

Super Neighborhood 17 – Eldridge/West Oaks
DRAFT: Meeting Minutes October 11, 2023, 7:00 PM

- I. **Call to Order** President, Jeff Baker called the meeting to order at 7:04 pm with a quorum.
- II. **Public Safety/Crime Stats – Lieutenant Jonathan Lui**
- **Crime Report:** see the SN-17 crime stats for September as compared to August (p. 4)
 - **Westside Divisional PIP meeting** is on October 19th, 2023 @ 6:30 pm at 3203 S. Dairy Ashford Rd. This month’s meeting will feature a *guest speaker from the “HPD Bomb Squad.”*

III. **Guest Speaker – The Honorable Michael Landrum**

In preparation for the upcoming election, Judge Landrum gave an overview of the *14 propositions to amend the Texas Constitution that will be on the November ballot*. This was a concise, content-rich presentation that provided valuable insight on each of the 14 propositions. Propositions making it on the ballot require a 2/3 vote in both the TX House and Senate. The propositions are grouped below by A) Project Funding/Tax cuts B) Local Issues specific to Galveston and El Paso County C) Non-budgetary, miscellaneous issues related to protecting the rights of agricultural pursuits, prohibition of an individual wealth tax and increasing the retirement age for judges/justices.

A. Project Funding/Tax Cuts

Nine of the 14 propositions on the ballot allocate funds *to specific projects and tax cuts* supported by the state’s estimated \$32.7B budget surplus. The budget surplus is separate and apart from the “rainy day fund”, which was created in 1988 in response to a plunge in oil prices that sent Texas into recession.

Prop 2: authorizes a local tax exemption by a county or municipality (not a school district or MUD) for all or part of the appraised value of real properties used to operate a *child-care facilities*.

Prop 4: establishes a *temporary limit on the increase in appraised value of non-homestead property e.g., rentals, 2nd homes, etc. to 20%/year, until 2026*. Currently there is no limit on the increase in appraised value of non-homestead property, while homestead property can only increase 10%/year.

Prop 5: establishes a new source of funding in the form of a *permanent endowment for four public universities (Texas State University, Texas Tech University, University of Houston and the University of North Texas) to support research facilities and activities*. This fund will be similar to the Permanent University Fund established in 1876 to benefit the University of Texas and Texas A&M.

Prop 6: creates a *water fund* to assist the financing of water projects in Texas.

Prop 7: Provides for the creation of the *Texas Energy Fund* to support construction, maintenance, modernization and operation of electric generating facilities and administered by the TX PUC.

Prop 8: creates the *broadband infrastructure fund to expand high-speed broadband access and finance connectivity projects*. An estimated quarter of Texans do not have the quality of Internet access to conduct essential services (on-line classes, on-line business, job applications, tele-health, etc.).

Prop 9: provides a *cost-of-living adjustment to eligible annuitants of the Teacher Retirement System of Texas*. This proposition received unanimous votes in both the House and Senate.

Prop 10: *property tax exemption on equipment and inventory (not real estate) held by medical or biomedical products*. This proposition is intended to incentivize capital investment and expansion of these industries in Texas and strengthen the medical supply chain.

Prop 14: provides for the *creation of the centennial parks conservation fund* to be used for the creation and improvement of state parks.

B. Local Issues Specific to El Paso and Galveston Counties

Prop 11: permits conservation and reclamation districts in El Paso County to issue bonds supported by property taxes to fund the development and maintenance of parks and recreational facilities. This amendment would add new conservation and reclamation districts to those currently allowed to issue these bonds.

Prop 12: provides for the abolition of the office of Galveston County Treasurer (and the associated oversight of an *independently elected* official). This amendment puts the treasury function under the direct control of commissioner's court, with financial oversight by the *appointed* county auditor.

C. Non-Budgetary – Agricultural Rights, Prohibition of Wealth Taxes, Retirement Age for Judges

Prop 1: protects the right to engage in farming, ranching, timber production, horticulture and wildlife management. The author cited future food security, urban sprawl, and the need to unburden farmers and ranchers who engage in production agriculture *within municipal boundaries from “overregulation” that restricts “normal practices of agricultural operations”*, such as raising and keeping livestock, production of hay and cultivation of certain row crops.

There was concern expressed as to the quality-of-life impacts associated with rendering moot city ordinances that protect food safety, address water pollution, public health, animal welfare, and the noise/smell associated with raising livestock for food production, particularly given the vague language in this bill.

Prop 3: prohibits the imposition of an individual wealth or net worth tax. Texas currently does not impose a wealth tax on individuals/families, so this would extend the adoption of such into the future.

Prop 13: increases the mandatory retirement age of elected judges from 75 to 79 years old.

