

Passyunk Square Civic Association
General Membership Meeting
Tuesday, December 3, 2019

President Sarah Anton began the General Membership Meeting of the Passyunk Square Civic Association (PSCA) at 6:33 PM on December 3, 2019 in the South Philadelphia Older Adult Center. Board members in attendance included Sarah Anton, Suzanne Tavani, Monica Montiel, Andrew Stober and Jeff Brown. Absent were: Bill Gross, Christine Knapp, Alysea McDonald, Theresa Rose, Liz Moselle, Henry Sullivan and Patrick Pasquariello.

Sarah explained that PSCA used to have a holiday party at the December membership meeting but since we had a Happy Hour in November and will be having another one in January, we are not having a party this evening. She then turned the meeting over to Officer Ace Delgado for a PSC 3 report. Ace introduced Lt. Petineo, the new PSC 3 lieutenant. Lt. Petineo said that he has been in the district for one year and was just promoted. He has been with the Police for 24 years and is from South Philly, west of Broad. Lt. Petineo reported the major issues were burglaries, robberies and theft from auto. He cautioned people not to leave valuables in sight in their cars and make sure to lock them. Since most burglaries occur overnight, he suggested that properties have surveillance cameras and be well lighted. He also said that trees and bushes around properties should be trimmed. Recently burglars have entered properties through the basement windows. Commercial burglaries are usually quick. Thieves smash the front window and are in and out. Regarding robberies, Lt. Petineo suggested that people travel in pairs and try not to wear headphones while walking. They should make themselves less of a target by paying attention to their surroundings, zipping up their purses and placing their wallets in their front pockets. These common sense measures should lessen the likelihood of crimes of opportunity. If it comes to it you are being robbed, give up your property; it is replaceable. Lt. Petineo gave out the phone number of 267-240-2624. He then took questions.

Question – a car has been parked on the 1300 block of S. 9th Street for six to seven months, what can be done about it? Lt. Petineo replied that people should get a 311 app and, if there is an abandoned car, call 311. You can also email him and he will send someone out to check on the car, which may be faster. The questioner said that the car is registered and legal, it just hasn't moved. Lt. Petineo said that he will investigate it.

Question – a dog walker doesn't pick up after his dog, what can be done? He is trying to find out who is not picking up. Lt. Petineo said if he can identify the person by video he will issue a code violation.

Ace mentioned that with the cold weather he is seeing people start their car to warm it up then leave it and go in the house. He suggested that they get an automatic starter, which will warm up the car for seven minutes then shut off. Lt. Petineo informed people that packages for their houses can be delivered to a box at 711 stores to avoid being stolen from the front of the house. He said if they see someone with a rolling trash can walking down the street, they are stealing packages, and the police should be called.

In response to a question regarding increases in crime in certain areas, Ace said that the police know all of the incidents on a block. They check to see who may have been recently released from prison. Lt. Petineo indicated that the police re-deploy officers if there are incidents in

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different areas. They also gather information on burglaries. He told neighbors to call 911 if they see something and give as much information as they can. For instance, the police need to corroborate that a person is trying to break into a vehicle.

Sarah reminded the meeting to sign in on the sign in sheets. She turned the meeting over to Suzanne for the Zoning Committee report. Suzanne informed people that the Zoning Committee meets the second Tuesday of each month at St. Maron's Hall. The December 10 meeting has three cases: 1224-28 S. 8th Street currently under construction, which is an issue; 1431 S. 9th Street; and 1512 S. Juniper Street. Five cases are already lined up for the January Zoning Committee meeting.

Sarah stated that the City put out an RFP to sell its property around 1100 Wharton Street. Councilman Squilla will hold a community meeting on December 16 to discuss all the issues regarding this property.

Monica reported that PSCA has a cleaning contract to sweep neighborhood streets bi-weekly. It includes all the numbered streets between 6th and Broad Streets from Washington Avenue to Tasker Street, except for 9th Street, which goes from Federal to Tasker. She asked people who do not see their streets cleaned to let her know. Monica also mentioned that PSCA will have a tree cycling event on Saturday, January 4 between 9:00 AM and 3:00 PM at Capitolo Playground. Sarah stated that the City has leaf pick up at Broad and Christian Streets through December 21. The leaves should be in recyclable bags. There are also neighborhood leaf drop offs on the 1400, 1500 and 1600 blocks of S. 13th Street.

Sarah explained that PSCA has a Step of the Month contest to choose the most attractive house front. This month 1507 S. 8th Street won.

