

West Side Association

Meetings Minutes

December 2, 2010

Meeting called to order by Pres. Connie Drexler at 11:54 AM

Approval of November minutes

Treasurers Report

- Had \$7200
- Collected \$260
- Spent \$2200
- Spent \$500 on celebration of lights
- Second payment of \$1667 to grand opera house
- New balance \$5200

Notes: one open pledge left to Grand Opera House, membership renewal letters go out in January

Chamber Report by John Casper

- Discussed post office consolidation plan
- Post office lost \$8.5 billion last year, post office illumination in Oshkosh will save \$4.6 million by closing Oshkosh facility
- The chamber requested details however they are not coming in and are not expected to come
- GE oil and gas may close facility in town, study was just launched
- 2 software development companies may expand, Department of Commerce is involved
- Horizon Group improvements near outlet mall
- New North, bringing possible new business in town

New Business:

1. 2011 board members election, noted and approved
2. Support of celebration of lights – board passed

Guest Speaker introduced by Robin Jennings:

Officer Chee Vang, of the Oshkosh Police Department, Chee Vang is here to discuss gang activity in the Oshkosh area and greater Fox River Valley

- Community involvement and awareness is key
- Gangs use violence to create fear
- Officer Vang shows us a video of local gang members describing their culture, their signs, and roots traced to communities across the country
- Definition of the gang: group of three or more individuals, formal or informal, that have something in common
- Money and drugs are common problems with gangs
- We can prevent many of the problems by simply locking our doors and garage doors
- There are seven gangs in Oshkosh with over 200 kids as members

Jugalo's is the most common group of gangs in the Oshkosh area. Their primary malfunction is they are seeking and looking for love and home life , **which they have no mouth currently??**. They can be from all socioeconomic backgrounds.

Three common traits to Jugalo's:

1. Violence equals earn respect
2. Intimidation equals control those around them
3. Fear equals accomplish goals

There are many issues making the gang situation worsen Oshkosh:

- Prison does not help this group of individuals. They build stronger gang affiliations in jail and prison
- Currently Oshkosh does not have a full-time gang unit, just a group of volunteer police officers
- This new group started recently within the past four years –**What new group?**

Other Common Gangs Found in Oshkosh:

- Cripts, Folk Nation, Asian Hispanics, Jugalo's and bikers
- Chicago gang influence
- **The Folk Nation: primary color is blue, they use a six pointed star or pitchfork to identify themselves. We can see them spray-painted on several buildings in the Valley –contradicts next statement**
- **The Folk Nation: primary colors red, they use a five pointed star to identify themselves**
- Asian gangs primarily from California, the **blogs ??** and the crypts

Other important things to remember regarding gangs:

- Gangs have a 360° importance on everything effecting all aspects of gang members life
- Gangs commonly use acronyms and letter word replacement for identifying themselves. For example the number 74 equals GD, the seventh and the fourth letters of the alphabet. GD is gangster disciples, which is part of the folk nation. Kickback equals kicc bkaak
- If you see the clothing “brand 54”, it is gang attire, so please don't buy this for your children or relatives
- Other gang notes: the following gangs have also been involved in the Oshkosh area; Menace of Destruction,(connected to the Asian Creek Killers); MS 13, Mara Sulvatrucha, an El Salvadorian gang tied to many murders across United States.
- More on the jugalo's and jugglett's: These gang members are devoted to the Insane Clown Posse, which is a very dark and violent music culture. They've been around since 1989. Typical gang members join when they are middle school age. Typically these individuals are seeking love and sense of community. **and home are the most heavily influenced and to join the gang.??** The group take drugs in drinks and create the ideal family life for those with little or no guidance. Commonly you will see signs for them as J4L. They typically meet every Tuesday between 7 and 10 PM in downtown Oshkosh near the sundial. If you ever see a bumper sticker with a little dude running with a hatchet, he is called the running hatchet man and is a common identifier to this gang affiliation. Clothing these members typically wear are black, blue or red.

What Can We Do?

- Call the police when you see weird or suspicious stuff
- Most activity is on the west side of Oshkosh, typically theft
- More “no loitering “signs need to be placed

Things parents should do to help prevent their child from being involved in a gang:

1. Be involved with your child and show love
2. Monitor thier Facebook and MySpace accounts
3. Ask questions about their friends and activities
4. Keep the computer in the living room or kitchen where you can monitor their use
5. Pay attention to children who recently dropped their lifelong friends and develop new friendships during middle school or early high school
6. Be aware that girls are very heavily involved in these groups

Officer Vang finished by telling us about a program he would like to introduce to Oshkosh

"Step Up"

- This program would focus on school age children, typically in middle school
- It is a program designed to prevent children from getting involved in the gangs in the first place
- Officer Vang is driven by passion for helping these kids
- Officer Vang a native of Minneapolis and was once involved in a gang as a middle schooler
- Currently the Police Union prevents officers from doing this type of work on their own free time
- Officer Vang is going to need to present this at some point to the police chief
- As a group we discussed writing a letter in support of Officer Vang's program, step up, and offered to write letters to the Chief of Police and encourage other members to do the same. Letters should be sent these to Officer Vang directly so he may use them when needed.

Meeting adjourned at 1 PM