

**Tennessee Town NIA General Membership Meeting**  
**6:30 p.m., Monday, November 13, 2017; Buchanan Center Conference Room, 1195 SW Buchanan**

TENTATIVE AGENDA:

- I. Welcome
- II. Community Resources Council's Mary Thomas and NIA Acquiring 501c(3) Federal Nonprofit Status (vote to access Neighborhood Relations' funds for year one; vote to use 2017 operations/communications funds for future years)
- III. New Topeka Fire Chief Craig Duke
- IV. NIA December 2017 Holiday Party (vote); Spending Operations/Communications Funds by End of Year (vote)
- V. Adoption of Agenda (vote)
- VI. Approval of September 11, 2017 General Membership Meeting Minutes (vote, pgs. 2-5 of meeting packet)
- VII. Reading and Acceptance of Treasurer's Reports (vote, pg. 6)
- VIII. Lane Garden and the Shawnee County Parks and Recreation Board (pgs. 12-14)
- IX. Negotiations with Property Owners in First 1200 Block of SW Buchanan for a Second Habitat Home (pgs. 7-8)
- X. NIA Bylaws Review Process (January 2018 vote; see pgs. 15-20 for current bylaws and suggested changes)
- XI. Updated Neighborhood Plan, SORT Budget Approved by Planning Commission, Next to City's Governing Body on Dec. 5 for Discussion and Dec. 12 for Action
- XII. 1181 SW Clay, Position on Housing Rehabilitation in the NIA (pgs. 9-10)
- XIII. Reports of Officers (pgs. 7-11)
- XIV. Community Policing Report: Ofc. Alexander Wall
- XV. Property Maintenance Report: Carlos Martinez
- XVI. Citizens Advisory Council (CAC) Report: Don Fortin (also see pgs. 8 and 11)
- XVII. City Council Report: Karen Hiller
- XVIII. Old Business:
  - A. Citizens Advisory Council Candidates' Forum Report (pg. 9)
  - B. Doorstep's Request to Move Dovetail Services to 1119 SW 10th Approved by Planning Comm. (pg. 9)
  - B. International Academy Update: Sandy Lassiter
  - C. Topeka JUMP, Heartland Visioning Updates: Joyce Revely
- XIX. New Business:
- XX. Kudos: Recognizing the Good News and Deeds of Our Neighbors and Friends:
  - A. Recognitions from Attendees
- XXI. 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. Next Meeting: 6:30 p.m., Mon., January 8, 2018, Buchanan Center, 1195 SW Buchanan
- XXII. 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/](https://tennesseetown.nextdoor.com/news_feed/)  
E-Mail: [tenntown@yahoo.com](mailto:tenntown@yahoo.com) • Twitter: @tenntown • Facebook page under construction

Tennessee Town NIA General Membership Meeting  
6:30 p.m., Monday, November 13, 2017  
Buchanan Center Conference Room, 1195 SW Buchanan

Minutes of September 11, 2017 General Membership Meeting:

Attendees: President Michael Bell, Vice President Pat De Lapp, Secretary-Treasurer Sandra Lassiter; TPD Officers Alexander Wall, P. Parrett, and Munoz; Property Maintenance Officer Carlos Hernandez, Joyce Revely, Emma Ray, Pastor Harry Christian, Joe Stringer, Karen Hiller, Rachelle (Ann) Stricker Jones, John Williams, and Donald Fortin.

Bell called the meeting to order at 6:33 p.m.

Bell, on behalf of the NIA, recognized the 16th anniversary of 9/11 with these words: ""Let's have a moment of silence for the innocent civilians; police, fire, and search and rescue personnel; and others in Washington, DC and New York City who gave their lives on 9/11. And let us pray that love will overcome hate."

Demolition of 1129 SW Lincoln; Demolition of 1194 SW Lane and Lane Garden Expansion, Meeting with Shawnee County Commissioner Kevin Cook and Shawnee County Parks and Recreation Director John Knight on Lane Garden Ownership: Bell reported on the recent demolitions of 1129 SW Lincoln and 1194 SW Lane, the latter after a protracted process.

Bell also discussed the Sep. 7 meeting the NIA's executive committee had with Shawnee County Commissioner Kevin Cook and Shawnee County Parks and Recreation Director John Knight. The purpose of the meeting was to continue discussions on whether the county would take the existing Lane Garden and the newly vacant lot at 1194 SW Lane under its umbrella so that the NIA can make improvements to the expanded Lane Garden.

The City of Topeka, which currently has the deed to the existing Lane Garden, has refused to allow any improvements to Lane Garden because parks are now under the domain of Shawnee County Parks and Rec, and the county hasn't helped because Lane Garden is owned by the city.

Cook and Knight discussed the county's master plan regarding park development and mentioned that at some point it might consider aquatic attractions or other improvements to the Aaron Douglas Park across the street from Lane Garden. Bell said that while those things might happen in the future, the NIA's only recognized greenspace had an opportunity to make improvements to a place of respite for NIA and city residents now and that improvements to Lane Garden and any future improvements to the art park would work together to make both parks better. Bell also said that since the NIA had the funds to start making improvements in 2018 through its SORT grant, then the county would not be on the hook for those improvements.

Regarding maintenance, Bell said it was working with Working Men of Christ Ministries to cut the current Lane Garden and the lot at 1194 SW Lane and would find additional partners to make sure that the expanded Lane Garden was maintained.

Cook suggested that the NIA contact the county's Parks and Recreation Advisory Board to state the NIA's case and then work up the county ladder. Bell said he knew board member LJ Polly and would contact him.

Bell said that the partnership that had been discussed with Bernie Heeney, a son of Marge and Barney Heeney, most likely was over due to Heeney being unwilling to work with the NIA as equal partners.

SORT Committee Meeting with Topeka Planning, Neighborhood Relations Departments; Neighborhood-Wide Meeting to Conclude SORT Planning Process: The NIA's SORT committee met with Topeka Planning, Neighborhood Relations' staff on a proposal related to the NIA's SORT grant at 5:30 p.m. on Wednesday, July 29, 2017, in the first-floor conference room of the Holliday Building, 620 SE Madison. Bell, Lassiter, Don Fortin, and Joyce Revely attended for the NIA. Dan Warner and Tim Esparza attended for the planning department. Sasha Haehn and Corrie Wright attended for Neighborhood Relations.

Haehn said that there is an opportunity for the NIA to use some of the \$330,000 in SORT housing rehabilitation funds for new housing construction. She said Cornerstone of Topeka, Inc., a Topeka affordable housing provider and Tennessee Town NIA partner and neighbor, is working with Stormont-Vail's David Cunningham to acquire the vacant property owned by Stormont-Vail on the west side of the first 1100 block of SW Lane (at the "jog" where Lane turns northeast, roughly bounded by 1131 SW Lane on the north and 1153 SW Lane on the south) and build two duplexes to be used for affordable housing. Ironically, this is essentially the same proposal the NIA previously proposed to Cunningham. To complete the "deal," Tennessee Town would need to use approximately \$160,000 of its \$330,000 in rehab funds to enable the property acquisition and the construction of one duplex now (funding would need to be found later for the construction of the second duplex, which could be done through pursuing funds in partnership with the City and Cornerstone). The in-fill funds would be expended in 2019.

