

Community Issues Meeting Minutes

Monday, November 12th, 2018— 6:30--8:00pm — Whittier Park

Attendees: Karen Clark, Aldona Martinka, Brandon Schorsch, Christine Popowski, Annie Flynn, Kathy Waite, Jessica Kawas, Brian Foster, Crystal Audi, Joanna Krause-Johnson, Hukun Dabar, Brendan Kelly, Sam Peterson, Corey Barden, Will Zest, Becky Lewis

Staff: Kaley Brown

Welcome

Welcome at 6:30pm by Kaley Brown, Whittier Alliance Executive Director.

Agenda & Standard of Conduct is reviewed.

Motion to Approve Agenda. Seconded. Approved.

No formal meeting minutes from October due to strategy session work at the CI Meeting.

Motion to approve September Minutes. Seconded. Approved.

Announcements/Community Comments & Discussion

Community Updates

Inspector Kathy Waite and Crime Prevention Specialist Jessica Kawas - 5th Precinct

- New crime prevention specialist at the 5th Precinct
- Auto thefts and garden level apartment break-ins are the most common issues right now
- Safety concerns in Whittier can be routed to Whittier Alliance for further support from 5th Precinct
- Question: what to do about individuals experiencing homelessness who tend to leave belongings and trash in certain areas?
 - Call non-emergency line and beat officers can go to assist them - most know them all by name and have formed relationships with them
 - Setting expectations for using community space is helpful

Becky Lewis - Park Director at Whittier + 7 area parks

- Winter programming costs can be waived if cost is a barrier
 - Program highlights - Futsal League (indoor soccer) starting at end of December
 - Basketball starting at end of January -- different age groups
 - Adaptive health and fitness class -- open to anyone -- programming is focused on adaptive health -- cooking, social skills
 - Teen programming has had a lot of success
 - Tuesday evenings - glow in the dark dodgeball - free
 - Teen Night -- free
 - Jan 23rd - snowshoeing at the park
- Ceramics Program Highlight

- Heidi - ceramics program for the past year on Tuesdays
 - 2 pottery wheels and a kiln
 - 8-12 students and a few adults
 - Thinking about adult pottery classes or even an adult paint night to engage older community members for one-off events -- open to ideas
 - Pottery studio is drop-in and free
- IDEA: with the holidays coming up, there could be an opportunity to advertise a chance for community members to make a gift on a Saturday morning or afternoon

Will Zest - Zest Ed

- 2018 BIG Ideas Grant winner
- Will and Kym are co-owners of Zest Ed, which is located in the Whittier neighborhood, the Lyn-Lake area out of the Balance Fitness Studios
- Programming is aimed at helping individuals build skills in outdoor activities / wilderness exploration
- Rather than a one-off guided trips that don't do as much to actually teach the skills, this program is designed to help community members achieve specific goals including a training session and 6 months of active follow-up to answer questions and keep clients on track
- The BIG Ideas grant will allow Zest Ed to offer scholarships on a need basis - those who couldn't afford to do the program otherwise or may experience other barriers, as well
- QUESTION: What age range? Geared toward adults or families.

Brendan Kelly - 98.9 FM KRSM Radio Station

- Partnership proposal with Whittier Alliance
- Station manager for KRSM - based in Phillips neighborhood
- Station is 1 year old but has been in the works for about 10 years
- About the station: 24 hours per day, 7 days a week
- Also have mobile apps and can also listen through standard radio
- Broadcasts in 6 different languages
- Primary work - serve as a tool to amplify the voices and stories of communities all over south Minneapolis with a focus on communities that have traditionally been marginalized
- Indigenous community-led shows
- Youth led programming - 300 hours ; partner with 12 classrooms and 6 local schools
- Partnered with Ventura Village Neighborhood Association
 - Contract to have KRSM on retainer to be a mouthpiece for VV
 - Once per week they can email events, meetings, info they want to share with community members
 - Volunteers put together a script, translate, and broadcast messages 7x per day
 - What worked this past year? The neighborhood partnership was a big highlight of success and they want to expand this.
 - Assist us with reaching community members that our traditional media channels aren't reaching as is

- “Community Radio” means that they are a catch-all for all kinds of broadcast topics and hyper-localized to South Mpls
- Proposal to begin similar partnership with Whittier Alliance for \$750/quarterly (much more cost-effective than paying for occasional ad spots)
 - QUESTION: Local politics are sometimes covered -- people come forward with what they’re interested in, so they don’t always know what topics will be covered
 - QUESTION: Estimates of how many people are reached? A: The style of radio station that they are doesn’t apply to the FCC measurements of listenership
 - They received a grant from Nielson (sp?) to help them track this for next year
 - 2 months ago -- 19% of contributors in first-ever fundraiser from Whittier
 - 170+ survey responses from both Whittier renters and homeowners

