

COVID AFFECTING NEIGHBORHOOD SERVICES, ALDERPERSONS SAY

If your alley dumpsters aren't being emptied as often as they used to be, that is because city refuse workers have been hit hard by Covid.

"We've had whole departments out quarantined," Eighth Ward Alderwoman Annie Rice told the Tower Grove East Neighborhood Association general membership meeting over Zoom on Nov. 24.

The meeting also included reports from Sixth Ward Alderwoman Christine Ingrassia, the South Grand business community and city police.

Rice said there's been a shortage of truck drivers, and yard waste/recycling dumpsters are down to being emptied only once a week—in order to give solid waste removal priority for pickup.

In other Covid-related news, Rice emphasized the city is asking private gatherings to have a 10-person limit through the holiday season.

Re other city services:

--Sixth Ward Alderperson Christine Ingrassia said that if the city removes a tree from in front of your dwelling, "we'll be more than happy to replace it." If you have an issue with leaf pickup, please call the Citizens Service Bureau, she advised.

<https://www.stlouis-mo.gov/government/departments/public-safety/neighborhood-stabilization-office/citizens-service-bureau/>

Asked about traffic control changes, Ingrassia said alderpersons have received the smallest amount of capital funds in 10 years since she's been elected, so traffic improvements paid by those funds will have to wait. It's not going to get any better next year either because of Covid, she said.

--Rice noted the city will have two nonpartisan elections this spring—in March, for a group of candidates running for city offices, and in April for a runoff between the top two vote-getting two candidates from March. She also said the city's earnings tax is up for approval by voters in April.

Rachel Witt, Executive Director of the South Grand Community Improvement District, said word needs to get out that all businesses on South Grand are hurting. "Please shop small this season," she said, pointing out that some stores are offering specials. Urban Matter, however, has closed and will reopen Dec. 5, she said. Apotheosis was mentioned in the Wall Street Journal last week, she said.

Many restaurants are offering carry out and extremely appreciate the business, Witt said. They report sales are down only 20 percent, and thought the drop would be higher.

Other Grand Blvd. news:

Some new trees were planted along Grand recently.

The street has seen a lot of car accidents recently, most hit and run. There have been 27 accidents at Grand and Arsenal and seven at Grand and Hartford. Witt said she would like to see radar control along the street.

--If you want to work on South Grand beautification, you can become an eco-volunteer to help clean up green areas on Saturday, Dec. 5., from 9 a.m. to noon. Meet at the Hartford Street Parking Lot.

During a discussion of crime in the neighborhood, Eighth Ward Neighborhood Stabilization Officer Keith Minor advised concerned residents to call their Neighborhood Improvement Specialist.

<https://www.stlouis-mo.gov/government/departments/public-safety/neighborhood-stabilization-office/find-nso.cfm>

Residents were advised to put valuables out of sight; park in garages and make sure they're locked; watch for suspicious persons in alleys; and use plenty of outdoor lighting.

In other business at the meeting:

--Police Officer Murray sent a crime report (see separate story).

TGENA President Denise Heinz says she wants to post these reports regularly so all residents can see them.

--Heinz and Communications Chairman Severyn Jarman said they aim to improve or replace the TGE listserv, in order to communicate better with residents.

--Treasurer Brian Kratz said TGENA gained \$650 from new member signups.

--Participants talked about ways to improve TGENA's overall visibility and work with residents and businesses.

--The Orchard on Virginia announced it will hold a workday and Holiday Tree Decorating on Dec. 12.

--Kristine Hildebrandt reported she is working to put out a condensed neighborhood newsletter/news flash soon.