

Tower Grove Heights Neighborhood Association Meeting
January 22, 2013 7:15 p.m. 39 attendees

The Tower Grove Heights Neighborhood Association (TGHNA) meeting was chaired by President Jim Zakibe.

First time residents were welcomed.

Mayor Francis Slay listed some of his accomplishments in city government and noted he is running for reelection. He said he has a strong team of people who have been effective in running the city and tackling the issues during a tough economy.

Officer Amber Gottschall, Major Gerald Leyshock and Captain Michael Deeba from the [St. Louis Police 3rd District](#) discussed local crime information and introduced Captain Deeba. Captain Deeba is the new 3rd District Captain, since Major Leyshock was promoted. Captain Deeba was a marine, has 23 years of experience in the police force and was a commander on the SWAT and mobile reserve teams. The 3rd District led the city for crime reduction at 24%. Continued police visibility is the challenge for this year. The district will continue having officers working beats so people can see officers on the street. They will also continue building relationships with Rachel Witt, the Circuit Attorney, etc. When asked for more details about burglaries, Major Leyshock mentioned that burglaries often happen with unlocked windows and he strongly encouraged people to call 911 at the sight of anything suspicious. The next Third District Community Outreach meeting will be Mar. 14 at the [5 Star Senior Center](#) located at 2832 Arsenal. Melissa Rieger and Allegra Grizzanti of the International Association of Fire Fighters, Paramedics, EMT's and Dispatchers of St Louis union let us know about an issue with ambulance service.. Ambulances are often not manned due to insufficient staffing levels. We only have 12 ambulances for the entire city. There were 80,000 911 calls related to ambulances last year. Response times go up when there are unmanned ambulances. There is a backup of a private ambulance service, but they cost more and are often not available. The issue is lack of budget and they can't use overtime to staff the ambulances either. We have to bring in ambulances from the county to respond to a mass casualty (mutual aid). They want to raise public awareness of these ambulance shutdowns (termed as unmanned). They are putting signs out to help publicize the issue when this happens.

Peter Herrington, owner of [Dunaway Books](#), spoke about how the technical revolution will be more far reaching than the industrial revolution. He's been the owner of Dunaway Books for three years and walk-in trade has diminished 40% during this time, since people are probably ordering online instead of browsing in the store. Brick and mortar stores may no longer exist in the future for retail. Walk-in traffic will continue to diminish. To compensate for this loss of trade, he joined the Internet by trying to put his books online. He has 200,000 books in the store but it takes much effort to put them online. He feels that S. Grand hasn't had as much retail diversity as needed, since that's what brings additional street activity.

Rachel Witt is working to try to get that to happen and since S. Grand isn't as expensive for rental as other places, that should help. The pace of the technological revolution is increasing. Before TV, much spare time was spent reading. In time, the physical book store may just have collectable books like antiques, rather than being used for selling books for reading. Other reading will be done online and information will be imparted with video. He feels that a society with no time to reflect will not keep its values and stimulate imagination.

Judy Lane, 15th Ward NSO (Neighborhood Stabilization Officer), noted that [Operation Brightside Project Blitz](#), the annual campaign to clean up city neighborhoods, will be on Apr. 13-14. Call 772-4646 for information on being a block captain.

Jennifer Florida, 15th Ward Alderman, told us that Eagle College Prep School will open in St John's Lutheran school at Morgan Ford and Chippewa. University of Missouri is their sponsor and they will open in the fall. The next Tower Grove South Public Safety meeting will be Mar. 20 at [Grand Oak Hill Community Corporation](#) on Juniata. For more information on the Citizens on Patrol program, contact Amber Gottschall, our Neighborhood Liaison, at 933-5059.

Rachel Witt, South Grand Community Improvement District (CID) Executive Director, updated us on the South Grand Great Streets Initiative work. The new street lights have been installed and the old cobra lights will be taken out gradually due to a truck shortage to pick them up. Next to be installed are benches and bike racks. This includes seven benches and 39 bike racks. There will be 24 bike racks installed initially and we will see about installing the rest later as needed. Fencing (18") will be added to the planter boxes. We will have an art installation from an artist who is a former resident when Phase 2 is complete. Planting in the new area on Utah will be done in the spring, along with planting rain gardens with more color. The new traffic signal at Juniata should be working by the 1st week in February along with synchronized traffic signals. Jay International Food Co. will only have an entrance on Juniata, not Grand. Surveying will start for the pocket park (planned for the current "Ritz" parking lot) and will then go to bid. Grants will be written to try to offset the costs. The Tree House Vegetarian Restaurant will go into the old Petra Café. [Bikram Hot Yoga Midwest](#) is open. Flex Studio, located over the Medicine Shoppe, will have yoga, Zumba classes, and choreographed dance fitness styles such as Broadway, pop or culturally inspired folk dance routines starting in March. The Mothers' Day bike ride is planned and the Dine Around will be June 22 from noon-9 pm. Movie nights will be scheduled for the summer, the Creepy Crawl will be in October and the Grinch breakfast will again be sponsored by the Moolah Shriners.

The next TGHNA meeting will be on Feb. 26, 2013. There will be a representative from Homeland Security at the meeting.

The meeting concluded at 8:35 p.m.

Claudia Seifert, Secretary