

Bell Meade Neighborhood Association (BMNA)
Tuesday, April 26, 2011
Criminal Concerns Sub-Committee Meeting Minutes



In Attendance:

Saleem Shabazz, Cassandra Jackson, Verdie Hallums, Harriet Cunningham, George Singleton

Special Guest:

Officer Natalie Hill: Greenville County Sheriff's Department, Neighborhood Watch Organizer

Opening with thanks to those in attendance with late notice, Mr. Singleton recapped the goal of this group to be ready with updates at our May 14th standing monthly meeting. The date of next subcommittee meeting will be set at that meeting to provide better notice.

Officer Hill was introduced and neighborhood concerns that had been identified in the March & April Association meetings were shared with her. The question was raised if our concerns rise to the level of a visit from the sheriff. She is a Neighborhood Watch liaison between law enforcement and the community and is here to help. We must be able to define what we need.

Two handouts, "Eight Things You and Your Neighbors Can Do" and a list of important phone numbers were provided. Copies will be made to share in the May meeting. She explained that a Neighborhood Watch would fall under a Neighborhood Association but are not the same thing, though both belong to the community.

Number one piece of advice is to that everyone should "call in and report concerns" document the dates and get the name of the person you speak to. Multiple reports increase amount of attention the issue gets. Don't sit back and wait for others to call and don't think that if one person has called it is sufficient. You can call in anonymously and she stressed the importance of understanding emergency versus non-emergency calls. Follow up with her on the Community Services # (422-2036) when there are no results.

See the list below, which is followed by her recommendation for next steps.

Dogs

Hill: Unlawful to be unleashed in the neighborhood. Call Animal Control

Noise: Loud Music from Dugout

Update: Owner attended last BMNA Monday meeting and shed light on the parking issue and efforts he has undertaken to improve the situation by acquiring adjacent property but has had roadblocks. He has had no complaints from neighborhood and is willing to work with BMNA. He agreed to help keep entrance clean. First step was to identify concerns.

Traffic: Speed Bumps/Speed Limit Signs (Additional) & Stop Signs

Hill: Can provide contact information for appropriate agency. The process includes an assessment to determine need and if allowable. Sometimes community has to come up with financing. The standard maximum speed of 35 mph in residential areas can be enforced without posting. Officers can be posted to monitor stop signs, but all who roll or run will get the same treatment.

Prostitution and Drugs at Augusta Road entrance near the Camelot Motel

Hill: Call in on non emergency number and provide description of what suspects are wearing to help identify – officer will be dispatched, but it is a non-emergency call and another call could take priority, they will be warned and if repeated they will be arrested. There was a sting at Motel 6 in March and 18 men were arrested for soliciting.

Tires slashed in driveways; Pine Creek Court section towards area that backs up to Aladdin Manor Apartments – Can she pull crime stats for the community?

Hill: Yes the information can be pulled. We need to provide street names. Only reported incidents can be pulled which is why reporting is so important to see where patterns are and help provide additional resources to an area.

Graffiti on traffic signs and in community: Will be on of the community projects to clean up

Hill: Community has to get involved and help law enforcement do their job

Further discussions:

Need for a map of Belle Meade Community to help identify areas currently represented in meetings, to help identify areas that need more recruiting efforts and to help neighbors learn names of surrounding streets.

Information was shared about gang activity at UCF grounds prior to the transformation to a community center.

Description of some patterns observed that imply drug activity was discussed.

As the coordinator, she has brought all Neighborhood Associations to come together in a workshop to increase awareness of opportunities like the Safe Kids giveaways, give holiday safety tips and address common concerns by making recommendations for issues to spotlight monthly.

Next workshop could be in August

National Night Out is the 1st Tuesday in August

There are about 60 active Neighborhood Associations countywide. There are none in the immediate Belle Meade area.

The Belle Meade Community is in patrol area 6 and Conestee is in area 5 and though they may assist each other it is not a single patrol area.

Next Steps:

BMNA will provide a list of streets to Officer Hill to pull crime stats to be made avail at May 14th community meeting

Handouts will be shared at the May meeting

Suggestion was put on table to have a march in the community with a call to action to be a part of improving our community

Recommendation: Change the name of this sub-committee to "Neighborhood Watch" which will cover a multitude of concerns and broaden our scope.

Minutes respectfully submitted April 28, 2011.

Next Neighborhood Association Meeting: May 14, 2011 at 11 AM