

DISTRICT ADVISORY BOARD (DAB) I

MEETING MINUTES

Monday, Nov. 5, 2007

7 p.m.

Atwater Community Center, 2755 E. 19th, Wichita, Kansas 67214

Members Present

Council Member Lavonta Williams
Treatha Brown-Foster
Gerald Domitrovic
Gail Finney
Lori Lawrence
Debra K. Miller Stevens
Janice Rich
Steve Roberts
Benjamin Stiff
James Thompson
Adam Thomsen
Shontina Tipton*

City of Wichita Staff Present

Janet Johnson, Neighborhood Assistant
Officer Justin Whyte, WPD
Officer Larry Carlson, WPD
Officer Paul Kimble, WPD
Mary Kay Vaughn, Housing
Doug Kupper, Park and Rec
Tim Martz, Park and Rec
Deb Legge, OCI
Julie Irvin, OCI
Joyce Stockham, CDO
Donna Goultry, Planning
Cynthia Berner-Harris, Library

*Alternate

Guests

Eugene Anderson, 1832 N. Poplar
Beverly Domitrovic, 1219 GW Blvd
Janet Wilson, 1152 N. Estelle
Pat Polite, 1551 N. Volutsia
Joann Hartig, 1756 S. Main
Robert Harmon, 644 N. Ridgewood
Annell Harmon, 644 N. Ridgewood
James Arbertha, 1802 N. Hydraulic
John Stevens 3125 E. Boston
Kim Potochnik, 6927 Woodbury Ct
Drusilla Triplett, 1601 N. Estelle
Paula Givens, 1228 N. Mathewson
Prentice Lewis, 4823 Ethel
Billy Williams, 3928 Vesta
Bev White, 2707 E. 21st St.
Rep. Melody McCray Miller
Mary McDonald, 1654 N. Lorraine
Dave Matson, 2834 Tee Time
Terry Smythe

Order of Business

Call to Order

Council Member Williams called the meeting to order at 7 p.m. and welcomed the guests.

Approval of Minutes

Minutes were approved as submitted 11:0.

Approval of Agenda

Lawrence (Roberts) made a motion to approve the agenda as submitted. Motion carried 11:0.

Public Agenda

1. United Builders & Contractor Inc.

Mr. Eugene Anderson passed out copies of proposal to the Board members. His proposal would teach 18 to 25 year-olds marketable skills in the construction field. He noted the number of young men who end up in prison and said it costs around \$22,000 per year to incarcerate someone, and it costs much less to teach them a marketable skill.

Brown-Foster asked if WATC offers a similar program. **Anderson** said a County Commissioner told him that they only have a “shell of a program.” He also noted that WATC had recently had a \$1.5 million budget reduction.

Domitrovic wanted to know how the project defines “disadvantaged” youth. **Anderson** said by the federal guidelines for economic status. He said they are targeting age, not race.

Kim Potochnik, 6927 Woodbury Ct., said one of the challenges that WATC experiences is that the students have to be able to read at an 8th grade level, and many of them can't.

Tipton thanked Anderson for wanting to make an investment in youth and asked where he is with the development of the program. He said right now they are simply trying to sell the concept.

Thompson asked if the concept would be classroom learning or on the job training. **Anderson** said it would be mostly on the job training.

Finney asked if there are any similar pilot programs anywhere else. Anderson said the U.S. Dept. of Transportation has a project and the State of Kansas also has a program.

Thompson asked if they have people lined up to do the classroom portion of the training. **Anderson** said he doesn't foresee that as being a problem.

Finney suggested that they considered teaming up with the Jabara Training program. **Rich** mentioned Job Corps, and how successful that program has been.

Stiff said this type of training is growing across the nation and that eventually he expects to see programs like this incorporated into programs like Workforce Development.

Anderson said that his proposed project is a good fit with the New Communities Initiative because there are two things that stand out: 1) employment opportunities and 2) enhanced learning environment. He said he wants to generate interest in this project and show that it has value.

Miller Stevens (Roberts) moved to receive and file. Motion carried 11-0.

