

The general membership meeting of AQCA took place at the Classical High Condominiums community room on Thursday, March 19, 2009 at 7pm.

1. The Springfield Police Department has set up a 311 call system for code violations. This is part of their concern for the quality of life issues in the city.
2. Clean Up Day will be Saturday, May 2. We will all be able to work in our own neighborhoods.
3. The Pancake Breakfast will be Saturday, May 16. AQCA is the only civic association that participates so far. We will be serving breakfast drinks, and wearing aprons.
4. The speaker for the evening was Elizabeth Cardona, Governor Patrick's representative in the Western Massachusetts office here in Springfield.

Her office covers the affairs of the four Western Massachusetts counties.

She is involved now in the Governor's Civic Engagement Initiative. This means that someone from Boston comes out to Western Massachusetts once a month to discuss business with the citizens. The Governor wants a 'grass roots' involvement. He wants to know what we all think about the way that the state government is going.

The Commissioner of Health is doing site visits soon. The person from the Labor Department will be coming soon. The Administrator of Finance is going to be helping small businesses at STCC.

The Governor attended Milton Academy and Harvard University. He is concerned about education and public safety. He has an established relationship with President Obama. Ms. Cardona said that the Governor hopes that monies from the Federal stimulus package will be coming to our city to help us fight crime.

When a lady complained about the possible raise in the gas tax, Governor Patrick came out to see her. He visited with her at her home, with some of her neighbors. "I want to listen to you," he said. They told him that their public transportation needs improvement.

Ms. Cardona said that government is very complex. She compared it to Stone Soup. We all need to work together.

The Governor has also said "I won't sign anything unless there's something for everyone." He has asked all the mayors, and the people, for help.

Some of the stimulus money will be going to regional infrastructure--transportation, a commuter railway. The environment will be considered.

Several members voiced their concerns about the Governor running for another term--  
"There needs to be something tangible for Western Massachusetts if he is to have another term."

"If we can only find common ground, whether we agree or not."

"The resources need to be expanded, from the East to the West."

The meeting closed with a reminder that we have to say Thank You to Governor Patrick for the upcoming data center at the old Technical High, the improving State Street corridor, and the monies that are coming for education.

The meeting adjourned at 8pm.

Respectfully submitted, Lynn L. Hallowell, Recording Secretary.