The proposal also would involve acquiring three more vacant lots owned by Stormont-Vail and located near the proposed duplexes. Two of those vacant lots are found in the same block of SW Lane but on the east side and closer to SW 11th St. The third vacant lot is just around the corner from the first two, in the 1300 block of SW 11th (between Lane and Lincoln Sts). Planning's Tim Esparza said he would get Bell a PDF showing all of the lots involved.

The proposal would leave Tennessee Town with approximately \$170,000 in SORT funds for housing rehabilitation to be spent in 2018 and 2019. Wright said two types of rehab are available with the SORT funding:

- Major Rehab, where \$25,000 to \$30,000 is spent per rehab for owner-occupied housing (she said most rehabs are around \$30,000).
- Rental Rehab, where most rehabs are around \$15,000 per house for tenant-occupied housing.

New housing construction costs are typically higher than rehab costs, and given the opportunity to acquire vacant land that can be improved with new affordable housing through Cornerstone *and* Topeka Habitat for Humanity (both partners have recently constructed new housing in the NIA, Cornerstone at 1231 SW Clay and Habitat at 1221 SW Buchanan), *the Committee thought it worthwhile for Neighborhood Relations to continue discussions with Stormont-Vail and Cornerstone.*

This new opportunity, coupled with the plan the NIA already has approved to recruit Topeka private entities to donate labor, materials and financial resources to do minor exterior rehabilitation (painting, porch repairs, landscaping, etc.) would enable the NIA to do complete rehabs with SORT funds *and* make improvements to the exteriors of housing through recruiting private partners, could address new construction *and* provide another way to do housing rehabilitation. And given the SORT funds and the plans being put together, we can approach private entities with a pretty impressive plan of action. Neighborhood Relations said that it would work with the NIA to contact property owners via letter and conduct "walk-and-talks" to meet directly with residents to discuss housing rehab opportunities in the NIA.

Regarding the neighborhood-wide meeting to conclude the SORT planning process, the planning department offered Sep. 25-28 as dates. First Church of the Nazarene Rev. Branson Roberts said the church would be available on Sep. 25, 26 and 28.

*Pat DeLapp moved to hold the SORT planning closing meeting at 6:30 p.m. on Sep. 26 at The First Church of the Nazarene. Joyce Revely seconded the motion. The motion was approved.*

Doorstep, Inc. Plan to Move Dovetail Services to 10th and Buchanan Location, zoning change (vote to support): Bell led discussion on Doorstep's application for a conditional use permit to move its services at Dovetail, 1196 SW Washburn, to its headquarters at 1119 SW 10th. Doorstep has said that the move will allow it to streamline its services and deliver them more cost effectively. He asked the NIA to vote its support for the move.

*Emma Ray moved to support Doorstep's conditional use permit application to move Dovetail services to Doorstep. Joe Stringer seconded the motion. The motion was approved.*

Bell said he would draft a letter to Doorstep Director Lisa Cain indicating the NIA's support.

*Pastor Harry Christian move to adopt the meeting agenda as amended (Abandoned tires added as "E" under Old Business and WMOC yard sale added under "Announcements"). DeLapp seconded the motion. The motion was approved.*

*Ray moved to approve the July 10, 2017 NIA general membership meeting minutes as presented. Joe Stringer seconded the motion. The motion was approved.*

*Stringer moved to accept the Sep. 11, 2017 NIA operations/communications and Envista treasurers' reports. DeLapp seconded the motion. The motion was approved.*

Citizens Advisory Council Candidates' Forum Update: Bell said plans for the forum were moving along nicely. The CAC decided to hold the forum, which initially had been opposed by the City Attorney's office, to discuss the future of Topeka, specifically shining a light on the issues that affect low- to moderate-income people and neighborhoods. WIBW-TV's Ralph Hipp will moderate the forum, which will be held from 1-3 p.m. on Oct. 14 at Faith Temple Church in Tennessee Town.

Reports of Officers: Bell referred meeting attendees to the reports of officers in meeting packets. He took time to talk about the Community Resources Council's presentation at the July 29 Neighborhood Leaders' Roundtable meeting where CRC's Mary Thomas spoke on NIAs being able to use CRC's 501c(3) status to acquire funds for activities. Thomas said CRC acts as an accountant in such an arrangement, receiving funds, paying bills, and providing accountability. She said a NIA would need to become a CRC member at \$100 a year to take advantage.

Community Policing Report: Officer Munoz (368-2401) introduced new Tennessee Town Community Police Officer Alexander Wall (368-1657; awall@topeka.org) and Officer Parrett. Rachelle "Ann" Stricker Jones said there were no lights on cars, break-ins and vegetation growing in gutters at the Tennessee Town Plaza Apartments. Bell said he'd follow up with THA's Sophie George and Ofc. Matthew Blassingame, who is the officer for the city's public housing complexes. Attendees reported gun shots in the NIA. Wall said the shots could be gang related and that the organized crime unit has devoted another shift to that kind of activity.

*Sandy Lassiter moved to extend the meeting through Announcements. Joe Stringer seconded the motion. The motion was approved.*

Property Maintenance Report: Carlos Hernandez (368-0164) gave the report. He stated that he uses utility bills to determine property ownership. He said he will work with individuals as long as there are communications. Hernandez reminded attendees that they can report nuisances via seeclckfix.org.

Citizens Advisory Council Report: Bell referred attendees to the Reports of Officers.

City Council Report: City Council Member Karen Hiller complimented Joe Stringer for getting results from the Gas Service company and the city. Hiller gave kudos to the NIA for how it found a way to save money and connect with the NIA through having copies of NIA meeting fliers run free of charge by Cornerstone of Topeka and Housing and Credit Counseling and distributed by NIA Secretary-Treasurer Sandy Lassiter and the kids at Faith Temple. She remembered Bowser-Johnson Funeral Chapel's Larry Johnson, who recently passed, and his contributions to the community. Hiller also reminded attendees about the Aaron Douglas Art Fair, to be held on Sat., Sep. 23, 2017, where there will be an opportunity to register to vote. And she spoke on the reordering of city departments and specifically on the Animal Control unit.

Old Business: National Night Out Against Crime Report: NNO Coordinator Emma Ray gave the report. She said that even with the rain, the event had been a success. She said an outdoor sale to raise money for NNO would be held from 8 a.m.-4 p.m. on Oct. 14th, in the GraceMed parking lot (the old Dillon's parking lot).