2. Off Agenda Items

No items submitted.

Staff Reports

3. Police Report

Officer Whyte, 32 Beat, provided cold weather tips and suggested that citizens in need of assistance utilize the United Way 2-1-1 help line. In dealing with cold weather, he suggested that everyone watch out for their neighbors, keep plenty of food, water and clothing in the car during long trips, and make sure that animals have proper shelter and food and water. He also reminded everyone not to leave their cars running.

Officer Carlson, 21 Beat, reported that he is working on the panhandling issue in Old Town. He said there is aggressive panhandling occurring in that area, and it's not typically vagrants doing it, but rather people out to get some extra money. He said the panhandlers will often follow someone to their car, won't take no for an answer and use other intimidating tactics. Several DAB members

said they have either been victims of this, or they know other people who have been victims of aggressive panhandling in the Old Town area.

Officer Paul Kimble, 47 Beat reported for the Patrol North Bureau and said that burglaries are still up, but several arrests have been made. With the holidays approaching, they are working with area businesses to try and prevent commercial robberies. They have also been working on issues related to the Top Notch business located at Cleveland and Central. Kimble said this place operates as a cabaret/dance hall and a special project there recently yielded the following: underage drinking, curfew violations, drug violations, and a large disturbance that required a lot of police resources. He said they are also planning on doing a follow-up survey of the Beat 44 area. **Brown-Foster** stated that she Thanked Officer Paul Kimble and his wife for being her guest at the Wichita Crime Commission 54th Annual Awards dinner. Ms. Brown received the William Garvey Crime Prevention Award in recognition of outstanding achievement in the area of crime prevention citizen activist.

Lawrence (Tipton) made a motion to receive and file. Motion carried 11-0.

New Business

4. New Communities Initiative

Mary Kay Vaughn, Housing and Community Services, gave a Power Point presentation on the New Communities Initiative and the Master Plan. The City of Wichita, Sedgwick County and the State of Kansas have joined together to launch the New Communities Initiative (NCI). The Initiative is designed to: provide quality housing for all incomes; provide employment opportunities for those needing and seeking jobs; enhance the learning environment across all age groups; reduce the conditions of blight and revitalize the neighborhood; address and positively impact quality of life issues; and develop nurturing opportunities for children and youth. The overall goal is to support and enhance successful families and sustaining communities.

The NCI has an oversight Policy Group that includes representatives of government, education, business, philanthropic and social service sectors. The Policy Group wants to embark upon a comprehensive Master Plan for the current NCI area to provide a framework for the comprehensive development of the area and to identify the kind and quantity of housing appropriate for the area that will meet the identified needs.

It is anticipated that Policy Group members and other members of the community will share the Master Plan cost. Preliminary estimates are up to \$800,000 although that amount could be reduced based on the design and scope of the Request for Proposals. The City Council has been asked to consider committing \$250,000 toward the cost of the Master Plan. The source of funding is from the Capital Improvement Program within the Landbank project (Economic and Redevelopment allocation).

Finney asked if there is an economic development component of the Initiative. **Vaughn** referred to the brochures and said yes, it's one of the five pillars. **Finney** asked how it's possible to keep housing affordable. **Vaughn** said through appropriate financing and subsidies.

Brown-Foster inquired about possible funding sources. **Vaughn** said the developer would identify every possible funding source, which would include Federal sources. **Brown-Foster** also wanted to know why the Sedgwick County Sheriff's Office wasn't listed. Vaughn said the Sheriff's Office is not listed, but County and State Corrections are involved.

Lawrence asked for a phone number for the employment program. **Vaughn** said it's 337-9444. **Lawrence** also pointed out that the area designated for the New Communities Initiative does not include all of the 67214 zip code because the Initiative only runs to Central and the 67214 zip code runs to Douglas.

Stiff asked if there are plans for a special tax district. **Vaughn** said there are no plans right now.

Brown-Foster pointed out that the McAdams, North Central and Core Neighborhood Plans have been included in the Initiative.

Finney wanted to know what the projected time line is. **Vaughn** said 18 months, with no projection for the Master Plan.

