

Minutes Neighborhood Advisory Commission January 4, 2012

Minutes of the Neighborhood Advisory Commission (NAC) held on January 4, 2012 5:40 – 7:20 p.m., at City Hall, 31 E. 5th Street, 3rd Floor Conference Room, Tempe, Arizona.

(MEMBERS) Present: Nancy Buell, Gary Johnson, Ira King, Josephine McNamara, Robert Miller, Leonard Montenegro, Joe Pospicil, John Sanborn, Scott Smas, Bill Wagner, Michael Wasko

(MEMBERS) Excused Absences: Karen Adams, Maureen Decindis, Pete DeMott, Ann Lynn DiDomenico, Britney Scott Kaufmann, Joochul Kim, Angela Lopez, Lisa Roach

(MEMBERS) Unexcused Absences:

City Staff Present: Shauna Warner, Neighborhood Services Director; Elizabeth Thomas, Neighborhood Services Specialist, Mike Fleming, Police Department Officer, 480-858-6144, michael_fleming@tempe.gov

Agenda Item 1 – Call to Order

Chair Wasko called the meeting to order at 5:40 p.m.

Agenda Item 2 – Public Comment

There was none.

Agenda Item 3 – Consideration of Minutes: December 7, 2011

Elizabeth shared the email provided by Commissioner Adams regarding the specific ordinance change she had proposed exploring at the December meeting. She wanted to ensure the minutes noted her suggestion that the ordinance be amended to require that garbage and recycling cans be placed back at least to the side of the house or building if not behind a gate. This would help to eliminate smelly and unsightly cans placed just off the sidewalk.

Commissioner Sanborn made a motion to approve the minutes with the change noted above and Commissioner Miller seconded the motion. The motion passed with ten affirmative votes and one abstention due to absence from the December meeting.

Agenda Item 4 – Election of Officers

Commission members affirmed their nominations for Chair Wasko for Chair and Vice Chair McNamara for Vice Chair. There were no other nominations submitted. Commissioner Miller made a motion for the nominations to be closed and for Commissioner Wasko to be elected Chair and Commissioner McNamara to be elected Vice Chair. Commissioner Johnson seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Agenda Item 5 – Police Department Crime Prevention

Tempe Police Officer Mike Fleming opened his discussion by asking commission members how he could help them. He noted that there are 185 Block Watches in Tempe but only approximately 51 are considered active. To be considered active, a Block Watch need only meet twice per year (typically once in Spring and once in Fall often tied in with GAIN events) and 50% of the residents in that block watch must attend the gathering and sign in. Meetings can be held in driveways, at local parks or inside residences. PD generally attends the first meeting of each Block Watch to provide basic safety information and explain the process. Sign in sheets are then returned to the PD Crime Prevention Unit.

Elizabeth requested that Officer Fleming note the distinction between Block Watches and NA's or HOA's. He emphasized that a Block Watch can be an entire street or a small cluster of homes, ideally where residents can look out for each other and have a view of each residence. A neighborhood association or HOA may have several Block Watches within it but the entire neighborhood does not need to participate. The PD endeavors to make it very easy. However, each Block Watch is resident initiated and must have some residents willing to step and lead, while others participate and contribute. Officer Fleming added that when crimes occur in an area, interest in Block Watches increase and when crime is down and/or champions of the Block Watch move out or step down, apathy or disinterest can occur. Block Watches can be re-started at a later date when interest is there.

Officer Fleming added that usually when a break in occurs, residents want increased patrols but neighbors having good communication and knowing each other's schedules, vehicles and frequent visitors is most effective. If neighbors know each other better, they can help to identify if something is strange or odd and contact the PD. When there is an established Block Watch, Captains can share safety related or neighborhood trend information quickly through an email tree.

Commissioner King inquired if calls from Block Watches are prioritized over calls from individuals. Officer Fleming said no, emphasizing that calls are prioritized first by whether a crime is in progress. If a crime has already occurred, it's more about taking a report than trying to catch someone in the act. He added that you shouldn't confront people if you don't feel comfortable but you can use your cell phone to take a picture of a vehicle or you can ask someone suspicious what are you doing or can I help you? Sometimes knowing they have been seen is enough to get them to move on.

Officer Fleming encouraged reporting of all crimes and using the RAIDs online website to avoid rumors and to verify crime activity in specific areas. Sometimes neighbors share inaccurate information such as crimes that were not reported or happened sometime in the past versus recently.

Agenda Item 6 – Commission Goals and Objectives Discussion

Goal 1 – Strengthen and grow Neighborhood Workshop and Awards

After some discussion, the following three metrics were identified:

- Increase number of event attendees
- Increase number of sponsorships
- Increase amount of contributions (could be cash or in kind)

Elizabeth stated she will follow up with an email to commissioners with a sample sponsorship request template with suggested language, a list of event needs noting any that have been handled such as bottled water and event brochure and poster print deadlines.

Goal 2 – Improve feeling of safety in neighborhoods

The following metrics were identified:

- Increase total number of Block Watches
- Increase/improve number of active Block Watches
- Host a safety event with PD/FD to increase awareness of Block Watch opportunities and neighborhood safety related information such as using or adding outdoor lighting and pool safety best practices

Goal 3 – Improve maintenance of private property in neighborhoods

- Reduce number of code compliance complaints by each NAC member walking through their neighborhood and reporting one issue (online or through Code Compliance or Call Center) needing attention, then following up to verify status
- Identify an issue related to improving private property maintenance that could be forwarded to City Council for consideration emphasizing proactive versus reactive actions
- Consider requesting that City Council establish some sort of fund or grant to help homeowners with dead or diseased tree removal on private property

Goal 4 – Improve quality of neighborhood parks

Ideas included:

- Organize a clean-up/spruce up of 6th Street Park which was previously adopted by NAC but has yet to be addressed.
- Contact Tempe Cares and For Our City to see if any interest in partnering with NAC on a specific neighborhood and park area clean up or organizing a city-wide clean-up/spruce up day like those held in Cleveland, Ohio
- Have each commissioner identify an improvement or an area at each neighborhood park needing attention that could be done with little or no funding

Vice Chair McNamara encouraged commission members to wait to identify measures pertinent to Goal 4 until there has been some outreach to potential partners to verify what possibilities may or may not exist. Commission members agreed with the suggestion.

Agenda Item 7 - Neighborhood Workshop and Awards Planning Update

See Agenda Item 6, Goal 1, Strengthen and grow Neighborhood Workshop and Awards.

Agenda Item 8 – Board and Commission Recruitment

No names for review were provided.

Agenda Item 9 – Proposed Agenda Items for February 1, 2012

- **Tempe Elementary School District Facility Repurposing**
- **Commission Goals and Objectives**
- **Neighborhood Workshop and Awards Planning Update**
- **Potential Parks Partnerships Update**

For a future meeting, Commissioner Miller requested a presentation regarding Tempe's multi-family dwellings plans and policies. Commissioner Sanborn requested a Budget presentation, Chair Wasko requested that he come back with more specific questions or information.

Agenda Item 10 - Adjournment

Meeting was adjourned at 7:20 p.m.

Prepared by: Elizabeth Thomas, Neighborhood Services Specialist
Reviewed by: Shauna Warner, Neighborhood Services Director