Old Business: International Academy Update, Basketball Tournament Report: Sandy Lassiter gave the reports. She said the academy was doing well and that the basketball tournament, which had to be rescheduled to Aug. 19 because of rain on Aug. 5, went well, too.

Old Business: Topeka JUMP, Heartland Visioning Updates: Pastor Christian gave the JUMP report. He said the group is still working on affordable housing issues and finding ways to provide public transportation on the south side of Topeka.

Old Business: 2017 Neighborhood Cleanup Report: Bell said that the truck the NIA used this year to make it easier for residents to participate hardly picked up anything while costing the NIA \$165. However, the dumpster placed at the alley of 1181 SW Clay was mostly full. He recommended that next year the NIA go with a dumpster, which is free through Shawnee County Solid Waste.

Old Business: Abandoned Tires: DeLapp spoke on a license that costs \$100 a year. He also questioned why the City is using bleach to deter mosquitoes in abandoned tires when salt works as well, costs less and is safer.

New Business: There was no new business.

Kudos: Recognizing the Good News and Deeds of Our Neighbors and Friends: Bell extended kudos to those who served on the NIA's SORT committee (DeLapp, Lassiter, Rev. Branson Roberts, Pastor Christian, Ray, Revely, and Donald Fortin) for not only their service to the committee but to the NIA and Topeka.

Announcements: WMOC Yard Sale: Zachery Tague said WMOC would hold a yard sale on Sat., Sep. 30, at its house at 1175 SW Clay. Sale proceeds will go to renovations at the house.

Adjournment: *Lassiter moved adjournment. Don Fortin seconded the motion. The motion was approved.*

Meeting adjourned at 8:55 p.m.

Next NIA Meeting: 6:30 p.m., Monday, November 13, 2017, at the Buchanan Center, 1195 SW Buchanan.

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Treasurer's Report for Nov. 13, 2017 General Membership Meeting: 2017 Operations/Communications Budget

<b>Tennessee Town NIA 2017 Operations and Communications Budget:</b>				
Date	Piece Count	Transaction Type	Withdrawal	Balance
1-1-17	▶	▶	▶	<b>\$1,080.00</b>
2-24-17	302	Printing of Meeting Notice Cards (\$? ea.)	\$30.20	\$1,049.80
2-24-17	302	Postage for Meeting Notice Cards	\$76.54	\$973.26
4-28-17	302	Printing of Meeting Notice Cards (\$? ea.)	\$30.20	\$943.06
4-28-17	302	Postage for Meeting Notice Cards	\$76.54	\$866.52
6-26-17	1	KS Nonprofit Status	\$40.00	\$826.52
9-30-17	1	Ultimate Bounce (B-Ball)	\$175.00	\$651.52
9-30-17	1	Creation Station - Trophies (B-Ball)	\$60.00	\$591.52
9-30-17	1	Truck for N'hood Cleanup	\$165.00	\$426.52
11-6-17	1	National Night Out	\$86.00	\$340.52
<b>TOTALS:</b>	▶	▶	<b>\$739.48</b>	<b>\$340.52</b>

Treasurer's Report for Nov. 13, 2017 General Membership Meeting: Envista Account

<b>Tennessee Town NIA 2016-2017 Envista Account:</b>			
Date	Transaction Type	Deposit/Withdrawal	Balance
3-27-16	Account opened	Deposit of \$5.00	\$5.00
9-22-16	Check from Working Men of Christ Ministries	Deposit of \$337.00	\$342.00
10-20-16	Payment of Lawyer's Title Closing Costs for 1192, 1194 SW Lane; Reimbursement of Pat DeLapp's Expenses Related to Closing Costs	Withdrawal of \$275.00 (\$200.00 for Lawyer's Title; \$75.00 for DeLapp's Expenses)	\$67.00
12-20-16	Emma Ray Donation	Deposit of \$5.00	\$72.02 (includes interest earned)
12-20-16	Payment of First Half of 2017 Property Taxes at 1194 SW Lane	Withdrawal of \$20.79	\$51.23 (interest earned only on accounts with \$200+ on hand)
3-13-17	Account Balance Check	NA	\$51.23
5-8-17	Account Balance Check	NA	\$51.23
6-28-17	Payment of Second Half of 2017 Property Taxes at 1194 SW Lane	Withdrawal of \$21.08	\$30.15
9-8-17	Account Balance Check	NA	\$30.15
11-9-17	Account Balance Check	NA	\$30.15

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Reports of Officers (Activities Since Sep. 11, 2017 NIA Meeting):

A. Aaron Douglas Art Fair:

Bell attended the annual Art Fair, held on Sat., Sep. 23, 2017, at the Aaron Douglas Art Park, SW 12th and Lane Streets.

Numerous artists had their works on display for attendees. Music and food also were provided. The Fair also provided a number of groups to have booths sharing information on their services with the public, including neighborhood groups and the GraceMed Health Clinic.

B. SORT Planning Process Closing Meeting:

Bell, DeLapp and Lassiter attended the SORT planning process closing meeting held at 6:30 p.m. on Tue., Sep. 26, 2017, in the sanctuary of The First Church of the Nazarene, 1001 SW Buchanan. Topeka Planning Department staff Dan Warner and Tim Esparza and Neighborhood Relations' staff Sasha Haehn and Corrie Wright also attended the meeting as did several neighborhood residents.

Esparza gave a presentation on the planning process, including the two target areas identified and a budget page that would be used as a guide for how federal and local funds might be expended.

Discussion occurred on the target areas, the importance of housing rehabilitation activities and the opportunity offered to the NIA through a partnership being worked on between Stormont-Vail HealthCare, Cornerstone of Topeka and the NIA that would acquire vacant lots owned by Stormont-Vail for two new duplexes in the first 1100 block of SW Lane and provide additional in-fill housing opportunities with Topeka Habitat for Humanity in the same area.

Discussion also occurred on the opportunities private property owners might have at in-fill housing and how the budget page was not carved in stone and could be later tailored to meet Tennessee Town's goals.

A motion was made and seconded to accept the SORT proposal and budget as presented. The motion was approved.

C. Meeting with Harriet Johnson Regarding Vacant Lots on SW Buchanan to be Used for Habitat House:

Bell and DeLapp attended the meeting with Harriet Johnson at 3 p.m. on Oct. 2, 2017, at Bowser-Johnson Funeral Chapel, SW 6th and Taylor. The meeting specifically involved the donation of two 25-foot vacant lots in the first 1200 block of SW Buchanan to provide enough frontage to be used for a second Habitat house in the block.

Johnson owns the lot directly south of 1225 SW Buchanan and is on board with donating it to Habitat. She set up telephone calls with the heirs to the vacant lot at 1225 SW Buchanan owned by Hubert and Laura Johnson. Those heirs include Sokoni Karanja, Ivan James Johnson and Willemeda Johnson, and Warren Johnson.

Ivan Johnson said he was agreeable to the property donation to Topeka Habitat and that Willemeda Johnson, who he speaks for, would be agreeable, too.

