**We had ~30 attendees at the February NHNA General meeting. Matt Devoti, candidate for 5th ward alderman (running unopposed) was our special guest speaker. Outgoing alderman, Joe Vollmer, recapped details behind the BOA failure to reach a decision on allocating Rams settlement money. We heard from the SLMPD 2nd District Community Outreach Officer, NHNA committees, and about upcoming St. Louis Public Library events. The next NHNA General meeting will be held on March 24th at Gethsemane Lutheran Church.**

**Please email the NHNA admin at** [**admin@northamptonneighbors.com**](mailto:admin@northamptonneighbors.com) **with any questions.**

**2/24/25 North Hampton Neighbors Association meeting:**

* Jane Rain, President NHNA opens the meeting at 6:00 pm. She announces plans to record the meetings and to live stream on facebook in the future.
* Joe Vollmer, Alderman 5th Ward, Contact: [vollmerj@stlouis-mo.gov](mailto:vollmerj@stlouis-mo.gov), (314) 622-3287

- He reflected on his decades of service as an alderman, explained his reasons for retiring from the position and thanked everyone for allowing him to represent the neighborhood.

-He provided details about the recent breakdown in negotiations over the board bills on Rams settlement money appropriations.

-He stressed that an ARPA fund plan is more urgently needed. since there is a 2026 deadline for spending those funds.

Q/A – several topics were addressed. Resident asked about the re-assignment of Arnold Britt, a former firefighter convicted of stealing at an accident scene. Joe responded that the FBI is investigating this home inspector, along with two others. Joe also shared his opinion about bias in hiring of leadership positions in the current administration. He argues that St. Louis should create a City Director position. The City Director would be appointed by the mayor with approval of BOA and would make hiring decisions for departments that provide essential city services. This would allow continuity in city management despite changes in the mayor’s office.

* Gus Karagiannis, SLMPD South Patrol Station, 2nd District Community Outreach Officer (Contact: 314-444-0161, [gkaragiannis@slmpd.org](mailto:gkaragiannis@slmpd.org))

-Gus praised Joe Vollmer as one of the most trustworthy alderman that he has worked with during his 19-year career.

-He clarified information regarding the SLMPD issued shell car usage. Officers with 5+ yrs of service and who live in the city can take home official vehicles. Some exceptions (e.g. special assignments) exist for those not living within city limits

-Crime details for last month were provided (see complete transcript for details). To sign up for the weekly crime report sent request to Officer Karagiannis via email.

Q/A details—see transcript

* Jane Rain gave the SLPL community activities update.

- Early voting has started and runs through March 3rd at various branches including Buder,

Carpenter, Kingshighway, etc. Check the website for details.

- Buder library will host a Hygiene Supply Drive sponsored by STL Mutual Aid that will run from

March 3rd – April 13th. Personal hygiene, household, and cleaning products can be dropped off

at Buder library to support the STL Mutual Aid Community Closet.

- For additional information about your local library and upcoming events email Marissa

([mowen@slpl.org](mailto:mowen@slpl.org)) or visit <https://www.slpl.org/> for a detailed online calendar.

Committee Reports:

* Annette Nowakowski, Vice-President and Chair of Policy Cmte reviewed MO House Bill 495 and Senate Bill 4.

- House Bill 495 proposes state takeover of the St. Louis metropolitan police department.

1. The metropolitan police would be placed under control of a 5 member board comprising the mayor and 4 commissioners appointed by the governor.

2. The commissioners must be 3+ year residents of the city with no other qualifications

3. The police board would set salaries, hire/fire police chief, handle complaints and lawsuits

4. The bill will set police funding levels that the city must meet (e.g. 25% of general revenue spending).

5. The mayor’s office and police chief do not support the bill; while the police union is in favor.

6. She detailed additional pros and cons regarding state management of St. Louis police.

- Senate Bill 4 proposes an increase in the rates utility companies may charge to pay for future construction of gas and electricity generating facilities. For anyone interested in contacting representatives with their thoughts about the bill they can contact MO Senator Carla May (573-751-3599), Cindy O’Laughlin (573-751-7985) and Tony Luetkemeyer (573-751-2183).

* Tina Wong, NHNA Beautification Cmte, [tinaawong@gmail.com](mailto:tinaawong@gmail.com)

- Tilles Park spring clean-up (weeding, trash pick-up, planting annuals) will be held on Sat. April 26th from 9-11:30 am.

- A planning meeting will be held mid-late March.

* Tina Wong, NHNA Treasury Cmte report

- Anyone wishing to pay dues can do so tonight (see Tina)

* Anna Roche, NHNA Development Cmte, [annam.roche@gmail.com](mailto:annam.roche@gmail.com)

- No new issues

* Rob Meckfessel, NHNA Safety Cmte, [robem1964@gmail.com](mailto:robem1964@gmail.com)

- Rob expressed his appreciation for Joe Vollmer’s service to the community.

- He has some familiarity with the activity of the work that Matt Devoti has done as chair of The Hill Neighborhood Assoc. Safety Cmte. He is excited to hear about Matt’s plans for the neighborhood when he takes office as 5th Ward alderman.

-He discussed the threat to safety created by city leadership support for reduced police funding.

-He invited interested residents to join the NHNA Safety Cmte.

- He inquired about a proposed QT station/market at Jameison and Arsenal. This location is outside the NHNA neighborhoods and was not discussed further.

* Jane Rain new business

- We are working to collect enough donations to print yard signs and distribute to donors. Anyone interested in getting a yard sign contact Teresa Heilich, treasurer (teresaheilich@att.net)

- NHNA along with Southampton is holding candidates’ forum on March 27th 7-9pm at Church of the Magdalen parish hall. The forum will host the candidates for mayor and comptroller who advance after the primary election on March 5th.

* Matt Devoti, Candidate for 5th Ward Alderman (unopposed)

Matt is a 25 year resident of South St. Louis who currently resides in The Hill neighborhood with his wife and 5 kids. He is a partner in a local law firm located in The Hill. He served for 4-1/2 years as the head of The Hill NA Safety Cmte and this experience encouraged him to run for alderman.

- He believes that South City is the backbone of St. Louis; therefore, petty crime and quality-of-life issues are a priority. The city cannot afford to lose residents (and tax $) from these areas.

-Pay needs to increase for St. Louis police to keep them from moving to county.

-Money is needed to support the use of technology in policing.

-He aims to improve both the perception and reality that living in St. Louis is safe.

- The facebook website for the campaign, “Devoti for alderman” will be converted to his alderman communication site. He encourages everyone to follow him on facebook for updates and to post messages. (<https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=61568213091306>). He can also be reached @ 314-223-7387.

Q/A touched on his intent to maintain a role in his business while serving as alderman. He expressed interest in serving on the public safety, transportation, charter committees as alderman.

**A transcript of the full speech is available upon request.**

* Additional announcements

- Respect Voters Coalition (Respectvoters.org) promotes direct democracy through citizen initiatives. For more information pick up a flyer or sign up for the newsletter at the website Respectvoters.org.

- Hampton Chippewa Business Assoc is holding a Meet the Candidate breakfast on Thurs, Feb. 27th at Pietro’s on Watson from 7:30-9 am. For more information and to RSVP contact Michael Weidhaas (info@stantrav.com).

* Jane Rain – adjourned meeting

**To be added to the general meeting agenda, please submit a request though the NHNA website: https://northamptonneighbors.com/**