Stiff said he hopes they will reach out to the Small Business Association for micro loans.

John Stevens, 3125 E. Boston, asked if there would be any park development included in the Initiative. **Vaughn** said that should be a major part of the plan.

Bev White, 2707 E. 21st St., Center for Health and Wellness, said she thought it was an excellent process and she is very pleased to be serving on one of the pillar groups.

Janet Wilson, 1152 N. Estelle, asked how Neighborhood Associations could get involved. **Vaughn** said they can serve on any of the pillar groups. **Vaughn** will get the committee contact information to LaShonda for distribution.

Finney (Miller Stevens) made a motion to receive and file. Motion carried 11-0.

5. Neighborhood Inspection

Deb Legge and Julie Irvin, Office of Central Inspection, gave an update on the merger of Environmental Maintenance and OCI Neighborhood Inspections, and the Vacant and Neglected Structure portion of StopBlight.

Legge reported that as of Jan. 1, 2008, the six Environmental Maintenance inspectors would be moved to OCI, so the City will have a total of 19 neighborhood code inspectors. She explained that each inspector will now enforce both the housing and the premises violations, and that they expect the first year to be a challenging one due to the cross training that will be necessary and the abatement issues. The abatement process is moving to OCI, but the staff person who has run that program, is not moving to OCI.

Legge said this has been an excellent opportunity for OCI to review their own work process and those of Environmental Maintenance and to look for ways to eliminate bureaucracy.

Brown-Foster wanted to know if only having one "call in" number would be an issue. **Legge** said they aren't yet sure how that's going to work. Currently OCI gets 12,000 calls a month and Environmental gets 7,000 a month, and OCI will not be getting any additional clerical staff to answer the phones.

Miller Stevens wanted to know if the other functions that Environmental Services would remain in that Department. **Legge** said yes, only Environmental Maintenance is moving.

Thomsen said he thinks the merger is a great thing, having been on the other side of a neighborhood concern and trying to figure out who to call.

Roberts asked if they would be using different software. **Legge** said no, both OCI and Environmental inspectors use Tidemark, so there aren't any changes planned there.

Lawrence wanted to know that the phone number would be to call in complaints. **Legge** said 268-4481.

Thompson asked what the geographical assignment areas would be like. **Legge** said they already have the city divided up and know where the various inspectors will be assigned, and they have already started the cross training.

Joann Hartig, 1756 S. Main, asked if they have considered having a Citizen's Review Board to give input. **Legge** said right now they are playing catch up trying to get this change implemented, but it sounded like a good idea for after the first of the year.

Janet Wilson, 1152 N. Estelle, shared that a lot of people feel like they are being picked on when it comes to neighborhood code enforcement. She said she thinks it's mainly due to a lack of information, i.e. where can you park your boat, rv, etc. **Legge** suggested that the Neighborhood Associations invite OCI to their meetings, and she also said she can provide various brochures that explain City code and that the OCI website also has a lot of good information.

Officer Kimble encouraged **Legge** to also utilize police resources in the neighborhoods.

Julie Irvin reported on the VNR (vacant and neglected) properties. She said that 783 cases have been started on boarded properties, with most of them being residential, as opposed to commercial. She said 239 cases have been closed due to resolution and that of the remaining cases, 121 owners have registered plans to address the property.

Lawrence said the house next door to her has been vacant for the past four years. She wanted to know if it would qualify. **Irvin** said the property might qualify, but that right now, OCI is focusing on the vacant, boarded structures.

Thomsen asked how many structures can OCI demolish before they run out of money. **Legge** said it depends on a number of factors. This past year they set a record amount of demolitions with 90. **Thomsen** related that he was shocked when he called in a boarded structure and found that no one else had called it in. He said sometimes problem properties are reported because everyone assumes that someone else has turned it in.

Stiff asked if businesses can take over the boarded properties and refurbish them. **Irvin** said Mennonite Housing and Power CDC have both done some projects.