The *2023 LWV's Constitutional Voters Guide* provides videos explaining each of the 14 proposed amendments in clear, easy to understand language that is unbiased and nonpartisan, along with arguments for and against each at https://lwvtexas.org/content.aspx?page_id=0&club_id=979482

IV. Community Leaders

• State Representative District 133 Mano DeAyala (Deanna Harrington)

Governor Abbott called a 3rd session of the 88th Legislature to convene in Austin on Monday, October 9, 2023. This session is considering/acting upon legislation to:

- finance education savings accounts for all Texas schoolchildren (school vouchers)
- reduce illegal immigration by creating a criminal offense for illegal entry into this state from a foreign nation and authorizing all licensed peace officers to remove illegal immigrants from TX.
- impede illegal entry into Texas by increasing the penalties for certain criminal conduct involving the smuggling of persons or the operation of a stash house.
- impede illegal entry into Texas by providing more funding for the construction, operation, and maintenance of border barrier infrastructure.
- address public safety, security, environmental quality, and property ownership in areas like the Colony Ridge development in Liberty County, Texas.
- prohibit COVID-19 vaccine mandates by private employers

- **District G - Office of Councilwoman Mary Nan Huffman (Sarah Jones)**
 - The occupants of *the encampment in the 800 block of Hwy 6* have been given a verbal warning to vacate. The owners of the property will have to complain to have the encampment removed. A new commercial development is coming to this site; its nature is unknown at this time.
 - Ground-breaking on the *Kirkwood Phase 2* project is expected in late October.
 - Continue to *report water leaks to 311* and report the service number to District G at districtg@houstontx.gov
 - *Coffee with Council Member Mary Nan Huffman* is on Saturday, October 14 at Rudi Lechner's (2503 S. Gessner Rd. Houston, TX 77063) at 9:30a – 11:00a

V. Jeff Baker – Community Safety and Communication

Jeff reported on a recent Energy Corridor District meeting that he and Nick Kornuta attended. He was happy to learn how much good the flock cameras are doing in leading to the apprehension of criminals and noted that the number of cameras is nowhere near the saturation point in the area.

Old Business

The September Meeting Minutes were approved.

VI. New Business

- ***Fair for Houston: Advocates for Proposition B (Michael Moritz and Ally Smither)***

Houston is represented by the Houston-Galveston Area Council (H-GAC), a regional council of government that encompasses 13 counties, 107 cities, and 11 independent school districts, and from which federal dollars are allocated. *Houston is currently dramatically under-represented on the council based on population.* Proposition B would compel H-GAC to account for population size in its voting structure. While Houston/Harris County make up *63% of the population served*, they *hold only 18% of the voting power on the Transportation Policy Council*, for example. Underrepresentation has led to the city missing out on billions of available federal dollars for transportation, infrastructure, and flood control projects, etc. For example, H-GAC voted to distribute less than 2% of \$500 million in federal Harvey recovery funds to Houston, despite the majority of damage in the city.

Prop B would give Houston a fair/proportional share of regional funds. All mayoral candidates have endorsed Prop B.

- **Election Candidate Introductions**

The following attendees running for office spoke briefly on their candidacies:

Shannan Nobles, City Controller

Tony Buzbee, City Council District G

Nick Hellyar, City Council At-Large Position 2

Melanie Miles, City Council At-Large District 1

Holly Villaseca, City Council At-Large District 2

**Next Meeting is Wednesday, November 8, 2023
7:00 PM at Eagle’s Trace**

2023 September Crime Stats

SN17	Aug	Sept	TREND	SN17	2022	2023	TREND
MURDER	0	0	0.00%	MURDER	8	5	-37.50%
SEXUAL ASSAULT	3	1	-66.67%	SEXUAL ASSAULT	29	18	-37.93%
ROBBERY	15	5	-66.67%	ROBBERY	86	86	0.00%
AGGRAVATED ASSAULT	26	17	-34.62%	AGGRAVATED ASSAULT	271	224	-17.34%
Violent Crimes	44	23	-47.73%	Violent Crimes	394	333	-15.48%
BURGLARY HABITATION	12	19	58.33%	BURGLARY HABITATION	251	178	-29.08%
BURGLARY BUILDING	7	10	42.86%	BURGLARY BUILDING	149	104	-30.20%
BURGLARY MOTOR VEHICLE	90	69	-23.33%	BURGLARY MOTOR VEHICLE	638	609	-4.55%
THEFT	47	59	25.53%	THEFT	446	428	-4.04%
AUTO THEFT	50	42	-16.00%	AUTO THEFT	220	328	49.09%
Non-Violent Crimes	206	199	-3.40%	Non-Violent Crimes	1704	1647	-3.35%
CRIMES TOTAL	250	222	-11.20%	CRIMES TOTAL	2098	1980	-5.62%

Current Month Arrests

Aggravated Assault	4	Murder	0
Assault	12	Narcotics	0
Auto Theft	1	Prostitution	2
Burglary Building	1	Off Against Family	0
Criminal Mischief	2	Stolen Property	1
Disorderly Conduct	2	Theft	3
Burglary Habitation	1	BMV	2
DWI	4	Weapons Violation	5
Forgery	0	All Other Crimes	13
Total People Arrested	53		