Sarah informed the meeting that PSCA will have its Art Auction on March 28 in Theatre Exile. She indicated that there will be an East Passyunk Avenue tree lighting on December 5 and a Kidical Mass Holiday Ride on December 21.

A neighbor said that he didn't know anything about the 1100 Wharton project and asked Sarah about it. She said there was an RFP and Councilman Squilla will bring representatives from City departments involved to explain it at the December 16 meeting.

Sarah introduced State Representative Brian Sims. He explained that he represents the 182nd District, which includes Center City and part of South Philly north of Wharton Street. He was first elected in 2012. Prior to that time he was a civil rights attorney. He stated that Center City is an incubator of progressive legislation. Rep. Sims indicated that the number one occupation of his colleagues in the State House before they were elected was small business owner. Only a handful of state legislators had been scientists or teachers so there is a lack of expertise in the legislature. Rep. Sims had been in-house counsel for the Philadelphia Bar Association before his election. His job was to find people who were experts in their fields. In Center City many people are experts in something but not as many residents are in other neighborhoods. He felt that the

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ability to find experts is important for the legislature. In their absence, lobbyists are the people providing information. Among the key legislative issues are climate change, civil rights, education and LGBTQ matters. Rep. Sims mentioned that the House of Representatives has 28 committees. The most reactionary legislator in the state, Daryl Metcalf, chairs the State Government Committee and that is why progressive legislation doesn't get passed. Since Rep. Sims beat an incumbent representative, the Democrats put him on the Fish and Game Committee as a punishment. He is the most anti-gun legislator in the state and felt that it is time that we banned guns. He has introduced 17 bills. Rep. Sims indicated that Pennsylvania is the most gerrymandered state in the nation. By number of voters, the Democrats should control both the state House and Senate, but due to gerrymandering they don't. We have the most aggressive legislature aimed at hurting minority communities. We behave like a conservative state. However, the legislature is getting better as a result of recent elections. In the last election some of his most awful Democratic colleagues were eliminated. The House Democratic leadership is becoming more diverse with the inclusion of two African American legislators. Rep. Sims has a bill to improve sex education in the state.

Question – what could the Finance Committee do to help Philadelphia? Rep. Sims felt that Philadelphia, being the economic generator of the state, should keep its taxes in escrow. He said that we should get rid of the corporate net income tax of 9.3%. Because we allow other states to take corporate dollars, only 29% of corporations pay the corporate net income tax to Pennsylvania. They are usually the companies that are too small to have locations out of state. Rep. Sims recommends a commercial activity tax on all commercial activity in Philadelphia. He felt that would generate around \$600 million. He believed that we should be contributing much more to pre-K and senior tax relief.

Question – does Comcast pay any taxes to Philadelphia? Rep. Sims replied that they must pay some kind of tax but are avoiding paying a great deal of taxes. He also felt that the Eagles and the Steelers should be paying taxes and the NFL should not be treated like a non-profit.

Question – what is happening with labor and employment? Rep. Sims said that we recently agreed to raise the minimum wage to \$9.50 an hour. However, that is not enough to get people off some programs. Equal pay for women is also a major item. Increasing the minimum wage and providing women equal pay will significantly improve the economy.

Question – what is the status of legalizing marijuana? Rep. Sims felt that it was great. He explained that when veterans began to push for medical marijuana some Republicans did not object and it passed. After medical marijuana became law and the sky did not fall in legislators realized what a revenue source it was. Gov. Wolf may push to legalize recreational marijuana in his second term and he will have the clout to get it passed.

Question – is there funding to increase public transportation? Rep. Sims didn't have anything on transportation. He mentioned that four years ago the state passed the largest transportation bill in decades but he didn't expect that to happen again until the Democrats take back the state House and Senate.

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Rep. Sims introduced Ashton Adams his Director of Public Affairs. His office number is 215-246-1501. He stated that he is happy to speak to PSCA as often as he is invited.

Sarah mentioned that Manny the Nanny is at the PSCA Membership Meetings to do child care for any children brought to the meeting.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 7:28 PM.

Dates of Note:

December 4 – Free ACA Healthcare Enrollment Event at Whitman Library

December 5 – East Passyunk Tree Lighting

December 9 – Senior Scams Seminar at SPOAC

December 10 – PSCA Zoning Meeting

December 16 – 1100 Wharton Municipal Complex Update

December 21 – Kidical Mass Holiday Ride

January 4- TreeCycling (note special location – Capitolo Playground)

March 28 – Art Auction at Theatre Exile

Submitted by Jeff Brown