Karanja said he was aware of the great work Habitat does in his hometown of Chicago and also was agreeable to the property donation to Topeka Habitat and said he would contact Warren Johnson to find out if, as an heir, he was interested in the property donation.

The property donation also will include a provision to install a plaque recognizing Hubert and Laura Johnson's contribution to the construction of the new Habitat home, as well as recognizing their children for the property donation.

D. October 4, 2017 Citizens Advisory Council Meeting:

CAC representatives Fortin and Donna Rae Pearson, Bell, and DeLapp attended the meeting, held at 6 p.m. on Wednesday, Oct. 4, 2017, in the first-floor conference room of the Holliday Building, 620 SE Madison.

Bell gave a presentation on arrangements for the CAC's candidates' forum, to be held from 1-3 p.m. on Sat., Oct. 14, 2017, in the multipurpose room of Faith Temple Church, 1162 SW Lincoln.

Attendees were asked to break into groups to discuss landlord rental registration. Each group was presented with the same series of questions and group answers then were shared.

Neighborhood Relations announced that it would cover for NIAs the first-year cost of \$100 for Community Resources Council membership. The membership then could be used to gain 501c(3) federal nonprofit status.

At Bell's urging, the CAC created a "NIA Support" committee that would reach out to struggling/inactive NIAs to listen to concerns and offer technical and other support to get them to full strength. Bell volunteered to serve on the committee.

Next CAC meeting to be held at 6 p.m. on Wed., Nov. 1, 2017, at the Holliday Building.

E. Special SORT Committee Meeting:

The NIA's SORT committee met with Topeka Planning, Neighborhood Relations' staff on the final draft of the NIA's SORT grant at 3 p.m. on Wed., Oct. 11, 2017, in the first-floor conference room of the Buchanan Center, 1195 SW Buchanan. Bell, Lassiter, Pastor Christian, Rev. Roberts and Joyce Revely attended for the NIA. Bill Fiander, Dan Warner and Tim Esparza attended for the planning department.

Final edits to the neighborhood's updated neighborhood plan were presented and approved. The NIA's SORT Committee once again thanked planning staff for its hard work and support in putting together the updated neighborhood plan.

F. Planning Commission Meeting on Tennessee Town Updated Neighborhood Plan and SORT Budget:

Bell and DeLapp attended the planning commission meeting, held at 6 p.m. on Mon., Oct. 16, 2017, in the city council chambers of city hall, 214 SE 8th. Fortin, Revely and Ruby Carson also attended for the NIA.

Bell and Carson both offered comment and support for the updated neighborhood plan and SORT budget.

The planning commission approved the updated neighborhood plan and SORT budget on a 9-0 vote. The two documents next go before Topeka's governing body for final approval.



G. Planning Commission Meeting on Doorstep, Inc.’s Conditional Use Permit Application to move Dovetail Services to Doorstep:

Bell and DeLapp attended the planning commission meeting, held at 6 p.m. on Mon., Oct. 16, 2017, in the city council chambers of city hall, 214 SE 8th. Fortin, Revely and Ruby Carson also attended for the NIA. The planning commission considered Doorstep, Inc.’ request for a conditional use permit to enable it to move its operations at Dovetail, 1196 SW Buchanan, to its Doorstep location at 1119 SW 10th.

Bell offered comment and support for the rezoning request and reminded the commission that the NIA also had drafted a letter indicating its support.

The planning commission approved Doorstep’s request on a 9-0 vote. The request next goes before Topeka’s governing body for final approval.

H. CAC Candidates’ Forum:

Bell, DeLapp, Lassiter, and Fortin attended the CAC’s candidates’ forum, held from 1-3 p.m. on Sat., Oct. 14, 2017, in the multipurpose room of Faith Temple Church, 1162 SW Lincoln.

Although strong rain affected attendance, nine of the 17 candidates for city council and mayor attended the forum as well as about 40 members of the public. Those candidates attending were Joe Cheray, district 9; Justin Titzman, district 9; and Michael Lesser, district 9; mayoral candidate Michelle De La Isla; Karen Hiller, district 1; Sylvia Ortiz, district 3; Breta Bloomberg, district 4; Scott Bowman, district 6; and Joselito “Ping” Enriquez, district 7.

Questions about the importance of NIAs and low- to moderate-income Topekans, defining code enforcement, support for the city’s Affordable Housing Trust Fund and new and rehabilitated housing, crime and taxes were discussed by the candidates. The asked and unasked questions can be found at the Facebook page “Citizens Advisory Council Candidates’ Forum.”

WIBW-TV’s Ralph Hipp moderated the forum and Channel 13 was a co-sponsor along with Topeka JUMP and the League of Women Voters Topeka-Shawnee County, which also staffed a table to register voters.

I. Demolition of 1181 SW Clay:

Bell, DeLapp and property owner Donald Fortin were involved in the City’s decision to demolish Fortin’s house at 1181 SW Clay on Mon., Oct. 18, 2017.

Both Fortin and DeLapp had been doing work on the house, including clearing out unused items as part of a recent neighborhood cleanup and clearing back vegetation growth around the house.

DeLapp, who has refurbished a number of houses and done home inspections on some 2,500 residences, said the house had “good bones” and was worthy of being restored.

Both Bell and DeLapp reiterated the NIA’s desire to retain as much housing as was possible to rehabilitate, either through federal funds or selling houses to prospective owners who would take on rehab expenses. Both said the costs of new construction are often more than those for rehabilitation.

Bell said he had spoken via telephone with Neighborhood Relations’ Director Sasha Haehn and Property Maintenance Manager Mike Haugen on Sep. 15, 2017. He said that day’s conversation had led him to believe that there would be a “pause” in the City’s efforts to tear down 1181 SW Clay. Here are the notes Bell took of the telephone conversation:

“Later that afternoon (after an asbestos abatement company hired by the City had entered 1181 SW Clay), Sasha called me. Mike Haugen was in the office from where she made the call. She said the municipal court had issued a ruling that 1181 SW Clay was to be demolished in 30 days and that was Neighborhood Relations' position. I stated the concerns Pat had raised about jurisdiction and the NIA's position on retaining as much housing as it could. Discussion occurred on how long it had been since proceedings had started on 1181. Discussion occurred on the City having to follow HUD rules regarding rehabs that exceed 30% of replacement value not receiving HUD funds (Pat has said that the 30% figure is a local interpretation and not HUD guidelines and I mentioned that to Sasha). I also said that even if the 30% figure is HUD mandated, there could be other ways to rehab the house like selling it for \$1 or working with a nonprofit to acquire and rehab it without using HUD funds. Haehn said 1181 needed about \$70,000 in rehab but offered no evidence to support that statement. Haugen then made an interesting comment. He said he would be OK with going beyond the 30-day municipal court ruling as he was at least interested in seeing what could be done to save the house, even if Don wasn't the owner anymore, and that a contract to do the demo hadn't been signed yet. He said the signing of the contract would easily run beyond the 30 days contained in the municipal court ruling. Haehn didn't object to Haugen's analysis.” One month after that conversation the City demolished 1181 SW Clay.

