

Minutes from the meeting of MAY 11, 2016 – Super Neighborhood 17

- I. Call to Order at 7:04 p.m.
- II. Representatives' Announcements:

- A. District G Representative, Mark Kirschke –

Mr. Kirschke handed out "Houston Government Civics Lesson 101," listing email addresses for all council members and Mayor Turner. It also stated that anyone can address the City Council for 1, 2, or 3 minutes on any issue. You can call the City Secretary's office at 832-393-1100 or visit the office at 900 Bagby Ground Floor (Public Level) to reserve time. The Public session is on each Tuesday at 2:00 p.m. at City Hall Council Chambers, 901 Bagby second floor. District G's office can help you with directions, parking, etc. if you plan to speak. You can contact District G office at 832-393-3007.

Mr. Kirschke spoke briefly about Mayor Turner's proposal to end the reimbursements ("sponsorship program") for private trash service. He noted that the Public Works budget was discussed. The number of calls regarding pot holes has dropped significantly and Mayor Turner has claimed the program is a success as over 97% of the potholes have been repaired. He asked that if you have a pothole, please report it or the program may end. Potholes are no larger than 5 feet by 5 feet. If the hole is larger, still report it and it will go on a list for panel replacement. Hopefully there will be \$12.5 million in panel replacement. He also noted that if you use the 311 app you can take a picture of the pothole and the app will geo-code the hole, figuring out the address.

Mr. Kirschke noted that the Obama administration has declared the recent flooding in Houston as a disaster, making the flooding problems qualify for FEMA assistance. There are four disaster recovery centers in the Houston area. Stephen Costello is the new flooding czar for the City. His scope of power in that position has not been revealed but, hopefully he will be in a position to bring all the entities involved with drainage issues in the area together to get resolution. Mr. Kirschke noted that Houston covers 650 square feet, which is a large area to address regarding flooding. Lidar technology is more useful than using 311 to track problem areas. Hopefully federal funding will assist in addressing flooding problems in Houston.

Mr. Kirschke noted that the Zika virus is being addressed by the City but it is a difficult issue because the mosquitoes bite during the day rather than at night. The bites affect all, causing flu like symptoms, but it is particularly dangerous for pregnant women. There is no vaccine and no cure. It is related to dengue fever and chikungunya. He advised that you should get rid of standing water where mosquitos breed, including trash where water can accumulate. The City does not provide mosquito control. You can contact Harris County Mosquito Control at 713-440-7800 if you are having problems with mosquitoes.

Mr. Kirschke noted that there is an issue on the City's agenda (for Thursday, May 12) that would speed up the process for getting neighborhood traffic management devices. Temporary devices will be placed if there is no hearing requested by residents living within a half-mile radius. If there is no additional request for a hearing, the temporary devices will be made permanent. Although the process will be speeded up, there is no additional money being put towards the program.

Councilmember Travis has put \$100,000 towards addressing panhandlers, solicitors, massage parlors and neighborhoods where crime is a problem in the west side of Houston. The money will go towards "active patrols," meaning you will see the police patrolling those neighborhoods. So far \$16,000 has been spent and there have been 8 felony arrests, 5 misdemeanors, moving and non-moving traffic violations, 112 panhandling citations, marijuana and heroin seizures, and 27 felony warrants have been cleared. Also, a burglary erring was arrested.

B. District G Representative, Councilmember Greg Travis –

Councilmember Travis spoke about Mayor Turner's proposal to end the "sponsorship program" in which the City reimburses HOAs that use private trash services. Mayor Turner had stated the City could save the City \$3.5 million. Councilmember Travis discussed the fact the City could actually lose money if all or some of the HOAs decided to change to the City's trash service. Councilmember Travis asked the Super Neighborhood members to contact City officials and let them know they would opt for the City's trash services.

[As of May 16, 2016, Mayor Turner decided to not do away with the "sponsorship program" and the reimbursement will continue.]

He noted that the budget shortfall is \$160 million, as he previously predicted. Councilmember Travis also stated that the City could save money if it were to change its procurement practices. He noted that recent defibrillators were purchased by the City for \$36,000 each, but the exact same defibrillators are available on Amazon for \$20,000 each. He said more contracts/purchases need to be put up bids.

C. Jim Murphy's Representative, Deanna Harrington –

Ms. Harrington stated that Jim Murphy likes to hear from constituents if they are having problems and he also likes to speak to civic groups, so please contact his office if you have an issue or would like him to speak to a group.

III. Old Business:

A. Approved minutes from April, 2016.

B. Committee Reports:

Beautification – no report.

311/SNAP – no report.

Security – 4 murders in HPD districts 19 and 20.

Flooding – no formal report, but it was noted that the Addicks dam is one of the worst in the state and Cinco Ranch could be in jeopardy if the dam were to fail.

Homeless/Panhandler - J. Lozano reported that the Alief Super Neighborhood and our Super Neighborhood are getting together to address panhandling.

Webmaster – Bob Andrew is working on getting emails out faster.

- C. METRO representative, Marguerite Dunlap noted the Adopt-a-Bus Stop program. She can be contacted at md18@ridemetro.org.
- D. The new Stonehenge representative was introduced.
- E. Meeting was adjourned at 9:16pm. Next meeting is June 8, 2016.