

MINUTES OF THE MARCH 24, 2025
SEWANEE COMMUNITY COUNCIL MEETING

The Community Council meeting was held in person in March with an option to also participate online via Zoom.

Members present: Rob Pearigen, Scott Wilson, Rhea Bowden, Michael Payne, Evelyn Patton, Ben Tarhan, Laura Willis, Marilyn Phelps, Katie Gohn, Walker Adams, Delores Jelks, Sallie Green, Aidan Goulding, and Roger Speers

Members via Zoom: Ed Hawkins and Kevin Cummings

Absent: Phil White, Ben Beavers, and Robert Benton

Minutes taken by: Carey Fulmer (attending via Zoom)

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m.

(1) Approval of the January Minutes

The minutes for the January 2025 Community Council were approved as circulated.

(2) Update on 41-A Apartments- Tarhan

David Shipps confirmed that not much has changed since the last update on the 41-A Apartments, which remains a priority and funding is being assessed to move this project forward.

(3) Upkeep on the Sewanee Market- Gohn

Katie Gohn raised concerns about the lack of upkeep to the exterior of the Sewanee Market to the Council and while she was pleased see the roof replacement in progress, she emphasized that more work is needed to make the building more presentable. As a focal point for the University, especially with prospective students and families, and even though it is an important commodity for the community, the building is in disrepair and unsightly. Cited as the only commercial building maintained by the University's Facilities Management office, Katie asked that greater consideration is given for the upkeep for Sewanee Market.

Conversations on the plans for the future of Sewanee Market, as well as the responsible parties for maintaining the property, confirmed the need for more conversations from the University administration.

(4) Dog Control- Willis and Phelps

Laura Willis and Marilyn Phelps brought an issue to the Council of concerns of unleashed, aggressive dogs with a report of a dog biting a community member and the same dog showing aggression to the neighborhood children. Concern was presented that the Sewanee Police Department is not adequately enforcing the Dog Policy. This policy can be found on both the Provost webpage and the Lease Office webpages.

Two SPD officers were present to speak to the Community Council and addressed their protocol of working with Animal Control once an issue is reported. They noted that the SPD is not equipped to handle vicious animals, and therefore, they must rely on the assistance of Franklin County Animal

Control, which has the training to handle situations such as aggressive dogs. The building that previously housed the unofficial pound in Sewanee needs repair and cleanup, but plans are in place to begin using the facility again to help with stray and abandoned dogs in the area. Several concerns and comments from the Council members and community members in attendance were:

- Statement: An attack was reported on 2/28, but nothing has been done. Response: SPD officers explained that a warning citation was issued to the dog's owner, but the victim did not wish to press charges.
- If there was more transparency in reporting to the community, concerns could be alleviated knowing that the situation was being closely monitored.
- Leash laws should be enforced.
- Sallie Green confirmed that the current dog policy was updated in 2020 and she can send out an email reminder to all leaseholders reminding them of the Dog Policy and where to find it.
- Michael Payne commented that the University cannot expect officers to enforce animal control or upkeep a pound. There are not enough training or resources.
- Responsible dog owners should not be penalized for irresponsible ones.
- No one wants to have to call the police on their neighbor nor press charges in order for action to be taken against a repeat offender or a dog proven to be aggressive. The policy should allow for action to be taken without the victim pressing charges.
- Something must be done to prevent future attacks from a dog that has already bitten and the owner must be addressed in an official capacity.

In conclusion, VC Rob Pearigen confirmed that the administration needs to revisit the policy as well as the enforcement and follow up process.

(5) Proposed Community Council Dates for 2025-26- Wilson

Scott Wilson outlined the Proposed Community Council Meeting Dates for 2025-26 as:

2025

August 25 – on reserve

September 22

October 27

November 24 – on reserve

2026

January 26

February 23 – on reserve

March 23

April 27 – on reserve

May 18

June 22 – on reserve

Meeting dates were approved.

(6) Announcements and/or Questions

Sallie Green, Superintendent of Leases and Community Relations announced the next Community Cleanup day as April 26 from 9am to 11am. Meetup will be at the Mountain Goat trailhead.

Vice Chancellor Rob Pearigen updated the Council on a meeting he had with Duck River liason, Mark Webb that a map will be created outlining all the street lights. If there are any issues, individuals can easily identify the area of concern.

Rob also welcomed Delores Jelks as the newest member of the Community Council.

Meeting adjourned at 7:50 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Carey Fulmer