Bell and DeLapp also helped Fortin file an Americans with Disabilities Act complaint with both HUD and the US Department of Justice because Fortin's rights as a disabled person had been violated. Fortin, who is hard of hearing, contended he didn't hear his phone ring May 15 when Yearly convened a telephone conference regarding the house's fate.

J. NIA Officers' Meeting:

Bell and DeLapp attended the NIA Officers' Meeting, held at 6 p.m. on Mon., Oct. 23, 2017, in the first-floor conference room of the Holliday Building, 620 SE Madison.

Much of the meeting involved discussion about insufficient funding for NIA communications, including GoBlue's decision not to renew its contract with the City as the printer of NIA newsletters and meeting notices. A printer in the Kansas City area, Single Source Printing, was the only printer that had submitted a RFP for the job. It's quotes were less than GoBlue, but Bell raised concerns about dealing with an out-of-town printer. Haehn said the contract would be for one year, giving the City a chance to monitor the KC printer's work.

Materials detailing NIA communications expenses and anticipated 2018 funding and expenses were distributed. Bell once again reminded the group of other avenues to get information to residents, including producing one newsletter for all of the NIAs, City Channel 4, utility bills, Nextdoor.com, The Topeka Capital-Journal, nonprofits, and creating websites. He also discussed the arrangement Tennessee Town had made with Cornerstone of Topeka and Housing and Credit Counseling to print meeting notices free of charge that are then distributed by volunteers at Faith Temple Church. Bell also mentioned asking for additional money from the City of Topeka to fund communications activities and including in the next City budget another grant-writer position would be specifically devoted to Neighborhood Relations. Neighborhood Relations Community Engagement Director Monique Glaude reminded the group of the new link at its City webpage that makes NIA newsletters, meeting notices and websites available for all to view.

Glaude also spoke on CRC “Second-Tier” membership, where NIAs can obtain CRC membership with Neighborhood Relations paying the \$100 for the first-year's membership. Obtaining said membership would enable NIAs to form 501c(3) nonprofits and directly apply for funds. She also said the City's grant writer, Sheena Smith, will be involved in a grant-writing session soon.

Discussion also occurred on threats to CDBG and HOME funds by President Trump, who has proposed zeroing out both line items, and potentially the US Congress.

NIA officers were told to schedule meetings with NR's LaToya Burnett-Martinez by the end of 2017 to discuss their 2018 operations/communications funds. Neighborhood Relations said attendance at said meeting would be required before funds would be released to NIAs. (what HUD might think about that is unknown).

K. Neighborhood Leaders' Roundtable Meeting:

Bell, DeLapp and Fortin attended the Neighborhood Leaders' Roundtable meeting, held from 9 a.m.-noon on Sat., Oct. 28, 2017, in the first-floor conference room of the Holliday Building, 620 SE Madison.

Public Works Director Jason Peek presented on the city's infrastructure, specifically its streets and how repair and replacement decisions are made and where those projects occur.

"Refuel Topeka" gave a presentation on its meal program to provide all Topeka children nutritious meals. With multiple locations throughout the city, the program offers a fun, safe environment for anyone up to the age of 18. For more information on the program, please contact Refuel Topeka Coordinator Maria Anderson at 785-368-2497 or via e-mail at [manderson@topeka.org](mailto:manderson@topeka.org) or go to the group's website at <https://www.refueltopeka.com/>.

Neighborhood Task Force Code Compliance Committee Chair Marc Galbraith presented on code enforcement and rental registration, specifically speaking about the adoption of the International Property Maintenance Code (IPMC) and making landlords register with the city and pay a fee for said registration to specifically target out-of-town landlords. Our own vice-president, Pat DeLapp, presented on ways to reach vacant houses before they become problems or are demolished and the Tennessee Town NIA's abandoned tire program where DeLapp drove our neighborhood and nearby neighborhoods collecting abandoned tires that then were picked up by the NIA's previous code officer, Dennis Boyles (the effort was ended by the City when Boyles retired earlier this year).

The discussion with only the neighborhood leaders at the end of the meeting involved more discussion on rental registration and the perceptions held by many that equate all landlords with the bad landlords/slumlords. Discussion also occurred on how rental registration had not worked in other cities and how all of the players involved in rental housing had never been brought to the same table at the same time to work on solutions. Neighborhood Relations staff should e-mail the notes from the meeting to all of the neighborhood leaders (except the neighborhood leaders-only discussion, when NR staff leave the room).

L. November 1, 017 Citizens Advisory Council Meeting:

Fortin, Pearson, and Bell attended the meeting, held at 6 p.m. on Wed., Nov. 1, 2017, in the first-floor conference room of the Holliday Building, 620 SE Madison.

Topeka Police Department Manuel Munoz presented and distributed materials on the department's efforts. Attendees then broke into groups to discuss personal interactions and opinions about the police and the challenges of and opportunities for Topeka police. Those group discussions then were shared.

Tennessee Town NIA General Membership Meeting  
6:30 p.m., Monday, November 13, 2017  
Buchanan Center, 1195 SW Buchanan

Lane Garden and the Shawnee County Parks and Recreation Board:

The Tennessee Town NIA's request for Lane Garden to be placed under Shawnee county's umbrella is moving forward as the Shawnee County Parks and Recreation Board is handling the request. Bell submitted the following response to a recent Shawnee County Parks and Rec statement to the Board, prepared by Shawnee County Parks and Recreation's Brian L. Toby, to deny the NIA's request (Bell's responses are in the Arial font):

First, in prefacing the comments below, it should continue to be pointed out that during the consolidation of the City of Topeka and Shawnee County Parks and Recreation Departments Lane Garden, apparently as well as other parks, were left out. That is not the fault of the Tennessee Town NIA, which continues to deal with the oversight. If Lane Garden had been included, then this process would be unnecessary. But it wasn't included, so here we are.

Strategy:

1.10 Identify and acquire land to preserve and enhance access to natural resources, open spaces, and outdoor recreation. Tactic: Identify and aggressively pursue properties/parcels that are adjacent to major regional/community parks.

The property being discussed doesn't meet any of the criteria in 1.10, nor does the property being discussed meet any of the criteria in the tactic. Nearby but not adjacent park properties include - specialty park (Aaron Douglas Art Park), linear park (Elmhurst Green), and Neighborhood/Community (Central Park).

It's hard to understand how the Aaron Douglas Art Park, which is a mural and is only used once a year for the Art Fair, is considered a park worthy of attention while Lane Garden, in existence since the early 1980s and the neighborhood's only recognized green space for the vast majority of that time, is not. At one point Lane Garden had a sign (which I painted), benches (which I painted), and planters (which I painted), among other amenities. Time and the City's refusal to make improvements and the county's refusal to recognize its oversight during the department consolidation discussed above have not been kind to the park. The NIA tried through its last two Neighborhood Empowerment Grant applications to make improvements, but it was turned down both times because of the ownership issues discussed above. And the NIA is mindful of how quickly the county brought the Aaron Douglas Park under its umbrella while ignoring Lane Garden.

