

Tennessee Town NIA General Membership Meeting
6:30 p.m., Monday; January 11, 2021
Multipurpose Room, Faith Temple Church, 1162 SW Lincoln

The wearing of facial masks will be required for this meeting to help to prevent the spread of the coronavirus. Seating will be socially distanced.

TENTATIVE AGENDA:

- I. Welcome, Happy New Year!
- II. Adoption of Agenda (vote)
- III. Approval of November 9, 2020 General Membership Meeting Minutes (vote; pgs. 2-4 of this meeting packet)
- IV. Acceptance of Treasurer's Reports (vote; pg. 5)
- V. Election of 2021 NIA Officers, NIA Citizens Advisory Council Representatives (votes)
- VI. Expenditure of 2020 NIA Support Budget Funds for Smoke Detectors, Batteries and Distribution Details (vote)
- VII. Expenditure of 2020 SORT Grant Celebration Funds, 2021 CRC Tier-Two Initiative Memberships for City's NIAs (vote)
- VIII. Citizens Advisory Council (Association of City's NIAs) Report: Don Fortin
- IX. Old Business:
 - A. Continuation of SORT Grant, 2021-2025 and 2021 Consolidated Plan Updates (HUD, local funds)
 - B. Topeka Housing Study Implementation Committee Report Synopsis (pgs. 6-7)
 - C. Grassroots Housing Initiatives Work Group Report, "DREAMS" Initiative: (pgs. 7-8) Karen Hiller
 - D. Grocery Oasis Update
 - E. Lane Garden Grants Update
 - F. Operation Food Secure Update
 - G. City Council, Property Maintenance (Code Compliance) Reports; International Academy, Topeka JUMP, Momentum 2022 Updates
- X. New Business:
 - A. Creating a Housing Nonprofit Specifically for Tennessee Town (like the SENT initiative) Discussion
- XI. Kudos:
 - A. MLK Day: What it Means, Local Events (pg. 8)
- XII. Announcements:
 - A. Neighborhood Relations Programs: (1) *Emergency Program*: Intended to help homeowners make repairs to immediate health or safety hazards, (2) *Accessibility Program*: Provides modifications to residential homes for owners or tenants with disabilities. For more info. or to apply, please call 785-368-3711.
 - B. TOTO first-time homebuyers' assistance program: The program helps low-income families purchase their first home through HUD funding. The program helps Topeka residents become homeowners by providing education, financing, and home rehabilitation by partnering with Housing and Credit Counseling Inc. For more info., please call 785-234-0217, ext. 317.
 - C. Habitat's Aging in Place Program: Available to individuals living in Shawnee County, age 60 or older, living at or below 60% of the area median income. Must be the home's owner and currently residing in the home. Addresses basic repairs on homes, which reduces the need for critical repairs and enables seniors to live autonomously and with dignity in their homes. Shawnee County Advocacy Council on Aging partnership, business partners and community donors make program possible. To apply, please call Habitat at 785-234-4322.
 - D. Next Meeting: 6:30 p.m., Mon., March 8, 2021, Location to be Announced
- XIII. Adjournment

Tennessee Town on the Internet! Website: <http://tenntownnia.weebly.com> (all NIA meetings, activities posted) ●
Nextdoor Tennessee Town: https://tennesseetown.nextdoor.com/news_feed/ ● E-Mail: tenntown@yahoo.com

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6:30 p.m., Monday, January 11, 2021
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Minutes of November 9, 2020 General Membership Meeting

Attendees: President Michael Bell, Vice President Pat DeLapp, Secretary-Treasurer Sandy Lassiter, Ann Jones, Leroy Wedeking, Jeff Williams, and Karen Hiller.

Bell called the meeting to order at 6:41 p.m. He recognized Veterans Day on Nov. 11 with a moment of silence.

