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Ward 9 community meeting

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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.*

Summary

- The mayor's office will host [a town hall on March 11](#) from 5 to 7 p.m. at East Community Learning Center to gather feedback on the city's proposed operating budget.
- A large, all-day block party will be held in Kenmore on June 7. Activities will include a race, pancake breakfast, parade, music, vendors and more.
- Items of value have been removed from the former Kenmore High School building ([2140 13th St. SW in Kenmore](#)), which will likely be razed by the end of March or early April. Butcher & Sons Excavating was awarded the contract to demolish the building.

Follow-Up Questions

- What will happen at the site of the former Kenmore High School after the building is razed?

Notes

- Pizza, cookies and water were available for attendees before the meeting.
- [Ward 9 City Council Member Tina Boyes](#) started the meeting at 6:32 p.m.
- The only other city employees present were two Akron police officers.
- Boyes noted that an arborist from the city was supposed to attend the meeting to discuss Ward 9's tree canopy but did not appear..

City of Akron operating budget

- Boyes gave an update on hearings for the city's operating budget that started today and will continue this week.
- On March 11, the city will host a town hall from 5 to 7 p.m. at East Community Learning Center to gather community feedback on the proposed budget.
- Boyes said the proposed operating budget is 2% less than last year's, which pleased her.
- She also pointed out that Mayor Shammass Malik is proposing the creation of a public safety director position. The city used to have this position but has not recently. Boyes was in favor of this decision.

Miscellaneous updates

- Boyes reminded attendees that the [Financial Empowerment Center](#) in Kenmore will help people do their taxes for free if their household income is below \$67,000. To connect to the center, call 211.
- [Project Shine](#) is a ministry youth group based in Kenmore looking for people who need help with basic home improvement projects.
- Local U.S. Postal Service mail carriers will participate in the [Stamp Out Hunger Food Drive](#) on May 10. People are asked to place nonperishable food donations outside their mailboxes for carriers to collect and give to food banks.
- Boyes mentioned the recent renovation of Lock 3. Flyers were distributed with a QR code to [a survey](#) that the city administers to gather feedback for Lock 3 programming for this summer.

Akron Parks Challenge

- Sean Blake, the [Akron Parks Collaborative board member who represents Ward 9](#), said the Akron Parks Collaborative's Akron Parks Challenge application is open through March 22. He encouraged anyone to apply for a park in Ward 9 (except

[Chestnut Ridge Park and Prentiss Park](#), which have already received this funding). He handed out flyers.

Better Kenmore Community Development Corp. updates

- Boyes introduced [Better Kenmore CDC's new executive director, Eleni Manousogiannakis](#). She is from Kenmore and was previously Better Kenmore's grant writer.
- Manousogiannakis spoke about Better Kenmore's plans for the summer. June 7 will be the Boulevard Block Party. It will be an all-day event with the Kenmore Cowbell race, pancake breakfast, parade (something many Kenmore residents have asked to bring back), petting zoo, and more on Kenmore Boulevard and also at Summit Lake. This event will take place instead of a [Kenmore First Friday event](#) in June.
- The July Kenmore First Friday will be held on the second Friday instead of the first Friday due to Independence Day falling on the first Friday of July this year.

South Street Ministries updates

- [Chris Usner, South Street Ministries bike shop director](#), shared some of the history of South Street Ministries bike shop program. This is a sweat equity program that allows children and adults who need a bike to select one and then spend five hours working one-on-one with an adult to build or repair the bike that they can then ride. They will also begin requiring the participant to complete a ride with the bike shop program to learn bike etiquette and safety.
- The current bike shop program runs out of a shipping container at Summit Lake. Last year the program distributed 501 bikes.
- This year South Street Ministries is planning to purchase another shipping container and start a bike shop program near Kenmore Boulevard. The Kenmore bike shop program will be open on Thursdays and Saturdays.
- Usner said they want to engage the community with this program and are looking for neighbors who are interested in talking to program participants about what the neighborhood used to look like. They are also looking for volunteers to help work on the bikes and bike donations.

Former Kenmore High School building

- An attendee asked for updates on the demolition of the former Kenmore High School building.
- Boyes regularly stops by and asks the crew on site for information. Butcher & Son

Excavating was awarded the contract to raze the building. She said abatement is currently happening, and demolition will likely happen by the end of March or early April. She asked the contractors to let her know before the building would be torn down.

- An attendee asked about saving a silver screen that was in the building. Boyes wasn't sure if that had been obtained but thought most everything of value in the building had been removed.

Clean Up Akron Month

- April is Clean Up Akron month, which is organized by [Keep Akron Beautiful](#) (KAB).
- KAB has typically focused on cleanups at Summit Lake, but this year, they will focus on North Hill and Copley Road.
- [The Ohio & Erie Canalway](#) will host a monthly cleanup at Summit Lake beginning on April 12.
- Boyes encouraged residents to host cleanups in other parts of Ward 9.

Akron Police Department community engagement updates

- A sergeant from the police department's community engagement team mentioned his team's interest in partnering with the South Street Ministries bike shop program and Kenmore First Fridays and helping with community cleanup events. He noted that his team would want to participate as community engagement members, not as police officers providing security.
- The police department is looking to host another [Citizens' Academy](#) in April. Those interested in participating can find the application online on the police department's community relations page.
- The meeting ended at 7:33 p.m.