

Minutes Neighborhood Advisory Commission November 2, 2011

Minutes of the Neighborhood Advisory Commission (NAC) held on November 2, 2011, 5:35–7:20 p.m., at City Hall, 31 E. 5th Street, 3rd Floor Conference Room, Tempe, Arizona.

(MEMBERS) Present: Karen Adams, Nancy Buell, Pete DeMott, Ann Lynn DiDomenico, Gary Johnson, Britney Scott Kaufmann, Ira King, Josephine McNamara, Robert Miller, Leonard Montenegro, John Sanborn, Scott Smas, Bill Wagner, Michael Wasko

(MEMBERS) Excused Absences: Maureen Decindis, Joochul Kim, Angela Lopez, Joe Pospicil, Lisa Roach,

(MEMBERS) Unexcused Absences: Michael Pickett

City Staff Present: Shauna Warner, Neighborhood Services, Director; Elizabeth Thomas, Neighborhood Services Specialist, Andrew Ching, City Attorney, andrew_ching@tempe.gov or 480-350-8575.

Agenda Item 1 – Call to Order

Chair Wasko called the meeting to order at 5:35 p.m.

Agenda Item 2 – Public Comment

There was none.

Agenda Item 3 – Consideration of Minutes: October 5, 2011

Commissioner Miller made a motion to approve the minutes; Commissioner King seconded the motion and it passed with eleven affirmative votes and two abstentions due to not being present at the October meeting.

Agenda Item 4 – Open Meeting Law

City Attorney Andrew Ching was invited to attend to further explain the memo distributed to the Commission as a handout at the September 7, 2011 meeting. Andrew explained that when the ordinance change was made and adopted by City Council in January 2008, no special outreach was directed to Boards and Commissions because there was only one or two that had the authority to create committees or sub-committees in the first place. In essence, the NAC committees of the commission were doing everything right pertinent to Open Meeting Law except for the fact that they weren't supposed to have committees or subcommittees or task forces in the first place.

The City Attorney's office was not fully aware of the situation until recently. The current City Clerk was not here when the ordinance was changed and was unaware of the intent of the omission of the changed language as was staff. Andrew acknowledged the different direction previously provided by City Clerk and staff and apologized for any resulting confusion and

miscommunication.

Moving forward, he explained that nothing prohibits “informal” gatherings from taking place as long as a quorum is completely avoided and as long as no legal action is taken or inferred. These informal activities could include a couple of NAC members agreeing to gather to take a Saturday morning walk in their neighborhood and later sharing their observations at the NAC meeting with the commission as a whole. A NAC member could also take the initiative at the close of a meeting to invite anyone interested to get together for coffee at a later date to share neighborhood news and concerns. He added that it is ok for the Chair to request volunteers to research an item or to follow up on an issue and report back.

It’s important to ensure that the same people are not meeting and gathering repeatedly, this could inadvertently create a quorum by proxy situation where two to three people meet and then each share information with two to three others and a quorum is inadvertently reached - even though the members were not all present at once. Andrew also suggested that if there is an issue or event that comes up when possibly taking action between commission meetings is desired, a second commission meeting could be scheduled with an agenda posted to allow for discussion and action without having to wait for the group as a whole to meet at the next regular meeting.

Staff reiterated that if a commission member thinks of an item they want added to the next meeting agenda (outside of a commission meeting), they can always email staff and/or Chair Wasko to make a request. Depending on what else is already on the agenda, availability of outside speakers if needed and if there is sufficient interest by the group, the item can be added or considered for a future meeting.

Andrew mentioned that in light of all this new information if NAC still wants committees, they can go before the City Council and request an ordinance change to allow them. They must be prepared to explain why they are needed in order to conduct commission business. Staff again noted that even when committees were in place, they had problems with getting meetings set up, getting members willing to chair, reaching a quorum and preparing minutes. Chair Wasko observed the newly provided direction allows flexibility and will eliminate much of the extra effort needed to arrange formal committee meetings.

Agenda Item 5 – Customer Relations Center/Tempe 311 Center

The Tempe 311 Center, is planned to roll out to the public in March 2012. This timing will coincide with the unveiling of the City’s new website which has been entirely re-designed to be more visual, interactive and easy to use.