Lawrence asked if there are any local businesses that have been acting as the registered agent for the absentee property owners. **Irvin** said not really, because they don't want to be legally responsible if the work isn't done on the property to bring it into compliance.

Finney (Tipton) made a motion to receive and file. Motion carried 11-0.

6. Payday and Auto Title Lending

Representative Melody McCray-Miller, 89th District State Representative, reported that the Payday loans and auto title lending issue has been in front of the Legislature for the past three years now, and still hasn't made it out of committee. She said that the number of Payday loan establishments have increase from 218 in 2004 to 358 in 2005.

Because of the way they are set up with hidden fees and taxes, nationally, citizen paid \$4.2 billion in excess fees on these loans last year, and more than \$30 million of that was in Kansas. She said that 13 states have banned this type of lending and save \$1.4 billion.

Rep. McCray-Miller said the average person who uses these businesses typically has five loans at any given time and they will usually pay \$793 in interest and fees on a \$325 loan.

She said on a national level, the Federal government passed a law that caps the interest rate on this loans at 36 percent for military personnel. Other states, such as Iowa, have capped the interest rate at 12 percent.

Rep. McCray-Miller explained that last year the Kansas Attorney General put together a round table on this issue and they recommended that Kansas follow the lead of the Federal government and cap the interest at 36 percent. She said the Legislative hears were textbook, but the bill went nowhere because the Committee sat on it. She said she is trying to generate a ground swell of support for this issue before the next Legislative session.

Roberts asked which Committee sat on the bill. **Rep. McCray-Miller** said Financial Institutions chaired by Rep. Clark Schultz.

Thomsen asked why the round table set the cap at 36 percent, why not something lower? **Rep. McCray-Miller** said everything they do in the Legislature is a compromise and she would have preferred 18 percent, but compromised at 36 percent.

Tipton asked if there are any regulations on how many loans a person can get. **Rep. McCray-Miller** said there is no credit check and the regulations say you can get two loans per lender.

Lawrence asked where she could get a copy of the bill. **Rep. McCray-Miller** said citizens can go to the website www.kslegislature.com and then put in the bill numbers 2244 and 2245. She said there might also be a fiscal note with additional information.

Stiff commented that there is probably a lot of "special interest" concerning this issue. **Rep. McCray-Miller** said yes, and the CFA is the trade union for payday lenders. **Stiff** asked what other lending options are there for borrows who use payday loans. **Rep. McCray Miller** said there are some credit unions that will lend.

Dave Matson, 2834 Tee Time, asked if within the bill, if there were any truth in terms or oversight. **Rep. McCray-Miller** said yes, in the bill to amend the statute, they were requiring a database that would be under the oversight of the Bank Commissioner.

Mary McDonald, 1654 N. Lorraine, said she wonders if people use Payday loans because the 67214 zip code is redlined by more traditional lenders.

Roberts (Finney) made a motion to receive and file. Motion carried 11-0.

7. **CUP2007-00057**

Donna Goltry, Planning Department, The application area is Parcel 6 of DP-228, the Woodlawn Power Center Community Unit Plan, located north of K-96 Expressway and east of Woodlawn Avenue. DP-228 currently is divided into two parcels, Parcels 5 and 6, that were originally part of DP-95, which contains Parcels 1-4, located south of K-96. (K-96 ran through the middle of DP-95, separating Parcels 1-4 from Parcels 5 and 6.) In 1997, DP-228 was created. The parcels were rezoned to "LC," Limited Commercial, but the original parcel numbers, 5 and 6

were retained. The subject of this request is Parcel 6. The applicant is seeking to divide the six acres of Parcel 6 in two, leaving Parcel 6 with four acres. The remaining two acres would become Parcel 7. The applicant proposes to develop the newly created parcel with a hotel containing 124 units. In order to accomplish this division of Parcel 6, signage rights, access controls, screening and architectural controls need to be modified.

Stiff asked if the case had already been before the MAPC. **Goltry** said yes, the MAPC approved the request.

Domitrovic asked if the petition period was closed. **Goltry** said no.

