

## **Windsor Heights Neighborhood Watch Meeting**

Minutes of the Windsor Heights Neighborhood Watch meeting held on Nov. 11, 2007

Location: 3E Conference Center, 953 – 73<sup>rd</sup> Street

Sponsored jointly by: City of Windsor Heights, Windsor Heights Police Association, and Windsor Heights Neighborhood Association

**Next Neighborhood Watch meeting: time and location to be announced**

### **Agenda:**

#### **Neighborhood Watch Organizational Meeting**

- **Informational meeting**

#### **WHNA Meeting**

- **Nominations for vacant at-large Board position**
- **Vote on Membership Committee recommendation**

The first meeting of the Windsor Heights Neighborhood Watch was held at the 3E Conference Center. The Windsor Heights Police Association provided the ingredients for a soup supper which was prepared by the Social Committee of the WHNA.

Logan Carlson gave an informational presentation on the purpose of a Neighborhood Watch and how to get one started. The following is a summary of his presentation.

The purpose of a Neighborhood Watch is  
to organize citizens in the fight against neighborhood crime

- to build community support
- to facilitate better communication between neighbors
- to facilitate better communication between the neighborhood and police
- to reduce crime

Neighborhood safety is everyone's business. The police can't be on every street corner in the city. Your help is needed in preventing and solving crime. You are the best eyes and ears the police department has... so use them and help them make your neighborhood a safer place. Do not take matters into your own hands.

A Neighborhood Watch needs many things to be successful:

- A desire to make a difference
- Commitment to get involved and remain involved
- Leadership
- Communication
- Time...but not as much as you might think
- And most importantly...YOU

### **Leadership**

Look for people who

- Will sustain the effort

- Get along well with people, listening constructively
- Use good communication, negotiating skills
- Will delegate tasks
- Conduct meetings effectively and efficiently
- Have a long-range vision of neighborhood and community improvement
- See the position as a civic duty, not a power trip or a chance for personal gain

**Organizing Your Group**

The Chairperson is responsible for:

- Organizing the monthly or bi-monthly meetings
- Communicating with Block Captains
- Providing information for the NW Newsletter
- Organizing participation in National Night Out (first Tuesday in August—more info on this later)
- Communicating with the NW Coordinator

The Block Captain’s duties are:

- Relay information to members
- Recruits seniors and youth
- Convenes and chairs block meetings
- Recruits newcomers
- Coordinates check-ins on shut-in residents
- Helps identify block problems and arranges attention to them
- Notifies chair/coordinator of changes in resident information

Duties of group members are:

- Report suspicious activity to police
- Report suspicious activity to Block Captain
- Attend scheduled meetings
- Participate in National Night Out
- Keep the mood of the meetings positive
- Encourage new families to join NW group
- Display NW signs in yard
- Elect Chairperson and Block Captains

**Ways To Build Participation:**

Every neighborhood resident can help. Young children can pick up litter and take part in specialized child safety programs. Youth can teach younger children how to stay safe and can organize events for other youth. Seniors can observe from their homes and make phone calls. Everybody should have a responsibility, small or large.

**Use Community Resources**

- Many people and groups are willing to help you.
- Religious institutions for meeting space, copying services and access to volunteers
- Service clubs and businesses for partnerships in fundraising

- Government agencies for information, equipment loans, program support
- Libraries for research materials, videos, computers and meeting space

### **Operation Identification**

Contact your local law enforcement agency about getting involved.  
Encourage residents to participate in Operation Identification.

### **Reporting Neighborhood Crime**

Report all crime to the police department

For non-emergency crimes call WH police at 277-4453 during the day. Call Polk County Dispatch at 286-3333 at night. For emergencies at any time, call 9-1-1.

When reporting crime, stay calm. It is important not to panic, even though you might be scared. Call the police immediately. On the phone, give the police the most important information first—the location of the crime, the type of crime, whether there are injuries, where the criminal went, etc.

Write down what you saw and heard IMMEDIATELY! Tell the police what happened, when, where and who was involved. Describe the suspect: sex, race, age, height, weight, hair color, distinctive characteristics (facial hair, scars, tattoos, accent, etc.) Describe any vehicle involved: color, make, model, year, license plate, and special features like stickers, dents, or decals, as well as the direction of travel from the crime scene.

You may be asked to make a complaint or testify in court. Remember, if you don't help the police, the criminal might hurt someone else. The police may ask you to attend a lineup or look through collections of "mug shots" to try to identify the person you saw commit the crime.

If you suspect drug dealing in your neighborhood, report it immediately. Provide us with as much information as possible: clothing description, description of the person, where they are hiding the drugs, where are they now...

### **Tips for Preventing Crime**

Don't become an easy target. Target harden your property by following these simple tips:

Have a neighbor or friend collect mail or newspapers when you are away on vacation.

Keep bushes and shrubbery trimmed to no more than three feet high.

The lowest limb on a tree should be six feet off the ground.

Place house numbers in a clearly visible location from the street.

Use motion-sensor lights on the exterior or the residence.

Use auxiliary lighting for dark places in your yard.

Replace hollow-core exterior doors with solid-core doors.

Use double-cylinder deadbolt locks on all exterior doors.

Keep all doors and windows locked when you are away from home.

Lock your residence when working around the yard.

Supplement your window locks if the current lock is insufficient.

Never give out personal information over the phone unless you initiated the call.  
Don't open the door to strangers, even if they are representing themselves as repairmen.  
Don't pay in advance for home repairs.  
Keep your property well maintained.

Neighborhood Watch is what you make of it...just like your neighborhood. If you don't care...the criminal will quickly realize this and set-up business. Together we CAN make a difference!

After the Neighborhood Watch presentation, the WHNA held a short meeting to fill the vacant at-large Board position and to vote on a proposal from the Membership Committee to lower membership dues from \$30 to \$10.

Nominees for the vacant Board position were Trevor Huffaker, Rod Van Wart, John Davis and Jim McDonald. Trevor Huffaker was elected and will fill the position of at-large board member until the April quarterly Board meeting.

A motion was made to lower the general membership fee from \$30 to \$10 per person and from \$50 to \$30 for a business. A vote of the paid membership was a tie. The Membership Committee will take this issue back under consideration and will present another recommendation at the next general meeting of the WHNA.

The next Board meeting will be Dec. 2 at David Lange's home, 6503 Del Matro to discuss goals and activities for 2008.

The next quarterly meeting of the WHNA will be in late January—time and location to be announced. Watch the WH newsletter, the DM Register, the WH web page and the WHNA web page for more information.