Adoption of Agenda: Pat DeLapp offered two additions to the agenda, both under Old Business: (C) Neighborhood Cleanup Report and (D) Cornerstone Housing Report. *DeLapp moved approval of the agenda as amended. Ann Jones seconded the motion. The motion was approved.*

Approval of September 14, 2020 NIA General Membership Meeting Minutes: *DeLapp moved approval of the September 14, 2020 NIA general membership meeting minutes as presented. Leroy Wedeking seconded the motion. The motion was approved.*

Acceptance of Treasurer's Reports: *DeLapp moved acceptance of the NIA Operations/Communications report and the Envista free-will donations report as presented. Sandy Lassiter seconded the motion. The motion was approved.*

Expenditure of 2020 NIA Support Budget Funds, 2020 NIA Holiday Party Discussion: Bell said that because of COVID and the cancellation of National Night Out there would be a surplus of funds in the NIA's support budget of \$300 that it would need to expend by Nov. 15. He asked for suggestions. DeLapp suggested smoke detectors and batteries to be given away to NIA residents. Other home improvements were suggested. Attendees were unable to decide, so Bell suggested this motion: "The \$300 in support budget funds be used for home improvements to be determined by the NIA's executive committee." *Lassiter moved to adopt Bell's suggested motion. Jones second the motion. The motion was approved.*

Bell suggested that because of COVID and the complications it causes regarding gatherings like the Holiday Party that it be cancelled for 2020. Attendees agreed.

Continuation of SORT Grant, 2021-2025 and 2021 Consolidated Plan Updates (HUD, local funds): Discussion occurred on the continuation of the SORT grant program. Bell said that while the recently completed 2017-2019 SORT grant in Tennessee Town had been successful, he was concerned that the "winning-the-lottery" nature of the grant, where now one NIA annually received targeted funds and special attention as the challenges in the city's other NIAs get worse wasn't the best approach.

Bell also said having the creation or updating of neighborhood plans connected to the SORT grant was problematic as the need for those neighborhood plans is paramount in all NIAs and not just the SORT NIAs. He added that the Neighborhood Initiatives Work Group had taken up these issues regarding the SORT grant and recommended that it be eliminated.

Regarding the 2021-2025 and 2021 Consolidated Plan strategic and annual plans, Bell said both were set for a governing body vote in December.

Topeka Housing Study Implementation Committee Report: Bell said the committee held its last meeting on Nov. 2. The committee resulted from the City appointing the committee to meet to discuss how to implement the housing study that was completed earlier this year. This new committee included 4 neighborhood representatives (Bell, Valley Park NIA President Susan McClacherty, CAC At-Large Member Margo Rangel and CAC Chair James Prout, who had served as the lone neighborhood representative on the initial housing study committee).

(Note: The committee's final report can be found at pg. ? of this packet.)

Grassroots Housing Initiatives Work Group Report: Karen Hiller gave the report. She said a grassroots group, the Neighborhood Initiatives Work Group, had been formed to discuss the city's affordable housing study and its implementation, as well as the HUD-funded Consolidated Plan after both had been put on hold. Those discussions would be from the viewpoint of those who actually represent low- to moderate-income people and neighborhoods.

The NIWG had decided on a number of recommendations so far:

4 Pillars: neighborhood engagement, infrastructure, housing and community

Neighborhood goals: attractiveness, safety, greater sense of community

Neighborhood association goals: Increased self-sufficiency, more frequent neighbor-to-neighbor interactions, meaningful improvements and activities.

Eliminate the SORT grant

Move distribution of SORT infrastructure funding to a city/county-wide model

Move neighborhood plans from the SORT grant and create and/or update 2 plans per year

Write new job descriptions for community engagement support staff

Working to make code enforcement and policing more responsive to residents

A refreshed Enhancement Program (where volunteer hours could be traded in for minor home improvement items)

Use the \$200,000 in DREAMS funding already committed to raise additional funds for competitive grants

Operation Food Secure Update: Data was not available for the meeting.

(Note: Data now is accessible at this link, pg. 4 for Tennessee Town: file:///E:/NIA/TTNIA%20Meeting%20Packets/2021%20TTNIA%20Meeting%20Packets/Operation%20Food%20Secure%20Pop-Up%20Events%20Final%20Report%20Sept-Oct%20%202020.pdf. I can send the PDF to those interested.)