Kim Potochnik, 6927 Woodbury Ct., asked if the applicant wanted to put a sign on the building. **Goltry** said no, but the sign they want to put up would be closer to the Muslim Center than is usually allowed.

Terry Smythe, Ruggles & Bohm, passed out photos of the proposed sign and where it would be located. He noted that they had met with the K-96 Neighborhood Association last week and answered all of their questions, and that group has no concerns.

Brown-Foster (Thomsen) made a motion to accept the recommendation of staff for approval. Motion carried 10-0. **Miller Stevens** abstained from the vote.

8. Library Master Plan

Cynthia Berner Harris, Library, reported on the Master Plan for the new Central Library. She said that the Master Plan's site requirements for a new Central Library include a minimum of 5.5 acres to allow for a 130,000 square foot building with accompanying surface parking for 520 vehicles, proximity to bus routes, and the downtown core area as well as a location on an arterial or collector street. The area from Kellogg to Central and Seneca to Washington was identified as the area in which the facility should be located. The Watkins property fulfills all of these requirements. In addition, use of the site as a location for a new library is consistent with the Delano Neighborhood Revitalization Plan, City of Wichita goals for Quality of Life and Core Areas and Neighborhoods and Visioning Wichita's goals for downtown development and libraries. On October 23, the City Council asked staff to do an additional check to ensure that no other properties exist within the target site area that might offer the same benefits at a more affordable price.

Domitrovic asked how much it would cost to purchase the Watkins property. **Berner Harris** said she didn't know. **Domitrovic** said surely she must have a rough idea. **Berner Harris** said, "not really." **Domitrovic** asked how large that property is; **Berner Harris** said 9.3 acres.

Thompson wanted to know how many acres they need to build the new library. **Berner Harris** said 5.5 acres. **Thompson** asked how big the City property at McLean and Maple is. **Berner Harris** said 5.1 acres.

Stiff asked if the Library Board had identified any other sites. **Berner Harris** said yes, that's what the Maple and McLean discussion is about. **Stiff** asked what the difference in cost would be between the two locations. **Berner Harris** said she didn't know.

Roberts, who sits on the Library Board, ask the DAB members to keep in mind that the criteria that was used to identify a suitable site, was developed two years ago and cost was not one of the criteria. He explained that without changing the criteria, they couldn't select another property.

Stiff said he felt sure that cost of the Watkins property had probably gone up over the past two years. **Berner Harris** confirmed that there is a lot going on downtown including the Water Walk and the Arena.

Janet Wilson, 1152 N. Estelle, asked what criteria was used. **Roberts** said, size, proximity to public transportation, collateral or arterial street, accessible from all quadrants of the City.

Miller Stevens (Tipton) made a motion to receive and file. Motion carried 11-0.

9. Off-road Motorsports Park

Doug Kupper and Tim Martz, Park and Recreation, gave a PowerPoint presentation on the proposed off road motor sports park. The Visioneering Document states that citizens desire more recreational opportunities and that the City should seek and develop new ways to attract and retain our current young population.

The need for an off-road motor sports venue in the greater Wichita area has grown rapidly in the past years and is fueled by the fact that no substantial public facilities for off-road motor sports recreation currently exist in the Wichita area. Currently there are 10 known off-road clubs in Kansas with over 2,500 active members and 9 non-automotive off-road dealers in Wichita.

Without a designated public off-road recreational facility in Wichita, off-road use along the Valley Center Floodway (big ditch) and the Arkansas River corridor has been a popular, yet illegal area for users. These practices create damage to public property and compromise public safety when not held in a properly designed setting.

In 1996, the City of Wichita purchased 1,400 acres of land in northeast Sedgwick County to be used for future landfill purposes. Portions of this area are currently used for agricultural purposes and there are few surrounding residents. The Park and Recreation department seeks to utilize 160 acres of this land to develop the off-road motor sports venue.

Federal grant funding through the Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks Recreational Trails Program is available as well as various other sponsorship opportunities aimed at making the venue a reality.

Miller Stevens wanted to know if the ATV Park would have some of the same problems that the golf courses have. **Kupper** said the golf courses are currently self-supporting. He also said he thinks they could make a profit from an ATV park that could be used to subsidize other recreation programs.

