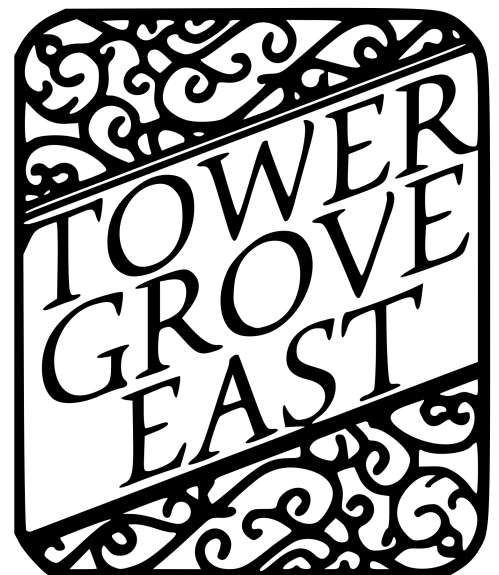


JANUARY 26, 2021

**TOWER GROVE EAST  
NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION**

**JANUARY  
MEETING  
MINUTES**



# Tower Grove East Neighborhood Association

## JANUARY MEETING MINUTES

### SPY PLANES, WORKHOUSE AMONG TOPICS AT TGE NEIGHBORHOOD MEETING

Sixth Ward Alderwoman Christine Ingrassia and Eighth Ward Alderwoman Annie Rice discussed spy planes, the city workhouse and other issues at the Tower Grove East Neighborhood Association general membership meeting on Tuesday, Jan. 26, over Zoom. They gave a brief overview of pending legislation, and neighborhood association representatives reported on other issues, including crime, social media and the revived newsletter.

### ALDERMANIC UPDATES

#### --Spy Planes:

The Board of Aldermen has voted 15-14 to endorse a possible “spy plane”

--aerial surveillance program to combat crime in the city—but funding is up in the air. The program had been operating in Baltimore at a cost of \$3 million for six months but will not be continued there, according to news reports. Also Arnold Ventures, the Texas philanthropy that had been funding the Baltimore venture, has announced it will no longer fund the aerial technology Ventures was supposed to be involved in funding the St. Louis effort.

Both Ingrassia and Rice say they oppose the spy plane plan because it would infringe on civil liberties.

“It raises hairs on the back of my neck,” Ingrassia said. She pointed out there are significant issues involving the City Charter and federal and state laws. At the same time, she acknowledged we have a “significant problem with violent crime in St. Louis.”

Ingrassia said the program didn’t work out so well in Baltimore and Mayor Lyda Krewson is considering vetoing the measure. Anyway, the issue will be caught up in litigation for a number of years, with zero funding, she said.

Rice referred residents to this blog by Heather Navarro, who opposes the surveillance plan: <https://heathernavarro.com/blog>

Rice and Ingrassia said if you have further thoughts on the issue, please contact them at:

[ingrassiac@stlouis-mo.gov](mailto:ingrassiac@stlouis-mo.gov) [ricea@stlouis-mo.gov](mailto:ricea@stlouis-mo.gov)

The spy plane plan will up for a third read and final passage vote by the board probably next Friday, they said.

During discussion, TGENA safety chairman Lane Forman brought up another crime-fighting program in the city, Cure Violence. That program now operates within 10-block areas of three neighborhoods: Wells Goodfellow-Hamilton Heights, Dutchtown and Walnut Park. The program, which operates in other cities, uses “violence interrupters” to treat violence like a contagious disease. Rice said they are seeing it work and “we’re hoping that continues.”

**--Workhouse:**

The workhouse issue looks like it might be on the ballot in April for a non-binding, “glorified Survey Monkey” vote, Ingrassia said. The Board of Aldermen voted in July to close it Dec. 31, but it is still operating. Rice said the board had a four-hour hearing on it Tuesday afternoon.

“I attempted to allocate funding away from warehouse,” Rice said.

**--Ward Reduction:**

In 2013, city residents voted overwhelmingly to reduce the number of aldermanic wards from 28 to 14 in 2023, but alderpersons concerned about Black representation recently voted to put that issue back on the ballot.

Mayor Krewson vetoed the proposal and Ingrassia said it would take 20 votes to override the veto. In addition, Ingrassia pointed out, Tuesday was the last day to get the issue on the ballot.

Wards are being reduced because the city’s population has been shrinking. It was about 857,000 in 1950 and is estimated at about 300,000 now.

Neither Ingrassia nor Rice is up for election. Both support taking the district redrawing power away from the legislature.

**--Covid**

About 120 people were tested for Covid last Saturday at the Hartford parking lot;

Rice and Ingrassia credited 15th Ward Alderwoman Megan Green with helping to make it happen. Rice suggested veterans sign up for a vaccination with the Veterans Administration.

She said it seems the city is not administering the vaccine at the moment. Ingrassia said if you have a typical healthcare provider you’re connected with, contact them for the vaccine.