There is no connectivity for this parcel as main arteries pass on the south and west of the parcel.

SW 12th and Lane Streets border both Lane Garden and the Aaron Douglas Art Park. Is the argument "there is no connectivity for this parcel as main arteries pass on the south and west of the parcel" being held against the Art Park? Apparently not. This disparate treatment is of concern to the NIA. Additionally, SW 12th and SW Huntoon Streets are slated for improvements as a part of a recently passed half-cent sales tax. SW 12th Street connects to the previously cited "linear park" in Elmhurst and SW Lane and Washburn Streets are arterials that lead to Washburn University, Central Park Community Center, Lowman Hill Elementary School, the Topeka and Shawnee County Public Library, Stormont-Vail HealthCare and St. Francis Hospital.

There is no demographic need to connect to this parcel.

The "demographic need" is contained within the Tennessee Town NIA, a low- to moderate-income neighborhood which has had Lane Garden as its only recognized greenspace for decades.

Further, based on simple irregularities of park classifications throughout the system, acquisition would increase the imbalance in existing quadrants as detailed below:

*Mini-Parks*

**Quadrant 1 - 12**  
NW

**Quadrant 2 - 17**  
NE

**Quadrant 3 - 5**  
SW

**Quadrant 4 - 11**  
SE

*Linear Parks/Greenways*

**Quadrant 1 - 0**  
NW

**Quadrant 2 - 4**  
NE

**Quadrant 3 - 1**  
SW

**Quadrant 4 - 3**  
SE

*Specialty Parks*

Obtaining undersized parcels (Mini-Parks) may have been a previously acceptable practice. As communities age, more land inherently becomes available which is demonstrated by saturation of Mini-Parks throughout Quad 2 as noted above. Many parcels were accepted and “overbuilt” at Neighborhood Park standards which is not financially sustainable over time. Balancing the system and conforming to national standards is sustainable and our recommendation.

Again, referencing the oversight of not including Lane Garden in the original parks and recreation merger applies here. Without that oversight, there would be no need for discussion on this point.

This parcel does not meet the criteria of 1.10, “Identify and acquire land to preserve and enhance access to natural resources, open spaces, and outdoor recreation.”

Placing Lane Garden under the county umbrella absolutely would “...enhance...open space and outdoor recreation.” I have previously submitted the last Neighborhood Empowerment Grant application the NIA submitted that details the amenities the NIA would seek in an expanded Lane Garden (I can resubmit that application again if necessary).

The department would need to spend significant funds initially to meet the approved maintenance standards and annually to maintain the park into the future.

The Shawnee County Parks and Recreation Department would only be involved financially in Lane Garden through liability and any taxes that would be involved, just as the City of Topeka has been for decades. The NIA has been designated as a SORT neighborhood for 2017-2019 and has funds to pay for the amenities it seeks and stands at the ready to pursue partnerships with Keep American Beautiful Topeka-Shawnee County, the Shawnee County Extension Office, other public and private interests, and neighborhood volunteers to maintain Lane Garden. Saying that “the department would need to spend significant funds initially to meet the approved maintenance standards and annually to maintain the park into the future” is simply not true.

As stated above, the parcel needs to have a genuine purpose and that purpose must create value and align with SCP+R goals and objectives. It may add beautification to the neighborhood, help solve an abandoned home issue but neither are primary functions for Parks + Recreation.

The purpose already has been discussed as it relates to the position Lane Garden has occupied in the neighborhood for decades. Regarding the “abandoned house,” the NIA acquired the property immediately north of Lane Garden, at 1194 SW Lane, in 2016. The house that was there was demolished by the City of Topeka in August 2017. So, regarding the “abandoned house,” there’s no issue left to “solve.”

This parcel has been offered to the department before and has been rejected.

There are numerous public and private lands within a half mile radius (national standard) that have amenities of which duplication would occur such as greenspace, landscaped areas, play structures for youth, sitting areas for adults and other specialty purposes.

And at least some of those lands were established after Lane Garden, which again was left out of the department consolidation. I suppose the questions before the Parks and Recreation Board are these: Should Lane Garden, a viable park for decades, be abandoned because of circumstances beyond its control conspiring against it? Should Lane Garden be abandoned although the NIA stands ready to pay for improvements with funding streams not involving the county? Should the synergistic possibilities of Lane Garden and the Art Park, which is already under county control, be ignored in favor of the Art Park, the use of which as a park is questionable as it is a mural and a once-a-year event?

An option may be to contract maintenance services from the property owner. The owner retains those rights but they contract with the County to maintain annually then make payment installments for maintenance performed. A true cost analysis would have to be completed and a contract negotiated. The county currently does not have the resources to take on new properties that bring value to the system.

The NIA is ready to cover Lane Garden maintenance, so such contractual possibilities discussed in this point are irrelevant.

Thank you very much for providing the PDF of this document. Please let us know if you have any questions moving forward.

Michael Bell  
Tennessee Town NIA President

Note: A meeting with the Parks and Rec Board had been scheduled for 5:30 p.m. on Tue., Nov. 7, 2017, but it conflicted with city elections held the same day. When a new date is announced, the NIA will be notified.

Tennessee Town NIA Bylaws (Adopted 2004, Last Revised Nov. 10, 2008):

**BYLAWS  
of the  
TENNESSEE TOWN  
Neighborhood Improvement Association**

**Article I: Name and Boundaries**

**Section 1: Name**

This organization shall be known as the Tennessee Town Neighborhood Improvement Association (Tennessee Town NIA).

**Section 2: Boundaries**

The boundaries for the Tennessee Town NIA shall include the areas within the geographic boundaries depicted in Attachment "A". These boundaries and certification of the Tennessee Town NIA shall be determined in accordance with Topeka City Code 42-5.

**Article II: Purpose**

The Association has as its purposes the following:

- 1) To participate in identifying needs and in defining objectives and expressing preferences about activities proposed in the city's five year consolidated plan and the annual consolidated action plan.
- 2) To act as a vehicle through which individual and group concerns regarding housing and neighborhood development program performance are channeled to the Department of Housing & Neighborhood Development (HND) of the City of Topeka.
- 3) To participate in the development of neighborhood improvement revitalization plans.
- 4) To otherwise participate in programs related to community betterment.
- 5) To elect representatives to sit on and participate in the citizen advisory council.
- 6) To participate directly with the staff of HND on those HND programs benefiting the NIA or its members which are funded or sponsored by federal, state or city funds.

