

Minutes from Eldridge West Oaks Super Neighborhood 17
September 11, 2013

Called to order at 7:01 p.m.

President Doug Parrish welcomed all and encouraged everyone to become a member on the newly revised and updated SN17 website. We wish to discontinue the yahoo account due to numerous problems and difficulties. The website offers so much more including up to date information, minutes from past meetings, upcoming agendas and more. Do visit that site at <http://www.sneldridgewestoaks.org/> .

Announcements from Representatives G F and City of Houston

1. **Mark Kirschke** from Councilman Oliver Pennington's office brought greetings and news updates.

In a recap of the Mandy C. Sample ride along which included our Jack O'Connor, John Lorzano and HPD on August 22, 2012 approximately "homeless" persons were approached. There seems to be approximately a dozen "chronic or vulnerable" homeless people. Most agreed that these were suffering from alcohol addiction and or mental health issues. Information given lead them to believe that most had been "on the street" for 2 or more years. One large difficulty in providing some services to these folks seemed to be the lack of I.D. None of the targeted persons were "in the system". Yes, is it a voluntary system. The largest numbers of complaints were about one particular man. He did not seem to be present in his "usual" locations. The local "homeless" have been shoved out by the aggressive panhandlers. (Gang types with behaviors overpowering the local homeless)

An additional difficulty in working with this group of the population is the creation of an ordinance with "teeth" yet compassionate to the needs of those on the street. Many are veterans. An item of note, there are just as many women on the street as men. However, their need for some kind of safe haven from physical or sexual assault usually drives them to find some kind of shelter at night. One woman was able to be put into a vehicle to get services yet, when she was questioned at the intake place, she became quite paranoid and fled the scene. Her motives may have been due to her possible connections to criminal events as a person or interest or a witness to crimes. This is not uncommon with homeless. Mandy Sample plans additional visits most likely in October. Mark distributed a "HOUSTON HELP CARD" and encouraged the further dispersion of this info to all who are in need or who may know of those who in need of services.

A certificate for Ben and the personnel of Eagles Trace is in the works. The presentation is planned for October 15, 2013 – Tuesday at 1:30 p.m. There will be others, so the timing needs to be flexible. This will take place in Council Chambers on Bagby. All are encouraged to attend if they can to support and thank Eagles Trace and their generosity.

Call 211 – sign up is a great way to have notifications in the event of mandatory Hurricane evacuations. For those with no transportation, elderly, or inability to relocate themselves this is a good solution. There is a "robo-dial" with information for those who register with this service.

There is the PIP opportunity to meet with Captain Luis and his command staff on September 19, 2013 at 7 P.M. at 3203 Dairy Ashford. Take advantage of this time to have in-depth questions and issues discussed directly with HPD in this positive meeting.

Citizens can respond to ordinances with feedback at www.houstontx.gov. You can access this on the City of Houston website. Under the Mayor's picture there is a link to ordinances and comment page. Several items of note include: unlicensed boarding houses, no texting while driving, and mobile food trucks, hens for Houston, so take your opportunity to respond.

Oliver Pennington's offices always want newsworthy items for the newsletter. Please contribute with your community good news. They want to hear from YOU.

Civic Association Registration Forms must be renewed each year. Please make sure your community, civic group, homeowners association, etc. are registered. You receive important communications about various timely items such as the "permitting" and building of low income housing, and other issues highly relevant to your group. Please register each year as they system is wiped clear each year.

311 app for phones. If you have the app, you will not have to remember the address, just snap a picture and the app will place the proper address in for you.

The Dairy Ashford location with the fire (shopping center – between Briarforest and Whittington on the east side of the street) is reportedly in the feasibility stages with a potential buyer. We are hopeful that these discussions will turn to the positive for this "eyesore" of a property.

- 2. Nelson Espitia** from City of Houston brought greetings and new from the City of Houston. He reminded the group about the Shredding event October 26th from 8 – 12 noon for the public at the Police Station at Dairy Ashford. This is intended as a public not commercial way for citizens to shred checkbooks, bank info and other sensitive materials in a free manner.

He also wanted to remind us of the National Night Out Event Tuesday – October 2, 2013.

