

February 8, 2017 – Ward 2 Neighborhood Outreach Meeting – Portsmouth Middle School

Panel: Peter Rice, Public Works
Nancy Colbert Puff, Deputy City Manager
Jack Blalock, Mayor
Rebecca Perkins – City Council
Steve Achilles, Fire Chief
David Mara, Police Chief

Peter Rice talked about the Click n Fix program and explained how it worked. Briefly talked about various methods of traffic calming. Went over current and pending projects in Ward 2, including Islington Street and putting sidewalks on Mark Street. Explained that Islington Street is in the design phase, and talked about some councilors request to bury utilities along Islington Street. Explained that it would be a significant increase in the cost, and that there would still have to be 'boxes' put either on public or private property along the street.

Q&A: Why would we put sidewalks along Mark Street? Peter Rice: Part of the repair of the existing street.

Residents voiced both support for burying utilities, due to them being ugly. Other residents voiced concern over the increased cost and asked if there were other ways to make the utilities more attractive. Peter Rice said that they are getting quotes both buried and un-buried utilities and are also looking into alternatives to making the utilities more attractive.

Resident asked status of the Middle Street bike project. Were told to call Juliet Walker in Planning, that it has been modified.

Specific questions were asked about sewer separation projects in the McDonough street area. Middle Street residents asked questions regarding parking enforcement, and no parking signs. Residents voiced frustration with sight lines, particularly from Union Street onto Middle Street. Chief Mara stated that you can call the police. Officers do not usually do parking, but will if it is a nuisance or a danger.

Chief Achilles spoke about what services are provided by the fire department, and talked about public outreach via a Face Book page and Twitter feed. There is an assessment on line that can be done assessing services. Talked about working with the city on snow and weather related emergencies and power outages. Talked about department goals, such as physical fitness testing, new youth programs, including partnering with Chase House, training officers on how to deal with youths. Talked about the scheduled TV shows on the local station which will introduce each officer, and the show on Edge Radio.

Spoke about working with other departments on education on opiate addiction and the three pillars are Education, Treatment/Recover and Enforcement.

Chief Mara spoke about the search for a new police chief which is starting. Talked about departments goals, including

Rick Taintor got up and explained briefly what character based zoning is.

General discussion followed with various questions. Meeting was ended and several residents stayed for specific questions with city staff.