**Article III: Members**

**Section 1: Eligibility**

All those 18 years of age or older who have a definable interest, as set forth in Topeka City Code section 42-5 (e), in the Tennessee Town NIA are entitled to vote at any of its meetings. In addition to general members, "associate" members will also be recognized but will not have voting privileges.

**Section 2: Votes**

No member shall have more than one vote. Persons with an interest in the Tennessee Town NIA who do not meet requirements listed in Topeka City Code section 42-5(e) will not be entitled to vote until such time that the requirements in Topeka City Code section 42-5(e) are fulfilled.

**Section 3: Proxy Votes**

Proxy votes may be recognized if a written designation of proxy is submitted in accordance with the procedure approved by HND.

**Section 4: Non-Discrimination**

The Tennessee Town NIA will not discriminate against individuals or groups on the basis of race, religion, color, sex, age,

disability, national origin, income, or political affiliation in any of its policies, recommendations, or actions.

### **Section 5: Dues**

No dues of any kind shall be assessed of any member.

## **Article IV: Officer's & CAC Representatives**

### **Section 1: Officers**

There shall be four officers for the Tennessee Town NIA: a President, a Vice President, a Secretary and a Treasurer. These officers shall perform the duties prescribed by the parliamentary authority as determined in Article VII. Officers must be elected from members of the Tennessee Town NIA. Should an officer move from the NIA area or otherwise be determined not eligible for membership, he or she must be replaced within 60 days of the disqualifying event. The officers shall be referred to generally as the Executive Committee, in addition, they shall perform the following duties:

#### **a. President**

The President shall preside at all meetings of the Tennessee Town NIA and of its Executive Committee. The President shall prepare a tentative agenda. The President may represent the Tennessee Town NIA to committees and commissions of the City of Topeka, Shawnee County, and state of Kansas, and shall perform other duties normally expected of a presiding officer.

#### **b. Vice-President**

The Vice-President shall preside at meetings of the Tennessee Town NIA and its Executive Committee in the absence of the President, and shall perform any other duties normally assigned to the President when the President has so requested because of the President's unavailability.

#### **c. Secretary**

The Secretary shall be responsible for the minutes of meetings of the Tennessee Town NIA and of its Executive Committee. The Secretary shall also be responsible for the safekeeping of all the official papers of Tennessee Town NIA.

#### **d. Treasurer**

The Treasurer shall be responsible for any fiscal functions pertaining to the Tennessee Town NIA that may be necessary. The Treasurer shall comply with all statutory provisions of open meetings laws.

### **Section 2: Nominations**

The Executive Committee may appoint a Nominating Committee that will submit a list of candidates for each office at least 60 days prior to the January general membership meeting. However, nominations will be accepted from the floor at the Annual Meeting. Candidates for officers shall have attended at least one general meeting of the NIA within the prior 12 months. These nomination requirements will become effective at the January meeting in 2006.

### **Section 3: Election**

The officers shall be elected by ballot of the general membership at the January Annual Meeting for a term of one year or until their successors are elected. No member may serve in the same capacity for more than two consecutive years or multiple officers for more than five consecutive years. If there is only one nominee for an office, the membership may agree to dispense with the ballot vote. A majority vote is required for election. If there are more than two candidates for an office and no one receives the required majority on two successive ballots, only the two candidates with the greatest number of votes are eligible for election on the third ballot. A tie on the third ballot will be broken by lot. Names, addresses, and telephone numbers of all officers must be submitted to HND within 30 days of election to office.

### **Section 4: Citizen Advisory Council (CAC)**



The eligible voting members shall elect a representative and an alternate to the CAC at its Annual Meeting in January in accordance with the Topeka City Code 42-4, subpart 1.

**Section 5: Vacancies**

A vacancy in any of these offices shall be filled by a majority vote of the general membership at the next meeting following the existence of any vacancy. Officers who fail to attend two (2) general membership meetings in one (1) calendar year shall be deemed to have resigned their offices. Replacement of officers following said event shall follow procedures described in Article 4, Section 5 of these bylaws.

**Article V: Meetings**

**Section 1: Regular Meetings**

Regular meetings shall be held six months per year in every odd numbered month at a time and location designated by the Executive Committee, and as published in the Tennessee Town NIA newsletter. Notice of meetings shall be published in the Tennessee Town NIA Newsletter and may include a tentative agenda of the meeting. HND shall be provided with a listing of the times, dates and location for monthly meetings in January each year. Any member of the public may attend such meetings, though only general or "associate" members of the Tennessee Town NIA may be recognized to address the membership unless the member of the public has contacted the Executive Committee in advance of the meeting to be placed on the agenda or unless a motion to suspend this bylaw is adopted by a two-thirds vote of those general members present.

**Section 2: Annual Meeting**

The regular meeting in January is designated as the Annual Meeting, at which election of officers, Citizen Advisory Council (CAC) members are held, reports of officers are received, and such other business as may properly come before the Annual Meeting is transacted. Newly elected officers take office at the adjournment of the Annual Meeting. CAC representatives become active at the next CAC meeting.

**Section 3: Special Meetings**

A special meeting of the general membership may be called by a two-thirds vote of the members of the Executive Committee to transact urgent business. Notice of such meeting shall be given at least one week prior to the meeting in the same manner as notice of regular meetings and shall include time, place, and the nature of the business to be transacted. No other business is in order at a special meeting.

**Section 4: Emergency Meetings**

In the case of an actual emergency, the President or Vice President is authorized to call a meeting with at least a 24 hours notice. The minutes of the meeting must describe the emergency and indicate why the meeting could not be delayed. A good-faith effort must be made to notify the public at large, especially those who have a special interest in the issue at hand. Only emergency issues may be acted upon at an emergency meeting.

**Article VI: Committees**

**Section 1: Committees in General**

For all committees, the Chair shall be appointed by the President and the other general members shall be selected by the Executive Committee. No one who is not a member of the Tennessee Town NIA shall serve as voting members on the Association's committees.

Each officer of the NIA shall be an active member of a standing committee as follows: Vice President-Economic Development and Beautification Committee, Secretary-Historian and Publication Committee, Treasurer-Fundraising and Activities Committee. No NIA officer shall serve as chair of a committee except in the absence of the committee chair. No funding authority is granted to committees unless determined by 2/3 vote of the general membership at a regular NIA meeting. Committees are required to keep minutes and should keep meetings informal and infrequent as necessary.

Failure of an officer to actively serve on a committee and or engaging in committee functions will prohibit the officer from serving in any officer position for a period of one year. No other authority, expressed, written or otherwise is granted.

Additional Guidance on Standing Committees: The Economic Development and Beautification Committee will be responsible for the maintenance of public open space, to include the Lane Gardens, as well as working with the code compliance officer to eliminate neighborhood blight. The Historian and Publication Committee will be responsible for the recording of history, newsletter publication, notices and electronic methods to present data to the general public. The Fundraising and Activities committee will be responsible for short term community events similar to but not limited to the Aaron Douglass Art Fair, the Tennessee Town Basketball Tournament, as well as the application for grants and other funding in support of the NIA. Committee priorities do not preempt any resident of Tennessee Town from pursuing neighborhood matters affecting their own personal interests.