City Council: See Hiller's comments above. Hiller also said a public-private partnership for the zoo was being discussed and that the zoo should be responsible for its own buildings. She said a search for an interim police chief was underway and that Chief Cochran's last day was Dec. 25. She said that Brian Wheelles is currently the deputy chief.

Property Maintenance: There was no report.

Citizens Advisory Council: Bell gave the report. He said City Planning and Development Director Bill Fiander presented on the city's housing study at the Nov. 4 CAC meeting. Hiller then presented on the Neighborhood Initiatives Work Group's work. The City's Bryson Risley presented on the SORT neighborhood planning process next steps. The City of Topeka Community Engagement's LaToya Burnett then presented on the SORT neighborhood building process next steps.

The CAC voted to recommend for approval to the city's governing body the Valley Park NIA's SORT application.

The CAC voted Valley Park NIA Vice President Susan McClacherty as chair and Central Park NIA Vice President Kim Thompson as vice chair.

International Academy: Sandy Lassiter gave the report. She said the Academy has about 20 students and that a couple of kids had moved or were being home schooled. Lassiter said there had been no coronavirus infections at the school although one student had been infected at home.

Topeka JUMP, Momentum 2022 Updates: Joyce Revelly was unable to attend the meeting to give the reports.

Old Business: Grocery Oasis Update: Bell said efforts continued to find a site for the grocery store and that the partnership with the CRC would assist in fundraising efforts as well as finding an attorney to handle any contracts or other legal issues. He said the group also has spoken with grocers about both inhabiting and running the store and advice about opening a new store.

Old Business: Lane Garden Update: Bell said that he had contacted the National Recreation and Parks Association. He said that while a partnership with the NRPA wasn't possible that he'd check out grants available through the NRPA that could help.

Old Business: Neighborhood Cleanup: DeLapp said the 40-yard dumpster placed behind Asbury-Mt. Olive Church had been well used while the one placed at the alley of 1153 SW Lane had not. He said that dumpster may have been mistakenly associated with the new infill housing construction next door. He said that tires and paint had been stacked near the Tennessee Town Plaza units.

Old Business: Cornerstone Housing Report: DeLapp said the construction on the duplexes is moving along nicely. He said the windows and doors had been installed on the south duplex (of 2 duplexes).

Kudos: Bell recognized Thanksgiving and offered thanks for family, friends and neighborhood leaders working on behalf of those traditionally without a voice.

Announcements: Neighborhood Relations' programming, TOTO First-Time Homebuyers' programming, Habitat's Aging in Place program listed.

Next Meeting: 6:30 p.m., Mon., Jan. 11, 2021, multipurpose room, Faith Temple Church, 1162 SW Lincoln.

Adjournment: *Hiller moved adjournment. DeLapp seconded the motion. The motion was approved.*

The meeting adjourned at 8:43 p.m.

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 Multipurpose Room, Faith Temple Church, 1162 SW Lincoln

Treasurer's Reports for January 11, 2021 General Membership Meeting:

