**We had a great turnout for the March NHNA General meeting (>35 attendees). We had a Ward 5 update from Joe Vollmer and a safety/crime update from Officer Karagiannis from the 2nd Patrol District 2. Neighborhood Improvement Specialist, Sam Kippin, gave a detailed report on issues that have been resolved by the NSD. We also had brief updates on upcoming elections from the Board of Elections and on upcoming Buder library activities in April/May. The next NHNA General meeting will be held on May 20th at Gethsemane Lutheran Church.**

**Please email the NHNA admin at** **admin@northamptonneighbors.com** **with any questions.**

**4/22/24 Northampton Neighbors Network meeting:**

* Jane Rain introduced herself as the new president of NHNA because of the recent resignation of Adam Jung due to professional conflicts. Jane opened the meeting at 6pm with the first agenda speaker.
* Joe Vollmer, Alderman for Ward 5 (Contact: vollmerj@stlouis-mo.gov, (314) 622-3287)

-He reviewed the Kingshighway road project that includes plans for lane reduction, speed control and streetscaping from Calvary cemetery to Gravois.

- A bill proposing the use of automated cameras for speed/light violation enforcement, the “red light camera bill” has been signed by Mayor Jones. Violators will be notified to allow response after which the confirmed violators will be fined. The revenue collected will go to a general fund aimed to improve driving and pedestrian safety.

-Tilles Park playground equipment has been ordered but has no update on installation date. Over $300,000 has been invested in Tilles improvements in the playground and pickleball court (resurfacing/lighting). So, he encourages continued community use and regular maintenance (trash and garden beds) by volunteer groups.

-During the current paving season 38 speed hump requests will be fulfilled at a cost of $212,000 and 42 additional are being considered for next year.

-Q/A issues touched on the duration of ongoing work by Spire and state vs city running of SLMPD.

* Officer Gus Karagiannis, SLMPD South Patrol Station, Second District Community Outreach Officer. (Contact phone 314-444-0161, gkaragiannis@slmpd.org) presented crime trends and arrests for last month.

-Trends:

Garage break-ins are up with thieves bypassing the automatic door openers using coat hangers to release the door from the track. One way to prevent this is to cut off string the handle or use a zip tie to secure the release arm (methods can be found on YouTube).

-Crime details for April:

Three garage burglaries

Illegal dumping report

Multiple assaults-domestic, mugging and public fights

Three car break-ins with firearm stolen

Two reports of packages stolen from porches

Public flourishing of firearm

- During Q/A Gus noted that there have been fewer car thefts of Kia and Hyundais likely due to the use of mechanical locking devices and new theft deterrent software offered by the manufacturer. He encourages people to continue to report gunfire so they can collect more data enabling SLMPD to pinpoint hotspots.

 - For weekly crime alerts, email request to Gus Karagiannis, community outreach officer/2nd

 district at gkaragiannis@slmpd.org.

* Sam Kippen, Neighborhood Improvement Specialist for Hamilton Heights, North Hampton, Southwest Garden, The Hill, and Tower Grove East (314-657-1377, kippens@stlouis-mo.gov).

-NIS tracks down and solves issues brought to them. So, most of their work is guided by resident reporting of issues including refuse, animal abuse, nuisance properties, nuisance activities.

-Issue details for last quarter:

28 potholes

17 lights repaired/moved/replaced

28 refuse containers replaced

16 traffic signs repaired

1 graffiti removal project

Shell car requested in high speeding area (until speed hump can be installed)

-Q/A Several specific issues regarding panhandling at Hampton/Chippewa, vacant properties, displaced sidewalk due to tree roots (streets dept responsibility), tree removal (forestry dept responsibility)

* Jane Rain (Marissa Owen was not in attendance) gave St. Louis Public Library, Buder Branch and Tilles Park updates.

- Buder will reopen on April 27th with a Dia de los Ninos celebration of multicultural literacy.

-May 18th “Buder in Bloom” will be held at Buder Elementary School.

-Check events calendars at nearby SLPL branches.

-Tilles Park April 13th cleanup was a success thanks to 17 volunteers that came for the 2 hour clean up event. A lot of the invasive growth in the park/garden areas have been removed and these areas are now set to move forward with improvements. Contact Tina Wong if you want to volunteer (916-627-5541, tinaawong@gmail.com).

* Amber Cramer, St. Louis Board of Elections

- She reminded residents that if they have not voted in the past few elections they should check their registration status with the secretary of state (sos.mo.gov).

-She made available other informational material including pamphlets on voter registration, mail-in voting, absentee voting, becoming poll worker.

-Important 2024 election dates: Aug 6th (primary) and Nov 5th (general)

Jane introduced our guest speaker.

* Amanda Henderson, St. Louis Area Agency on Aging (https://www.stlouis-mo.gov/government/departments/human-services/aging-services/index.cfm)

Email: slaaa@stlouis-mo.gov, Phone: (314) 612-5918, Fax: (314) 612-5915

- SLAAA is a Health and Human Services agency funded by the Older Americans Act (OAA). OAA is a federal law that authorizes grants and programs for community social services, research, and rights protection for older Americans.

-Eligible residents are provided SLAAA services at no charge.

-Types of services SLAAA offers:

* Nutritional support including home delivered meals or hot meals at designated senior centers (9 centers in St. Louis City)
* Benefits assistance for Medicaid and Medicare (informational and case management)
* General tax assistance (circuit breaker for renters, MO homeowner property tax credit) but do not provide income tax preparaton
* Transportation – non-emergency medical, shopping, community center, reduced bus and Metro
* Health promotion classes
* Functional needs registry will enable agency to contact older residents after a natural disaster (e.g. flooding)
* Minor home repair (in collaboration with Mission St. Louis and Restore St. Louis)
* Legal assistance referrals.

-Volunteer opportunities via SLAAA include Pension Rights Center, Senior Medicare (peer) Portal and Silver-Haired Legislature (drafts bills and lobbying group)

-Amanda recommended that anyone with questions contact the SLAAA by phone 314-612-5918 for immediate assistance.

* Jane Rain, final announcements

- Adjourned meeting at 7:00.

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