

# WAMM CIVIC ASSOCIATION QUARTERLY MEETING

March 12, 2024

Bering Church of Christ

## MINUTES

Lane Llewellyn, President, called the meeting to order at 6:34 pm.

### 1. Introduction of Officers

Lane Llewellyn introduced the Board members present at the meeting, including: Lane Llewellyn, President; Kathy Conti, Second Vice President; Diane Baker, Treasurer; and Maria Morandi, Secretary.

### 2. Order of Business

#### 2.a. Update for WAMM Infrastructure projects - 2024, and Introduction of Speaker.

Lane Llewellyn gave an update on the replacement of the 72-inch water line: Time truly flies. A little over a year ago, on December 2022, Jeff Heflin, VP of MC2 Civil Engineering, gave WAMM a presentation on his company's portion of the COH 71-inch Waterline Replacement Project. Digging along Kipling St. had already started and, as a Professional Engineer (PE), he promised that his team would commit to the highest standards of competence and quality for the job. Well, she asked, what do we all think about the new Kipling St improvements? She would say that Jeff had warned us about the "unknown" and the dangers of rebuilding and upgrading existing infrastructure, especially waterlines. Thanks goodness WAMM did not suffer the from the explosion following the accidental cut of a gas line in Mandell Place. It is now smooth sailing on Kipling from Mandell St. to Montrose Blvd.

Lane proceeded to introduce the VIP speaker for the evening, Mr. Panduranga Kuruva (PK), P.E., MBA, Managing Engineer, Capital Projects, at the COH. Mr. Panduranga will update the audience on the COH 72-inch Waterline Project and other infrastructure issues. She asked the audience to hold questions until the end of the presentation.

#### 2.b. Presentation by Mr. Kuruva.

Mr. Kuruva thanked WAMM for the opportunity to present this update to our community. He requested that we all call him PK, as he understands most have some difficulty in pronouncing his name. He indicated that he would prefer members of the audience

interrupt to request clarifications as he will be using some technical terms not all may be familiar with.

PK clarified that the new 72-inch water line provides redundancy to the existing, old water line that was installed for providing drinking water. It runs for 8-10 miles, from close to Hwy 59 to the COH Southwest Pump Station. The project was undertaken in 4 segments, with segments 1-2 essentially completed, Segment 3 is 85% complete, while Segment 4 is under design.

As part of the project, there was replacement of pavement and storm drains and distribution lines. The overall cost of the project approaches 49 million dollars. He provided the approximate costs of each segment, and mentioned the companies in charge of each.

Regarding disruptions caused by the project, PK indicated that traffic detours and access to driveways are the responsibility of each contractor. Complaints should be reported to 311, and information on updates can be obtained at the [engagehouston.org](http://engagehouston.org) website. He asked the audience if there were any questions about the 72-inch waterline replacement.

Kathy Conti praised the work done by the contractors but she had issues with water pooling at the entrance to her driveway. She reported it to the contractor who came to inspect the issue, but nothing was done to remediate it. PK asked Kathy for her address, indicating that he will take care of the issue.

Lane Llewellyn reported that water pressure at homes along Hawthorne St. seems to be lower than before the waterline replacement. PK took note of it indicating he would get back with an answer. He also said that water pressure should not drop. Most of the time pressure drops because of deposits in water filters or household water lines.

Lane Llewellyn also asked why some sections of the recently poured concrete bed are dug. PK indicated that sometimes it is necessary to make tie-ins with the new line from the old line that were not foreseen at the time the concrete was poured.

Diane Baker asked whether the trees that were removed will be replaced. PK responded that some of them will be replaced, and some not. The decision for replacement will be made by the COH arborist. The type and size of replacement trees are stipulated by COH ordinances.

Erasto Cortes asked about the persistent water leaks along the 1400 block of Westheimer Rd. PK explained that the water pipes in the area are old and subject to breaks. Lane also indicated that the actual location of old water meters in this section of Westheimer is not always evident. PK indicated that he will investigate the issue of the persistent water leaks in this section of Westheimer.

Maria Morandi reported that neighbors had experience cracking of sheetrock as a result of the work along Kipling St., and if the city could do anything about it. PK responded that based on the design of each segment of the project, this should not have occurred. He advised to call the contractor, who will inspect the problem. It will then be his decision whether the problem was project-related and, if so, remedial actions to be undertaken. However, because there has been an extensive approval process by engineers at each stage of the project, there is a high probability that the contractor will decide the cracks are project-related. Lane Llewellyn added that inspectors are likely to attribute the problem to "normal wear and tear".

Diane Younker reported that water pressure at her home had increased rather than decrease.

PK continued on to describe briefly two other projects, pavement replacement on W Alabama, and drainage improvement on Buffalo Speedway.

Sunita Kavrie complained about the slow progress of the work on W Alabama and Shepherd St. Pavement was dug up again after completion of the intersection. PK took notes of the problem.

Deborah Quintero asked about the proliferation of flags on the ground to indicate gas lines, electrical lines, etc. PK responded that it was likely survey work.

An attendee asked whether restoration work is separate from the waterline replacement project. PK responded that restoration is integral to the replacement project. Lane Llewellyn added that local street resurfacing will be done with asphalt and include drainage improvement, similar to the resurfacing of Hawthorne St.

Jerry Baiamonte remembered that a lot of this work had been part of the Rebuild Houston plan around 9 to 10 years ago, and asked whether WAMM's turn had finally come up. Lane answered that they have been very active and supportive in District C. Maria Morandi indicated that the resurfacing work will be done after completion of Segment 3, expected in June 2024.

PK described another project for improving Westheimer Rd from Montrose Blvd. to Bagby St. and Elgin to Milam St. This is a 24-million-dollar project, now in the preliminary engineering phase. Funding not yet available.

Lane thanked PK for the very informative presentation.

### **3. New Business**

Lane listed the existing committees set up to address long standing issues in WAMM, including:

1. Speed Bumps on Hawthorne St. (Deborah Quintero, chair).
2. STR Regulation and Enforcement.
3. Parking Issues

4. Pocket/Dog Walking Park
5. Homeless/Mental Illness Assistance
6. Safety/HPD

Lane reported that we are working on the 2024 budget for WAMM, including some funding for the proposed dog walking park. Recurring expenses include website maintenance, post office and safety deposit boxes, email and communication services, and socials. Our account balance is just under \$10,000. We had 92 paying members in 2023.

Sunita Kavrie suggested that we need business sponsorships and she has some ideas.

Erasto Cortes propose that the association needs to increase visibility in social media, which is preferred by younger people who are moving into the neighborhood.

Hearing no additional new business, Lane Llewellyn called the meeting adjourned at 7:53pm.