| Tennessee Town NIA 2020 Operations and Communications Budget: | | | | |
|--|--|--|-------------------|--------------------------------|
| Date | Piece Count | Transaction Type | Withdrawal | Balance |
| 1-1-20 | ▶ | ▶ | ▶ | \$983.02 |
| 6-1-20 | 1 | State Nonprofit Fee | \$40.00 | \$943.02 |
| 6-22-20 | 302 | Printing of Meeting Notice Cards | \$28.10 | \$914.92 |
| 6-22-20 | 302 | Postage for Meeting Notice Cards | \$78.52 | \$836.40 |
| 8-24-20 | 302 | Printing of Meeting Notice Cards | \$28.10 | \$808.30 |
| 8-24-20 | 302 | Postage for Meeting Notice Cards | \$78.52 | \$729.78 |
| 10-6-20 | 302 | Printing of Meeting Notice Cards: Clean Up | \$28.10 | \$701.68 |
| 10-6-20 | 302 | Postage for Meeting Notice Cards: Clean Up | \$78.52 | \$623.16 |
| 10-19-20 | 302 | Printing of Meeting Notice Cards | \$28.10 | \$595.06 |
| 10-19-20 | 302 | Postage for Meeting Notice Cards | \$78.52 | \$516.54 |
| 12-8-20 | 1 | Home Depot (Smoke Detectors, Batteries) | \$318.62 | \$197.92 |
| 12-14-20 | 302 | Printing of Meeting Notice Cards | \$28.10 | \$169.82 |
| 12-14-20 | 302 | Postage for Meeting Notice Cards | \$78.52 | \$91.30 |
| TOTALS: | ▶ | ▶ | \$891.72 | \$91.30 |
| Tennessee Town NIA 2021 Operations and Communications Budget: | | | | |
| Date | Piece Count | Transaction Type | Withdrawal | Balance |
| 1-1-21 | ▶ | ▶ | ▶ | \$983.02 (same as 2020) |
| 1-4-21 | 302 | Printing of Meeting Notice Cards | \$28.10 | \$954.92 |
| 1-4-21 | 302 | Postage for Meeting Notice Cards | \$78.52 | \$876.40 |
| TOTALS: | ▶ | ▶ | \$106.62 | \$876.40 |
| Tennessee Town NIA 2016-2021 Envista Account: | | | | |
| Date | Transaction Type | Deposit/Withdrawal | Balance | |
| 11-12-18 | Balance Check | None | \$139.47 | |
| First of the month going through 1-1-21 | Balance Checks: Dividend of \$0.01 paid each time | Deposit | \$139.74 | |
| 1-15-20 | Cash Donation: Michael Bell (to keep account open) | Deposit | \$5.00 | |
| TOTALS: | ▶ | ▶ | \$144.74 | |

Tennessee Town NIA General Membership Meeting
6:30 p.m., Monday, January 11, 2021
Buchanan Center Conference Room, 1195 SW Buchanan

Topeka Housing Study Implementation Committee Final Report Synopsis:

Prioritization for 2021

The Study recommended four priority recommendations:

Fund the Affordable Housing Trust Fund
Establish a strategic land bank
Support the development of a community development corporation (CDC)
Expand weatherization and home repair programs

In addition, the Study recommended 26 tactics, or tools, to address its overarching goals for Topeka. The timing of new and expanded efforts were further recommended in the study as shown by the Prioritization Timelines in the appendix (page 102 of study). These were broken down by short-term (1-3 years), mid-term (4-6 years), shows “continued efforts” that should be sustained along the way.

The IP Committee was asked to select which new and expanded “short-term” tactics from this list were either ready to be activated in 2021 (Tier A) or need more planning in 2021 before they are activated (Tier B). This also included any market-rate housing tactics. The following tactics were prioritized for 2021:

TIER A
Affordable Housing Trust Fund
Weatherization
“Take 2” Tenancy
Aging in Place
Rehab Assistance (Self Help)

TIER B
Landbank
Downtown Area Housing

These tactics were further developed into one-year action plans (see pages 7-9) detailing what, who, when and how they will be accomplished. Ideally, Tier A tactics will be activated in 2021 and become continued efforts once steps are achieved. Tier B tactics in 2021 will hopefully graduate to Tier A in 2022. New Tier A and B tactics may emerge when the IP is updated at the end of 2021 and annually thereafter.

Not all tactics or four main priorities were deemed ready for 2021. Tier A and B tactics selected to date represent early “wins” for new and expanded efforts under the scope. If a tactic or continued effort is not included as Tier A/B in 2021, it does not mean it is excluded from being advanced in the community if there is support and alignment with core housing documents. All actionable steps should continue to seek stakeholder involvement.

Metrics

Lastly, the IP Committee recommends a series of metrics to measure our progress and commitment to rise up and overcome the key findings of the Study (page 10). These key findings reflect the biggest challenges in meeting our future housing needs found in the Study’s Executive Summary. They include:

Lack of Quality Affordable Housing Stock
Limited Senior Housing Options
Cost-Burdened Households
Core Neighborhood Disinvestment
High Housing Vulnerability
Limited Housing Choices

It is recommended that both the Tier A/B Action Plans and Metrics be “living” to adapt to changing conditions, data sources, best practices, AHTF priorities, etc. with the intent to update during the annual IP process or as needed.