Rice advised that even after you're vaccinated, you should still wear a mask and keep social distant from others.

## COMMITTEE UPDATES

### ■ **Safety:** Lane Forman, chair - [New committee memeber as of Dec. 2020](#)

No one from the St. Louis Police Department made a report. However, TGENA Safety chairman Lane Forman said he posted on Facebook neighborhood crime statistics provided by TGE Police Liaison Officer Christopher Murray.

Forman said that since the first of the year, city police have begun a new way of targeting troubled areas. The commander is supposed to zero in on troubled areas, then develop a plan of attack.

He said Officer Murray told him police have successfully removed 100 abandoned vehicles in the Third District, of which TGE is a part. They plan to concentrate on the area around Roosevelt High School next.

Forman said concerned residents should reach out to him and Officer Murray about safety issues. If you want to make a request anonymously, pass it on to Forman and he said he will remove you name and pass it on to police:

#### TGENA safety chair

Lane Forman  
314 229-8333  
[rooforman@aol.com](mailto:rooforman@aol.com)

#### POLICE

Sherdon Douglas  
Third District Public Affairs Officer  
[Sdouglas@slmpe.org](mailto:Sdouglas@slmpe.org)  
314 444-2576

Christopher Murray  
District Liaison Officer  
[Cmurray@slmpd.org](mailto:Cmurray@slmpd.org)  
Third District: 314 444-2500

■ **Newsletter: Kristine Hildebrandt, chair**

If you did not get the TGENA newsletter in the mail, please send your address to the newsletter editor, Kristine Hildebrandt

Hildebrandt, who put out the first newsletter in over 2 years, said she is working on the second. Advertisements will look different because businesses are facing the challenge of the pandemic, she said.

She is asking neighbors for content: "Give us stories about your lives. It's time to reach out to each other," she said. Contact her at [kristine.hildebrandt@gmail.com](mailto:kristine.hildebrandt@gmail.com)

■ **Treasurer: Brian Kratz**

Brian Kratz reported deposits of \$680 in the neighborhood association account, mostly income from membership, and withdrawals of \$700 for printing and other expenses.

■ **Beautification: Ralph Noyes, chair**

The next neighborhood cleanup is tentatively set for Saturday, March 6, Chairman Ralph Noyes will get tools and supplies from Operation Brightside. Trinity Christian Church and the South Grand parking lot will probably be gathering places for volunteers to meet and fan out in designated blocks. He is reaching out to the Lafayette neighborhood for tips on enhancing beautification efforts.

■ **Communications: Severyn Jarman, chair**

Severyn is coordinating an overhaul of the TGENA website. Neighbor Annie McCance has donated her time and professional skills to the design effort. They hope they can have it up and running by next month.

TGENA is on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/towergroveeast> and Instagram: at @towergroveeast

Jarman said it's probably time to retire our listserv and get on a more friendly platform.

Severyn will also be running a Mayoral Candidate Forum at our next meeting, Feb. 23 at 7 p.m., on Zoom. All four mayoral candidates will present pre-recorded videos at the meeting.

Do you have questions for them? Send queries now to the Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/towergroveeast>

■ **Charity:**

Heinz said we will resume putting out a calendar and plan to reestablish our connection with Shenandoah Elementary School.

■ **Secretary: Mary Anne Pikrone**

Secretary Mary Anne Pikrone noted that we are participating again in Dine Out for Shenandoah on Thursday, Feb. 18. Nine local restaurants will donate 20 percent of that day's proceeds to Shenandoah Elementary School, where the money will be used for student-led community projects.

The restaurants are: Crafted, Gelateria, Kitchen House, Little Fox, Lona's Lil Eats, Riley's Pub, Rooster, Shaved Duck and Tick Tock Tavern.

■ **Ways & Means: Bill Gilbert, chair**

Bill said he hopes the Fourth of July Fair is scheduled this year at the Arch. TGENA runs a beer and beverage booth, which is staffed by neighborhood association members who act as bartenders. The Fair is our biggest fundraiser and we had no income from it last year because it was canceled.

■ **TGE Community Garden:**

Pikrone, former garden leader, said she is waiting for a busy contractor to install wrought iron railings on the steps.

Meghan Speiser, a garden member, said the garden has a long waiting List. You can still sign up by contacting the garden's Facebook page.

■ **The Orchard on Virginia:**

Heinz said all the fruit trees are dormant and Christmas lights will be taken down soon.

**GENERAL TGENA BOARD UPDATES**

-- While Covid is limited our activities, we still plan activities this spring, including beautification efforts, President Heinz said.

The board is now concentrating on infrastructure, policies, procedures, membership benefits. If you want us to collaborate on something, please send a message to Denise Heinz, president, or Severyn Jarman, our social media chairman.

And last, safety chair Lane Forman said he needs old newspapers for his dogs.

**NEXT MEETING**

**Tuesday, February 23rd, 2021 @ 7PM - Zoom**