Thomsen said he thinks it's a great idea, but wondered about liability issues. **Kupper** said Kansas Tort Laws protect recreation departments. He also said he and his staff visited a number of ATV parks, including the Little Sahara in Oklahoma.

Domitrovic asked how much staffing the park would have. **Kupper** said minimally three full time staff and a cadre part-time staff. **Domitrovic** also asked about emergency response. **Kupper** said WPD would be responsible for responding to the park because it's City property, and they would also partner with the County.

Tipton said she thought it was a wonderful idea and she would definitely support it.

Roberts said Kansas has less public space for recreation than almost any other state and that we need to devote more space to outdoor recreation.

Rich inquired if an ATV park came up during the PROS meetings. **Kupper** said yes, primarily as a result of citizens complaining that there is ATV riding occurring illegally in existing parks.

Thompson asked if the proposed ATV park would be open after dark. **Kupper** said no.

John Stevens, 3125 E. Boston, said he was very excited about this project.

Stiff (Roberts) made a motion to accept the recommendation of staff for approval. Motion carried 11-0.

10. Community Service Block Grant (CSBG) Committee Appointments

Joyce Stockham, Career Development Office, was present to ask for nominations for the CSBG Board. The City of Wichita receives federal CSBG funds to provide services to low-income Sedgwick County families and individuals. Current CSBG funding is over one-million dollars and supports operation of the Neighborhood City Halls, assists the neighborhood clean-up program, provides prescription medicines through Project Access, provides summer day care and recreation for children of low-income families, provides employment assistance and homeless overflow shelter support.

Federal law governing the use of these funds mandates a board to participate in the development, planning, implementation, and evaluation of the CSBG Program. As part of the changes in advisory board structures in 1999 and 2000, the City Council created the CSBG Review Committee to meet these requirements. The Council chose to base the membership of the Review Committee within the District Advisory Boards to take advantage of the special knowledge base of the DAB members.

The Review Committee is a twelve-member board with members serving two-year terms. Four members are appointed to represent the City Council; low-income residents of the quadrants of the City and County elect four members; and four members represent the following community sectors: business, religious organizations, industry, welfare, labor, education.

Finney asked what the responsibilities are. **Stockham** said the Board meets about four times a year and makes recommendations on how to distribute the available funding.

Thomsen asked when and where the meetings are held. **Stockham** said usually over the lunch hour and the Career Development Office located at 447 E. William.

Action: Benjamin Stiff and Gail Finney were nominated.

Board Agenda

11. Updates, Issues, and Reports

- **Rich** said the Hyde Park Neighborhood Assoc. meeting is this Saturday and they will have a potluck dinner and educate citizens on how to start a Neighborhood Watch.
- **Lawrence** reported on Halloween they had around 300 children come out and all of the candy was given away.
- **Tipton** announced she is now working for Interfaith Ministries and the Director of Go Zones and can be reached at 264-9303.
- **Roberts** said he would like to be notified about programs where people can make holiday donations.
- **Miller Stevens** reminded everyone of two important issues going before City Council tomorrow: the dangerous dog ordinance and the CMB license for 3120 E. Harry.

- **Thomsen** announced he would be graduating from Citizen's Academy tomorrow.
- **Brown Foster** said Northeast Millair NA would be having their last meeting of the year and it will feature Diane Gage, Director of 911 Services, as the guest speaker.
- **Domitrovic** said he felt like the neighborhood meeting that was held regarding the 3120 E. Harry bar was a good meeting and that he thought the Town Hall meeting held last Saturday was great.
- **Council Member Williams** congratulated Brown Foster on her award from the Wichita Crime Commission.
- **Council Member Williams** said the DAB members need to decide who they want as the pro tem and the 2nd pro tem and be ready to make that decision at the next meeting

With no further business, **Stiff (Tipton)** made a motion to adjourn. Motion carried 11-0. The meeting adjourned at 10:15 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,
Janet Johnson
Neighborhood Assistant