Beginning in November 2010, the 311 Center has been participating in a pilot project taking all the calls that used to go through the city operator as well as calls to Public Works. Additional areas will continue to be added with the exception of the Police Department, Courts and Customer Service (utilities) who will continue to take all of their own calls. The creation of a knowledge base, a searchable data base, for all of these distinct areas has been a significant and time consuming part of this process.

The knowledge base is critical because 311 programs are designed to provide citizens a centralized method to access information and to request non-emergency government services through an all-purpose phone number. Advanced systems like Tempe’s also provide residents a progressive means of communicating with city hall including web, email and smart phone based technologies. Requests are automatically routed to the appropriate city service, tracked, resolved and the originating citizen can also track their request through the process.

Shauna walked commissioners through a graffiti complaint example and explained how many areas can be involved based on the location and nature of the graffiti. Next steps include moving

the Customer Relations Center from pilot phase to citywide service by end of March 2012, implementation of web portal and smart phone services for residents and the deployment of mobile technology for staff to manage requests in the field.

Agenda Item 6 – Commission Objective Setting

Chair Wasko explained that this agenda item was listed in order for members to think about and have further discussion regarding how the four identified goals might be achieved. These goals are listed below along with any initial objectives that were suggested:

1. Strengthen and grow Neighborhood Workshop and Awards
 - Improve nomination form.
 - Increase number of nominations received (Continue to promote and advertise event through Tempe 11, press releases, Facebook, Twitter, Tempe Today, Arizona Republic, Warner Wrangler, event posters and/or brochures in city facilities). Additionally, NAC members can help to get the word out through their business and neighborhood contacts.
 - Increase attendance (staff can provide a table with previous year's event attendance to establish baselines). Each member can ask at least one or two new faces to accompany them this year.
 - Secure sponsors.
 - Increase/maintain workshop ratings based on survey at end of event.
2. Improve feeling of safety in neighborhoods (Vice Chair McNamara agreed to spearhead this goal.)
3. Improve maintenance of private property in neighborhoods (Commissioner DeMott agreed to spearhead this goal.)
4. Improve quality of neighborhood parks (Chair Wasko agreed to spearhead this goal.)

There was agreement that once the objectives for each goal are identified, the goals can be listed separately on future commission agendas to allow for more detailed discussion and follow up on those items.

Agenda Item 7 – Neighborhood Workshop and Awards Planning

Staff schedules, room reservation and print deadline constraints necessitate that staff continue to move forward on the event planning. Elizabeth placed a hold on the Tempe History Museum Community Room for Saturday, April 26, 2012 for the Awards portion of the event. She is following up to see if Vihel has some classrooms available for the creatively building community workshops which may include: a public art activity, a behind the scenes tour of the Tempe History Museum, social media, a going green topic and a What's happening in Downtown Tempe session. She is in the process of contacting potential speakers. Commissioners were encouraged to offer event suggestions.

Commissioner McNamara prepared a draft of the Neighborhood Awards application with suggested revisions extracted from the June Retreat minutes. There was some discussion regarding whether to require that a separate application be completed for all Chuck Malpede nominees. Commissioners ultimately agreed that the same application could be used but that the nominator would need to indicate by checking a box that they intended for the nominee to be considered for the Chuck Malpede honor. Commissioners also agreed to change the application wording from 10 or more years helping in the neighborhood to five or more years to allow for more residents to be eligible. Additional minor application edits were provided, staff requested that commissioners email in any additional suggested changes after the meeting. Commissioners also agreed to recognize neat and tidy alleys as subset of the Residential Beautification Awards.

Agenda Item 8 –Board and Commission Recruitment

There is one current opening in the 85281 zip code and there will be additional openings after December 2011 when some commissioners term off. There was no discussion on this item as none of the commissioners brought in information or resumes from prospective members.

Agenda Item 9 – Adjournment

Meeting was adjourned at 7:20 p.m.

Prepared by: Elizabeth Thomas, Neighborhood Services Specialist

Reviewed by: Shauna Warner, Neighborhood Services Director

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