A New Approach for Topeka's Neighborhoods : DREAMS Initiative

The DREAMS Program is based on neighborhood input and assets, revitalization, activities, and successes as an alternative approach to Topeka’s current Neighborhood Revitalization program, proposed start 2021.

DREAMS has four pillars at its foundation, each critical to developing and encouraging a strong, healthy community that is safe, desirable, successful, and accountable to the people for input and guidance on how they wish to see their neighborhoods develop over time:

- Neighborhood Engagement
- Infrastructure
- Housing
- Community

Neighborhood Goals: Attractiveness, safety, greater sense of community

Neighborhood Association Goals: Increased self-sufficiency, more frequent neighbor-to-neighbor interactions, meaningful improvements and activities.

- We believe that we should always start with celebrating what has been accomplished and learning from those successes.
- We think Community Engagement (CE) should shift to an engagement and access model that primarily focus on NIA neighborhoods while still assisting other neighborhoods for prevention and sustaining activities.
- CE Staff duties would include assisting with approaches to City and County departments and other resources, Planning (see other side), grant writing or access to help, assisting residents in building their own events, resulting in improved neighborhood identity, strength and quality and multiplier effect.
- Links with events such as National Night Out and training such as neighborhood organizing and Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED) should be strengthened and encouraged.
- A slight restructuring of the Neighborhood Operating Funds program could provide an incentive to preserve the funds by allowing the CAC to come up with a planned alternative use for unused \$\$.
- We think that Neighborhood Planning should be converted to a freestanding cycle. NIAs would be placed on a 10-year rotation (with two NIAs having their Neighborhood Plans updated each year) for full updates. Other updates could be made upon request, per staffing availability. Linking Historic Preservation planning when warranted will also strengthen the Neighborhood Planning process.
- We are eager to work collaboratively on critical neighborhood issues such as code compliance and community policing.
- We know that Affordable Housing and Revitalization efforts need to shift to flexibility and opportunity models in order to bring the kinds of change our residents want to see in their communities.
- We support and encourage all NIAs to be active members of discussions for the Affordable Housing Plan, with all options available to all neighborhoods every year. These options would include everything from major rehab, exterior rehab, homeownership and infill to self-help rehab, weatherization, accessibility and emergency repairs. Neighborhood-generated opportunities should be prioritized and neighbor-to-neighbor activities should be not only encouraged, but supported. A refreshed Neighborhood Enhancement program should be discussed to include partnerships with a refreshed and enhanced Code Compliance program. All the above programs are to be managed by City and/or contracted vendors.

- We recommend a shift in infrastructure funding from SORT to all City and County funds in their own departments. Funds will be accessed through annual direct bidding in the capital budget processes and community engagement in planning processes.
- We appreciate the \$200,000 in funds committed for neighborhoods for 2021 and urge that it be named the DREAMS Fund and be renewed annually. Fundraising efforts and additional funds from the City should also be attained each year as outlined in the Affordable Housing Trust Fund program guidance. These and other funds could then be competitively awarded for small projects and/or act as local match funds for larger project applications.

Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day: Local Living the Dream Activities:

Because of the coronavirus, the normal schedule of in-person events has been cancelled. This is the 2021 schedule:

SAVE THE DATE! January 18, 2021

The Topeka Center for Peace and Justice is proud to announce the 28th Annual Community-Wide Birthday of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

The event will be held in collaboration with the Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historical Park in Atlanta, Ga.

The Virtual Community Wide Celebration will be held Monday, January 18, 2021, 5:00p.m. This year's theme: Whose Dream Is It? Where Do We Go From Here, Chaos or Community?

More program details will be forthcoming. For questions, email topekacpj@gmail.com. Please Mark Your Calendars and Plan to Join Us!