### **Section 2: Nominating Committee**

90 days prior to the January Annual Meeting, the Executive Committee may select a Nominating Committee. No one may serve more than two consecutive years on this committee. The President will appoint the chair. The committee will publish calls for nominations in the newsletter and provide a telephone number where members may submit names. The committee will present a slate of nominees for officers and for board membership at the January Annual Meeting. The committee shall secure from all such nominees an indication of their willingness to serve as an officer of the Association.

### **Section 3: Ad hoc committees**

Such other committees as may be deemed necessary by the Executive Committee for the proper conduct of the business of the Association may be established as ad-hoc committees. In each case, the President shall name the Chair and the Executive Committee shall appoint the other members.

### **Section 4: The President**

The President shall be an ex-officio member of all committees except the Nominating Committee.

## **Article VII: Parliamentary Authority**

The rules contained in the latest edition of Robert's Rules of Order shall govern the Association in all cases in which they are applicable and in which they are not inconsistent with Kansas's law, these bylaws, and any special rules the NIA may adopt.

## **Article VIII: Amendment**

These bylaws may be amended at any regular meeting of the Association by a two-thirds vote, provided that the amendment has been submitted in writing at the previous regular meeting and to HND at least 30 business days prior to the meeting at which action on the proposed amendment is to be taken and notice of the proposed amendment is included in the call to the meeting.

## **Article IX: Applicable Laws**

The Tennessee Town NIA will abide by and follow any and all federal, state of Kansas and City of Topeka laws, codes, regulations, ordinances and financial accounting standards.

## **Article X: Dissolution**

If the Tennessee Town NIA is dissolved for any reason whatever, any physical or fiscal assets of the Tennessee Town NIA will be distributed in accordance with the Tennessee Town NIA Articles of Incorporation if applicable.

## CERTIFICATE OF SECRETARY TENNESSEE TOWN NEIGHBORHOOD IMPROVEMENT ASSOCIATION

I, the undersigned, do hereby certify:

(1) That I am the duly elected and acting secretary of Tennessee Town Neighborhood Improvement Association;

And

(2) That the foregoing bylaws, comprising of five pages, constitute the bylaws of said corporation, as duly adopted at the general membership meeting of the NIA duly held on the 10<sup>th</sup> day of November, 2008.

Kevin Mercer, Secretary (Acting)

### Suggested Changes:

- I. Article II, Purpose, 2: Change “Department of Housing & Neighborhood Development (HND)” to “Department of Neighborhood Relations,” and change all other references to “Housing & Neighborhood Development (HND)” to “Department of Neighborhood Relations.”
- II. Article IV, Officer’s & CAC Representatives, Title: Should read “Officers,” not “Officer’s”
  - A. Section 1: Officers: Change “There shall be four officers for the Tennessee Town NIA: a president, a vice-president, a secretary, and a treasurer” to “There shall be a Tennessee Town NIA president, vice-president, secretary, treasurer, or secretary-treasurer.”
  - B. Section 3: Election: Change “The officers shall be elected by ballot of the general membership at the January annual meeting for a term of one year or until their successors are elected. No member shall serve in the same capacity for more than two consecutive years or multiple offices for more than five consecutive years. If there is only one nominee for an office, the membership may agree to dispense with the ballot vote” to “The officers shall be elected by voice vote or ballot of the general membership at the January Annual Meeting<sup>1</sup> for a term of one year or until their successors are elected. No member shall serve in the same capacity for more than two consecutive years or multiple offices for more than five consecutive years unless other nominees cannot be identified.<sup>2</sup>”  
(<sup>1</sup>City ordinance actually mandates elections to happen in April, but Neighborhood Relations has said that with the tradition of January elections coupled with some NIAs not meeting in April that holding elections in January is acceptable. <sup>2</sup>Neighborhood Relations also has allowed officers to serve outside those parameters when other nominees cannot be identified.)
  - C. Section 4: Citizen Advisory Council, Title: Should read “Citizens Advisory Council.”
    1. Reads “The eligible voting members shall elect a representative and an alternate to the CAC at its Annual Meeting in January in accordance with Topeka City Code 42-4, subpart 1.”
    2. The actual ordinance of 10-24-2004 reads “The CAC shall consist of one (1) member elected by each certified Neighborhood Improvement Association (NIA) and three at-large members. The NIA representatives must be eligible voting members of the NIA they represent. The NIA representatives will have three (3) year terms. No person can be the NIA representative on the CAC for more than two (2) consecutive terms. NIA representatives to the CAC shall be elected at NIA annual meetings. A NIA may also elect an alternate CAC representative who may represent the NIA in the event the NIA’s CAC representative cannot attend a CAC meeting. Except, in the event a representative cannot complete their entire term, a substitute can be elected at any regular NIA meeting.”
    3. Change to read “The eligible voting members shall elect a representative and an alternate to the CAC at its Annual Meeting in January depending on the provisions of the CAC ordinance which

specify that NIA CAC representatives serve three-year terms. Per city ordinance, a NIA CAC representative would only need to be considered for reelection after serving three years and would be limited to two consecutive three-year terms.”

III. Article 5: Meetings, Title: Should read “General Membership Meetings.”

- A. Section 1: Regular Meetings: Reads “Regular meetings shall be held six months per year in every odd-numbered month at a time and location designated by the Executive Committee, and as published in the Tennessee Town NIA newsletter. Notice of meetings shall be published in the Tennessee Town NIA Newsletter and may include a tentative agenda of the meeting. HND shall be provided with a listing of the times, dates and location for monthly meetings in January each year. Any member of the public may attend such meetings, though only general or ‘associate’ members of the Tennessee Town NIA may be recognized to address the membership unless the member of the public has contacted the Executive Committee in advance of the meeting to be placed on the agenda or unless a motion to suspend this bylaw is adopted by a two-thirds vote of those general members present.”  
Should read “General Membership Meetings shall be held six months per year in every odd-numbered month at a time and location designated by the Executive Committee and as published in a variety of ways including meeting notice fliers/cards/newsletters, the NIA’s website, Nextdoor.com, and other means approved by the Executive Committee. Notice of meetings may include a tentative agenda of the meeting. Neighborhood Relations shall be provided with a listing of the times, dates and location for general membership meetings in January of each year. Any member of the public may attend such meetings and offer comments. The NIA president or the presiding officer at a general membership meeting shall determine if comments are relevant to NIA business.”
- B. Section 4: Emergency Meetings: Delete the word “hi” near the end of line 3 and replace it with the word “in.”

IV. Article 6: Committees in General:

- A. Section 1: Delete paragraphs 2-4 of this section. It is impractical and limiting to assign specific committee assignments to specific officers. The first paragraph of this section is sufficient to describe committee assignments.