairperson, R. Corless, who introduced Officer Shaun Sahli, our current Neighborhood Response Team Officer (NRT) from Central Precinct. He gave a quick update on details of the local crime situation, adding that he used to patrol our neighborhood regularly, and knows it well. He just arrested a man involved in many local crimes in both Portland and Milwaukie. Also arrested was a man responsible for a number of burglaries – and a couple of prolific identity thieves, arising from those local burglaries. He endorsed doorbell and surveillance cameras, which he said are quite inexpensive these days, and which can provide very useful evidence in prosecutions.

Following Officer Sahli to the front of the room, also by invitation of R. Corless, was Mark Wells, Crime Prevention Specialist from the Central Precinct division of the newly named Office of Community and Civic Life (formerly Office of Neighborhood Involvement). Wells, a former police officer, has been in his city role in crime prevention for a number of years, and is very active in helping residential blocks set up Neighborhood Watches. There are now 351 Neighborhood Watches in the City of Portland – 12 of them are active in Sellwood and Westmoreland.

Wells commented that the current number of Portland police officers is approximately the same as 20 years ago, which today – given population increases and crime – means that the Police Bureau is understaffed by some 400 officers. That, he said, makes it more important than ever for residents of the city to get actively involved in preventing (and reporting) crime. All areas of the city are being victimized by crime – and filing a police report is very

important. Not only are the police unable to respond to crimes they don't know about, but they miss patterns of evolving criminal activity in local areas if they are not being reported. It may seem like too much trouble to do, if the crime is considered minor – but **no** crimes are too minor to report, he emphasized; and reporting crime is easier than you think: For several years residents have been able to do it from their own computer or smart phone online at – [www.PortlandPolice.com](http://www.PortlandPolice.com).

Wells remarked, “I’ve never seen the fear of crime higher than it is now – *even higher than crime itself!*”

The second and only other agenda item was an appearance by recently re-elected State Representative Karin Power, who represents District 41, which includes our neighborhood. She was present, at her request, to update SMILE on the legislative process in Salem – and to update herself on us. She said the current Democratic “super majority” is making it harder to “balance committees”; at this point she does not know what committee assignments she will be receiving. Her first committee assignment last term was the Environmental Committee, which is an area of special expertise for her; but she was subsequently appointed to others, and wound up on five committees. “I’m the third youngest [Representative] in the building,” she said; she is a former City Councilperson for the City of Milwaukie.

Representative Power considers that the three or four biggest looming topics facing the legislature in Salem are: (1) School issues – including mental health support, and financial support; (2) Housing – increasing available housing, and addressing the affordability of housing; (3) Climate change – “doing Oregon’s part”; and (4) Healthcare.

She continued the conversation with a Q-and-A period with those in attendance – on topics including the parental costs of working; healthcare costs; rent and housing costs; livability; improving recycling options; and homeless issues. She finished by suggesting that Oregon is lagging in modernizing its tax system.

There being no other business on the agenda or offered from the floor, Elizabeth Milner moved that the meeting be adjourned, and Tyler Janzen seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously at 9:07 p.m.