Legislative Session Updates

Rep. Karen Clark - MN House District 62A

- Bittersweet report - likes to come visit the neighborhoods at least twice a year
- January 6th - last day in office, and then Hodan Hassan takes over
- Still writing legislation and hopes to continue as a citizen advocate on those issues after the new year
- Last session felt like a lost cause because the legislature was so polarized and nothing could get passed
- Both property tax levies for Minneapolis Public Schools passed via ballot last week
- Appropriations bill had many different pieces of legislation with thousands of pages; Governor Dayton vowed to veto due to other items being thrown into the large bill and did
- DFL has now taken over control of the MN House, so it’s possible that items will get passed in the coming session
- Opioid crisis in MN is extremely bad - legislation on a “Penny a Pill” did not pass - didn’t get a vote on the House floor and had potential to raise millions of dollars for treatment programs
- Sensible Gun Control - worked on background checks - tried to identify those who need mental health treatment
- Reparations Bill - started working on this 20 years ago, reintroduced it 4 years ago, and hoping to get it back into the conversation with a People’s Hearing
- Cancer Registry - not comprehensive enough to incorporate environmental factors such as occupation and where someone lives
- Driver’s Licenses for Undocumented Minnesotans - came within 1 vote last year
- Lead paint testing for rental properties - didn’t get this passed
- Indoor Urban Farm for low-income East Phillips individuals with aquaponics -- environmental justice approach to community revitalization
- Serving this district has been an honor -- and mostly fun!

Hodan Hassan - Karen Clark’s Successor in Minnesota House District 62A

- Social worker by trade - worked in mental health
- Biggest issue in our district right now is housing crisis

- Was once a refugee and has experienced that reality
- A lot of work to be done in the legislature - housing and mental health/chemical health crises
 - Stigma is strong and prevents people from seeking services
 - Plans to work closely with Karen and with all her constituents to improve our district
- Please call her with issues and ideas for how to improve our community
- Lots of great colleagues to help orient her, and she will let us know about opportunities to support her efforts via public hearings and others
- Hodan will share her contact info with Whittier Alliance when she knows what it will be at her new office and WA will publicize
- QUESTION: What is the best way to connect with her on issues that are most important?
 - 1:1 convos with her and signing up for legislative updates / newsletters

Conversation on Veteran Homelessness

Corey Barden and Sam Peterson - St. Stephen's Human Services

- Visit shelters in evenings - a constant presence to start building relationships with those who identify as a vet
- In a unique position - different definition at Federal and State levels of what constitutes a "vet"
 - Where they served may dictate what kind of access to resources they may have
 - Periods of active duty lengths and the nature of their discharge could dictate whether they are able to access VA services
 - Subsidized by MN Veterans Assistance Council to help them distribute resources to those who may not be able to receive assistance otherwise
- MN has one of the best run VAs in the nation but can still be a challenge at times
- GOAL: Functional Zero -- every vet has been given the opportunity to access housing in Minnesota
 - Hennepin County is the area that St. Stephen's serves, but they are tasked the most with outreach in Minneapolis
 - Partner with other agencies in Minneapolis that do community-specific work with American Indians and other communities
 - Majority of caseloads are now in prevention-mode in Hennepin County which is huge
 - Much more cost-effective to keep vets housed and on track than it is to find them housing
 - On track to end veteran homelessness in Minnesota
 - Lutheran Social Services hosts a **weekly** collaboration meeting on Wednesdays with all organizations working towards this goal to really work together, which is a testament to the success that they've seen
 - Housing is the most important factor to individuals looking to build their life back together
- What can we do as community members to help advocate for vets experiencing homelessness or generate needed donations?

- Advocate for affordable housing funding legislation whenever possible
- Needs for Winter -- sleeping bags, hats, gloves, hand warmers, coats
 - St. Stephen's has a wishlist on their website for current needs and where to drop it off and when
- Community members can call their street outreach team if they see an individual who may need assistance and get them connected
 - Don't take general clothing donations but they do have a partner drop location listed on their website

Motion to adjourn. Seconded. Approved.

Adjourned 7:50pm

Minutes submitted by Kaley Brown.