Larchmont Edgewater Civic League
October 2022 General Meeting
October 24, 2022

Call to order: President Nate Kinnison called the meeting to order at 7:01 p.m.

1. LECL Board
   President - Nate Kinnison Ngkinnison@gmail.com
   Vice President - Mike Crockett mike.crockett@yahoo.com
   Secretary - Gail Nicula Gnicula1@verizon.net
   Treasurer - Kate Lennon lennon.katherinem@gmail.com
   At Large - GM Ziller gmzjr@verizon.net

2. Recognition of elected officials: Councilwoman Courtney Doyle.

3. Recognition & Q/A, Police
   Officer Dreer was not able to attend this meeting.
   Officer Charles Dreer, First Patrol Division, Community Resource Officer, Blue Sector. 2500 North Military Hwy Norfolk, VA 23502, 757-664-6900, Mobile 757-353-1268, Charles.Dreer@norfolk.gov
   ODU Police Officers Evans and Watson were not able to attend this meeting.

4. Presentations/New Business/Announcements & Updates
   Norfolk Forester and Norfolk Master Gardeners

- Paulette Crawford, Norfolk Master Gardener, Crawford27@cox.net, (757) 650-4129. Ms. Crawford introduced four more master gardeners at the meeting, and described the upcoming crape myrtle pruning event, a partnership with the Norfolk Forester's office, scheduled to take place on Saturday, November 19, from 9 a.m. to noon. One of the primary roles of the Master Gardeners organization is education. Crape myrtles are not native to our area, but they do thrive here. Pruning will be minimal; no permits are required, and the city will pick up the trimmings. Norfolk's Master Gardeners began doing this type of outreach in 2015 and have since pruned about 2500 trees in Norfolk. They have worked with more than 250 volunteers all over the city. Participants do not have to attend for the entire three hours. Gardeners will meet at Virginia Park, located on the west side of Hampton Boulevard, where Magnolia Avenue and Upper Brandon intersect. Participants will learn basic pruning techniques. There are about 40,000 crape myrtles in Norfolk! Please wear close-toed shoes. The city forester will loan safety glasses, gloves, pruners, and safety vests.
- Steven Traylor, City Forester, Steven.Traylor@norfolk.gov (757) 823-4037. The City Forester works in the Department of Parks and Recreation, and within that department, in the Bureau of Parks and Urban Forestry. This bureau is responsible for managing the city's 200,000+ trees. The Bureau also gives trees to homeowners on Arbor Day, and plants trees throughout the city. Norfolk residents can request that a tree be planted on city-owned property. Mr. Traylor works with schools and conducts outreach events. He let us know that

we are allowed to prune limbs/branches up to 1" in diameter on city trees. Question: Are you getting away from planting crape myrtles? Answer: They do plant crape myrtles on request but are trying to replant with native trees. Crape myrtles are drought and heat tolerant though. Question: How do they assess neighborhood trees/needs? Answer: Mr. Traylor hopes to soon be able to stand up regular pruning cycles in several parts of town. They do have a backlog of work – and there is only one inspector in the department. They try to get community buy-in to plant trees in Norfolk neighborhoods, especially in those neighborhoods that were formerly redlined. Question: What about the trees on Hampton Boulevard that have been lost to automobile accidents? Answer: Yes, this project is also on their radar. Larchmont Crape Myrtle Pruning Event Signup

- Courtney Doyle, Councilwoman, Ward 2, City of Norfolk. City Updates.
    - The Hampton Boulevard Bridge Rehabilitation project. Scheduled to be complete by mid-2023. This is a $7.7M project. There will always be two northbound and two southbound lanes. This project will extend the life of the bridge. Information is at available at this link: Northbound Hampton Boulevard Bridge
    - Flooding and sea level rise. Three projects are underway. (1) Sylvan and Walnut Hill. The berm is being raised to mitigate recurring tidal flooding. Information is available at this link: Sylvan Street and Walnut Hill Street. (2) Cambridge and Carroll Place. Work is underway. Cost is about $1.1 M. Information is available at this link: Carroll Place and Cambridge Place. (3) Richmond Crescent and Surrey Crescent – work has started. Residents have been able to give the city feedback about what they would like to see – including a living shoreline and riprap revetment. Some information is available at this link: Surrey Crescent. $5.5M project.
    - Public safety update. Interim Norfolk Police Chief Mike Goldsmith has restructured the NPD for the most effective use of available police personnel. Starting pay [for police officers] has increased - $52,000 (highest in the region right now). NPD is initiating a 3rd police academy (an increase of one per calendar year). By holding the police academy more frequently, NPD won't lose recruits who might otherwise have had to wait for 5 months. The search is underway for a new police chief. When the new chief is hired, Mr. Goldsmith will return to his role of Deputy City Manager.
    - Norfolk public schools. City Council authorized $700M+ to go toward Norfolk Public Schools' priorities.
    - Economic development. North Colley Avenue has become a real economic engine. Some additional physical upgrades will be done on the street itself.
    - Downtown safety. Led by Mrs. Doyle, several city council members began a fact-finding process by purposefully walking selected downtown streets after midnight, acquiring firsthand information about late-night activities.
        - Question: What about the downtown businesses – what has been done so far seems very draconian. Answer: when a conditional use permit is violated, the city will shut down the business. One reason: Violations of maximum occupancy.

- Request: That the city to enact the $0.05 plastic bag fee. Mrs. Doyle will raise this issue again at council.
- Question: Which is more effective, going through city council with a question or a request or going direct to city manager? Answer: Email her directly and she will email the city manager. She recommends emailing your council member. Same if you have a problem with Norfolk Cares (which is normally very responsive). Mrs. Doyle's email: Courtney.doyle@norfolk.gov
- Question about red-light cameras. There are restrictions (only allowed in work zones and school zones) on where these can go, as mandated by the General Assembly.
- Comment about Hampton Blvd, changes over the years, flooding, driving through high water, poles being hit. Reply: Hampton Blvd. is a state highway, so there are restrictions about what Norfolk is allowed to do. Mrs. Doyle suggested that residents consider adding the Waze app to mobile phones; Waze will alert you when the street is flooded.
- Question: What's being done about sea level rise? The city is working with Army Corps of Engineers ($400M allocated to Norfolk) to build additional flood barriers.
- Question: What is happening with the Wellness Center? The new Wellness Center is being designed now; there will be a pool.
- Comment: We need better two-way communication from the city back to residents in response to resident concerns. [Explanation: Issues are marked "closed" but residents have not received feedback about the incident]. Mrs. Doyle will look into this problem and respond back to the Civic League.

5. General information
   Norfolk TV: https://www.youtube.com/user/NorfolkTV
   Next Social: November 28, Location TBD (maybe at Elation)
   Next General Meeting: Dec 19 (3rd Monday), 7:00 pm
   HRSD Pump Station Projects [no updates until January at the earliest]
   The Railyard at Lambert's Point
   FOLLOW US ON FACEBOOK
   NFK Currents

6. For the good of the order? The Larchmont United Methodist Church thanks the community for supporting the pumpkin patch! Pumpkins have almost sold out. The application was submitted for our Memorial Day Parade. The parade will start at St. Patrick's School and will

end at LUMC. This Sunday (October 30th), with Crossroads Church, a Fall Festival block party, 4 – 6 p.m. All are welcome.

The meeting adjourned at 8:14 p.m.

Attendance: 27 in person, 10 on Zoom