

Akron Documenters

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Ward 4

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Agency: Akron City Council

Date: Aug. 28, 2024

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Summary

- Council Member Jan Davis has requested a capital budget of \$1.5 million for Ward 4. Among other things she hopes the money will help to demolish the abandoned building that once housed [the Rankin Elementary School](#) in West Akron which was sold for less than \$20,000 by Akron Public Schools several years ago.
- Summit County Sheriff Kandy Fatheree provided insight into new procedures at the sheriff's office.
- Residents engaged with community police officers regarding problems on [Peckham Street](#) in West Akron with unruly, disrespectful children and uncooperative parents.

Follow-Up Questions

- How can the nuisance problem in the Peckham neighborhood be resolved? The police have reached out and responded but are really limited in how they can respond. They asked residents to continue to call them.
- Will Ward 4 receive the requested \$1.5 million to continue to improve areas in and around the ward?

Notes

- The Ward 4 meeting was held at the [Lawton Street Community Center](#) in West Akron.

- About 30 people attended the meeting lead by [Ward 4 Council Member Jan Davis](#)
- [Sheriff Kandy Fatheree](#) outlined improvements made by the sheriff's department. In particular, inmates now receive tablets during their periods of incarceration. The tablets contain school curriculum programs from K-12 grades where the inmates can determine the level of education they are lacking and begin the program where they left off in school to ultimately end up with a high school diploma. The tablet follows them from the local jail to the penitentiary, if they are convicted.
- Fatheree has also advocated for the mental health of inmates and employees by hiring a full-time chaplain. The chaplain is a retired law enforcement officer, familiar with the stresses of the job and also the stresses of the inmates.
- In addition to addressing mental health, the sheriff's office has hired caseworkers to help inmates who may need assistance with housing, Social Security, disability, mental health issues and general living issues. These caseworkers follow the inmates throughout their incarceration and, when released, provide standard living assistance to help them live independent lives. In the sheriff's own words, "Education equals value." To that end, the sheriff's department works with other county officials and has opened [THRIVE House](#) for people needing a helping hand after incarceration.
- Summit County hopes to provide a restorative jail that simulates one recently [created in Franklin County](#).
- Fatheree invited all community members to the "[Faith & Blue](#)" event Oct. 5, from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. at Hardesty Park. This event centers on law enforcement, community leaders and residents building safe neighborhoods together.
- [Carla Chapman](#), chief diversity officer of Akron Public Schools, also spoke regarding the importance of supporting the ballot issue for the district in November. She said if the levy fails, they would start the 2025 school year \$25 million in the red and be forced to drastically cut programs. She provided the website www.akronschoollevy.com for further information.
- Chapman said the levy includes a measure that would raise \$25.7 million for operating expenses and a bond issue that would raise \$4.4 million annually for 25 years to build a new North High School building, which was slated for closure but has since experienced great growth
- An Akron Police Department officer presented the following facts regarding crime in Akron in the past year:
 - 160 reports of stolen guns and/or property.
 - 276 firearm offenses
 - APD officers have responded to 981 shots fired calls
 - 91 shooting victims and 14 people have died
 - 363 guns recovered

- Nationally, last year alone, 14 million guns were legally sold, 44,000 adult deaths were by suicide, and 35% of schools were forced into lockdown.
- The residents of [Peckham Street](#) voiced their concerns about the nuisances and outright disrespect of people and property in their neighborhood by the children and non-responsive supervision of the parents and grandparents. One disabled resident showed a photograph of a knife two young children left in her yard when she asked them not to play on her handicap ramp.
 - The residents said they have called the police numerous times regarding this particular house and the kids and the adults who come in and out of the home.
- Davis and a community engagement officer said they would delve further into these instances on Peckham Street and try to find a resolution.
- Davis ended the meeting by explaining how she would use \$1.5 million of funding she's requested, which she hopes would:
 - Remove Rankin School, which is gathering complaints of being an eyesore
 - Remove the currently closed Church's Chicken and candy store on Copley Road
 - Provide portable bathrooms for the new pickleball court at Kerr Park
 - Other smaller projects in Ward 4 that would enhance its appearance and viability.
- The meeting ended at 7:45 p.m.

Notes to reader: Unless quotation marks are used, all text is paraphrased. If you believe anything in these notes is inaccurate, please email us at documenters@signalakron.org with "Correction Request" in the subject line.