



## Colonial Village Neighborhood Association Meeting Minutes (CVNA)

*February 20, 2008*

President, Anita Beavers, called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. Other board members in attendance were Mike Morofsky, Mary Bechtol, Evelyn Bush, Thelma Dempsey and Willie Vinson. Fifty-four CVNA members and guests attended the meeting, including Mayor Virg Bernaro; Lansing Police Chief Mark Alley and Captain Teresa Szymanski; Carol Wood of Lansing City Council; Josh Hovey, Staff Assistant, Mayor's Office; Ofc. Huff and Martinez were two of three firemen from Fire State 45 to support the forming of additional Neighborhood Watch Programs in the area.

**Lansing Police Department Report:** Chief Mark Alley stopped by and asked if he could speak to the Association at large about the incident on Lenore Street where a police officer discharged his weapon and wounded the resident. The State Police has been called in to investigate the incident. He said, "the officer involved is a good officer and a ten year veteran on the police force." Chief Alley wanted to assure everyone that this was an isolated incident and not the beginning of a trend. In order to avoid rumors, he asked for patience and to allow the investigation to conclude. Once the investigation is concluded, the results will be turned over to Prosecutor Stuart Dunnings and Chief Alley or his staff will report the facts to the neighborhood.

Officer Jason Bock followed up with a report on local offenses in the area. He distributed a map showing offenses that have occurred over the last month in an area that span from Moores River Drive to Holmes Road between Waverly and Washington. The map showed three assaults, five burglary and one larceny report in the CVNA area. He said, in most cases, the owner of the property knows the assailant. The map showed how many offenses, but not if the assailants were caught. Chief Alley and Officer Bock agreed to indicate status of the investigation on future reports.

**Lansing City Mayor's Office:** Mayor Virg Bernaro, attended the meeting and expressed his commitment to the Neighborhood Watch Program in the City. He congratulated Anne Wilson for being placed on the CATA Board and he also talked about the current shortage of salt in the state. Pot holes are being repaired with (cold packs) as a temporary measure. Permanent repairs will not be possible until spring when temperatures rise above 40° Report pot holes to the Public Service Dept. at 517 483 4361. To stretch the current supply of salt it is being mixed with sand. The Mayor reported there is a \$6 mil deficit in the proposed July 1 budget. He asked for feedback on what adjustments could be made. He said \$6 mil needs to be found and he thinks by selling Red Cedar and Waverly golf courses they can find the funds without cutting services. However, he is open to suggestions. A feedback form will be placed on the City of Lansing's Website [www.cityoflansingmi.us.com](http://www.cityoflansingmi.us.com) once the proposed budget has been completed.

**Lansing City Council** – Carol Woods said the budget is indeed a serious issue. Once the Mayor presents his proposed budget to the City Council (in March), she and other Council members will evaluate it as it pertains to services for the citizens of the City. Fifty-six percent of the budget is for the Police and Fire Departments. The Council has been very responsive to Citizen feedback and she encouraged everyone to provide feedback on the new budget once it is released. In addition, everyone was encouraged to attend the Bea Christy Award Dinner at the Lansing Center, Friday, February 22, 2008.

**Program:** Captain Teresa Szymanski, South Precinct, introduced herself and spoke briefly about Neighborhood Watch & Officer Sarah Nolen, South Precinct Neighborhood Watch, and Mary Brinks, Area Coordinator, were introduced to discuss the possibility of adding more Watches in the area. Neighborhood Watch is not a project or unit of the Colonial Village Neighborhood Association. It is, according to Officer Nolen and Ms Brinks, described as a "program of mutual assistance among neighbors aimed at reducing crime in the area at the grass roots level." Currently, there are 1,300 homes in the area, but only four Neighborhood Watches. Mary Brinks said they need nine co-captains and 15 block captains (one for every 10 homes) to ensure the most effective and successful program. To get more information about Neighborhood Watch and to get involved, contact Mary Brinks at (517) 580-7444 or email [mary\\_brinks@yahoo.com](mailto:mary_brinks@yahoo.com).

Maria Irish, Real Estate Assessment, attended the meeting and asked to talk about recent changes to Real Estate Assessments. Residents may have already received a letter pertaining to changes in the Assessment of their home. Some were reduced and others increased which may cause some confusion. Attached are copies of information distributed at the meeting. She said changes have been made to Poverty Assessment and Poverty Exemptions. Citizens can appeal by letter. Improvements to property can be used when home is sold. Additional information can be found on the City's Website at: <http://finance.cityoflansingmi.com/assessor/> Information distributed at the meeting will also be placed on the CVNA Website at: [www.CVNAnews.com](http://www.CVNAnews.com)

Representatives of the Lansing Boat Club asked if they could discuss their City of Lansing lease agreement. The Lansing Boat Club is located on the Grand River off Old Lansing Road. They received a new one-year lease with instructions that they had 30 days to sign the lease. If they did not agree to the new lease arrangements and did not sign the new lease within the time frame, they would be evicted from the premises. They were concerned that incorrect information was being released and they wanted to make sure everyone understood the truth about the situation. Their lease is normally for multiple years and their expenses include upkeep and

maintenance of the premises. They would like a chance to negotiate their lease with the City but are not being given that opportunity, according to representatives of the Boat Club.

**Minutes:** January meeting minutes were accepted as presented.

**Treasurer's Report:** Treasurer Thelma Dempsey reported that the current balance is \$228.59. \$200 was spent to reserve the obstacle course for the picnic. The report was accepted as presented.

**President Report:** Anita Beavers congratulated Anne Wils on for being named to the CATA board and reminded everyone about the Bea Christy Award Dinner. The refreshment committee and L&L Food Center was thanked for providing refreshments for the meeting.

**No Area Representative Reports Due to the Length of the Meeting.**

Topic for the next meeting will be Birds of Michigan. There will also be information about Fenner Arboretum.

Meeting Adjourned 9:30 PM.