

Gentilly Terrace & Gardens Improvement Association

Meeting Minutes

May 11, 2011

President **Lisa Kamuf** started the meeting at 7:06 pm

Treasurer **Kim Schaefer** reported that the organization has \$1,162.80 in the account. The recent deposits were from the 50/50 raffle and sale of the Gentilly Terrace history books. She reminded everyone that voluntary dues are \$20 per year.

New Orleans Inspector General **Ed Quatrevaux** was our guest speaker.

- Recent suspensions of NOPD commander Ed Hosli and Public Works director Robert Mendoza
 - The Police Monitor was involved for 1 month before the public knew about the issue. It was leaked to the media by one of our sources.
- IG's Office has a staff of 30 people, 26 are professionals
 - Auditors -- look into reimbursements and the internal controls in departments
 - Evaluators -- look for sweet-heart deals in contracts
 - Investigators - are sent in when something criminal is found
- All info is on their website www.nolaog.org, except ongoing investigations.
- Law which created the Inspector General's Office was revised/strengthened last week.
- The first inspector general was created by King Louis XIV in France. He didn't trust anyone. He took his most junior general and directed him to investigate fraud within the government.
 - The inspector general reported directly to the king.
 - He had no regular duties except to investigate. If others could add duties, they could "drown him in paperwork" so that he couldn't investigate.
- In the 2010 IG's Report, \$9.3 million was found to be wasted in city government.
- The turnaround won't happen overnight. There is a 4 year strategic plan on the website.
- In regard to the NOPD "you lie you die" policy, the IG's office is investigating to see if this is being upheld by the NOPD.
- The office now has a cyber investigator to look into fraud.
- Howard Schwartz, First Assistant Inspector General, is ex-FBI. He has brought new energy to the office.
- Fraud and stealing in government
 - One third of people will never steal, one third of people will sometimes steal, one third of people will always steal
 - The Ethics Review Board helps to train government employees so that occasional theft can be reduced.
 - The IG's Office can reduce fraud in government by:
 - Simply asking for documents
 - Making periodic visits to departments

- Letting government employees know that they are being watched
- The IG's Office uses volunteers whenever possible
 - Laura Paul, their Volunteer/Outreach Coordinator, was in the audience.
 - You can volunteer on their website.
 - Volunteers were used to check the number of locations billed for garbage pick-up last year.
- Oversight of city entities
 - The Legislative Auditor has oversight of state boards and commissions
 - The State IG's Office only has oversight of the executive branch of state government
 - The IG's Office can look at any entity which uses city tax dollars or mileage proceeds. They follow the money.
- Professional Services Contracts
 - The IG's Office looks at draft RFPs (requests for proposals)
- City's Procurement Department
 - Still in bad shape
 - There is only one professional in the department. The rest don't have the background and skills to do a proper job.
 - Most of the department's contract specifications are poorly written. This leads to waste and abuse.
 - The IG's Office is working to improve internal controls
- Who checks the IG' Office
 - Every three years, other IGs audit them.
 - The mayor and the city council can review any result.
 - All reports are hyperlinked so that the basis of the report is easily checked.

Sergeant Prochaska of the NOPD

(Lisa Kamuf reminded everyone to sign a special sign-in sheet if they were interested in Neighborhood Watch training.)

- The NOPD is painfully aware of the recent burglaries in the neighborhood.
 - A pro-active task force is saturating the area
 - Plain clothes police are being used (they look like thugs)
 - 3 suspects have been arrested, but they are not the only ones. They are not from the immediate area. If anyone is missing property, contact NOPD.
- The district commander Henry Dean has instructed patrolling officers to pull on car door handles in the neighborhood. If they find any that are unlocked, they are to leave an index card on the windshield during the day. If they find one during the night and there are valuables in plain sight in the car, they are to run the license plate to determine the owner and then knock on the owner's door (no matter how late) and tell them about the situation.
- Target Hardening (make it harder for thieves)
 - Dogs are a good deterrent.
 - Better locks.
 - Leave the TV or radio on during the day.
 - Turn on outside lights at night.
- If you see your property in a pawn shop, call Detective Amos.

- Take pictures of your valuables, makes a better police report.
- An audience question about Firearm Classes
 - The NOPD does not handle them.
 - Contact a local gun range

Sheriff Marlin Gusman

- Many of his neighbors have been burglarized. Everyone must be on their guard.
- We need more traffic cameras. One could be placed at Gentilly and Elysian Fields to spot criminals.
- An audience member asked about street lights which are out.
 - Lisa Kamuf suggested that the person help form a committee to handle the problem.
 - We need people to come forward when they see a need. The Board cannot do everything on its own.
- Someone asked why we can't create a security district to patrol the neighborhood.
 - No one wants to pay.
 - Lakeview is a larger area which lowers the per resident cost.
 - Lake Oaks pays \$300 - \$400 per year.
 - Norm Whitley stated that a security district was looked into right after Katrina, but at the time, there weren't enough residents who had come back.

The 50/50 raffle was won by Dan Falk.

The meeting ended at 8:35 pm