

MINUTES
ANNUAL MEETING
GARDEN DISTRICT CIVIC ASSOCIATION

The annual meeting was held from 2 to 4 p.m., Sunday, February 17, 2013, at the Christian Scientist Church. About 50 people attended.

Six current board members who chose to run for another term on the GDCA board and nine new nominees who agreed to serve on the board were elected by acclimation by those present. The six current members are Ray Mack, Dorothy Prowell, Rosary Beck, Willie/Mary Fontenot, David Franz, and Nancy Grush. New members are: Chris Odinet, Mawe Takyi, Phil Hackney, Matt Swanner, Jason Dore, Fran Shurtz, Aaron Smith, Katherine Ragland, & Eric Troutman.

Sgt. Stone of the B.R. City Police spoke on security patrols, Garden District safety, and crime. With the current amount of dues paid by GDCA members, he and three other officers are able to provide off-duty patrol 48 hours a month.¹ He said the statistics for theft and burglary for the first six months of 2012 was not much different than for the first six months of 2011: 61 burglaries in 2011 versus 59 in 2012; and 121 thefts in 2011 versus 126 in 2012. He said they get a lot of calls about “suspicious persons,” but emphasized that if someone is in your backyard, he/she should call the police and not him. He said the police recently made a number of arrests of persons selling magazines without a permit. He encouraged homeowners to post a non-solicitation sign in their yard and emphasized that residents should not feel sorry for strangers asking for money. Sgt. Stone concluded that he works with about eight parishes as part of the Crime Stoppers program and did not think that the Garden District had a problem.

Dorothy Prowell discussed the upcoming Sustainable Living Tour of Homes to be held from 2-5 p.m., Saturday, April 20. The homes will feature what eight homeowners have done to conserve more energy and water. Jeff Shaw, owner of Gulf South Solar, talked briefly about solar panels, the tax credit and net metering. Mr. Shaw will be on hand for the April 20 tour.

David Franz explained that his committee is in the process of coming up with new signage at various entrances to the Garden District. Designs that are submitted will be posted on the GDCA website for a vote. One member in the audience suggested working with the Mid City Redevelopment Alliance in possibly getting a grant for the signage.

¹ GDCA Vice President (now President) Ray Mack pointed out that the GDCA collects about \$24,000.00 in dues (\$120.00 per household) annually and that about \$20,000.00 of that money is spent on security.

On a related note, Ray Mack pointed out that the GD had been selected by the American Planning Association as a “Great American Neighborhood.” Chris Odinet pointed out that Collin Magee (?), who works for the Planning Commission, was the one who submitted the application, nominating the GD.

When the discussion opened for suggestions, one member of the audience suggested that the GDCA needs to have a mission and to publicize it. He also pointed out that the GDCA needs to have a contract with the security patrol. Other audience members spoke about abandoned cars, zoning violations and ways to encourage more residents to become dues-paying members.