There has been a task force created to raise awareness, educate and report on human trafficking. It is called "Shine the light". Please see the attached flyer for more information.

There will be a disability advocate of the year event. Nominations for this award are due before Monday - September 30, 2013.

The Barc Flyer offers rules and contact information about laws related to pets in public. Citizens can get to BARC by way of 311. A rule of note for all of use, if you feed a stray cat or dog for 3 days it is then considered your obligation and you will be held liable for the animal.

- 3. METRO** Representatives gave reminders about the METRO 360 app. The Trip app also is reportedly extremely helpful. Give them a try.
The Reimaging report is ready. You can view this at the ridemetro.org site.

Metro Representatives can speak at your events, please contact them for more information.

The "Day pass" is making a comeback. The fee is expected to be \$3.00.

The Labor Day center lane to Galveston was a resounding success. Metro hopes to have more events like this in the future.

4. **Deanna Harrington** from Jim Murphy's office offered information on an ornament contest in conjunction with Memorial City Mall. You may obtain kits from the service center at the mall.

Did you know that there is a museum here in western part of Houston? This is in the Spring Branch area by Westchester school. This makes for a great outing. See Attached flyer.

OLD BUSINESS

Minutes from previous meeting were approved as read.

Please note that minutes are on the website as well as agenda. Please read them before meetings.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

BEAUTIFICATION– Vergie reported on the new trails within the Bishop Fiorenza part. Soon the Naomi and Cherry trails will be joined. This park basically covers the territory between Eldridge and Highway 9 near the Westpark Tollway.

The Bush park on Westmeimer will be under construction as the Dam is undergoing extensive renovations expected to last 5 – 6 years. This is a vital flood control location.

SNAP –Judy gave a brief report on our snap items. The approved items are still a go, but the time table has been pushed forward to October 31

SECURITY – There was no PIP meeting with HPD in August. Officer Charles Sterns at 713-773-7000 is the PIP coordinator for Westside.

HOMELESS – Diane Williams, concerned citizen volunteers to make our concerns with homeless more visible. The MEDIA were contacted and coverage followed soon. channel 2 cover our group and brought attention to the greater community our about the homeless, panhandlers, and prostitution on the corners and streets of our western communities.

HPD assigned 9 employees to this project. The committee found information demonstrating that Gang like Thugs were organized and pushed out the local homeless “regulars”. HPD plans to continue to address and improve on this problem. Some additional information shared by Jack O'Connor included the unwillingness of the homeless to “want to get off the streets”

To Re-emphasize to all in our community – PLEASE DO NOT GIVE TO PANHANDLERS. If we give they continue to stay and others come. Tell your respective communities to NOT contribute to these persons. Mandy C. Sample is working with us and HPD to address this problem from the City's perspective. We are happy to finally have the attention of HPD and the CITY on this increasing troublesome issue.

FLOOD – Billy presented some facts about the parks in our area being primarily “flood control plan retention areas”. He also reinforced the Dam as a significant construction project for several years. The Dam within George Bush Park was identified as a “Risky” rating. This is the primary barrier from complete flooding of Houston downstream if it fails. This is a high risk area. This Dam is vitally important.

This far, it has not exceeded its boundaries in capacity, ever! This construction will hopefully assure that this remains true. The construction will shore up the spillway areas and release areas as well. The parks are basically designed as flood control features and the park aspect is a bonus for local citizens. A concerned visitor to the meeting remarked that we all must take great care when on the trails, particularly when these trails are near housing. To her estimation, break in and theft have been increased and dangerous near trails by homes. Be watchful.

NEW BUSINESS

WEBSITE – Doug and Tom Mikus shared about our new additions to the SN17 website. These improvements are intended to make the site a 2 way communication opportunity. Features such as the Neighborhood Club and the Message Board are ways to transmit information to you the member and eblasts to other users. Please try to take advantage of the newly upgraded website.

Announcements

Next meeting is October 9th at 7:00 p.m. here at Eagles' Trace.

Meeting was adjourned at 8:05 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,
Sherry Lamb
Co-Secretary

Attachments

2 from Metro (2 sided each)
Barc
Fun and Games from Jim Murphy
Shine a Light Event
Shine a Light Information
Civic Association Registration Form
HELP CARD – 2 pages