

Tennessee Town NIA General Membership Meeting  
6:30 p.m., Monday, July 14, 2014  
Buchanan Center Conference Room, 1195 SW Buchanan

TENTATIVE AGENDA:

- I. Welcome, Housekeeping
- II. Adoption of Agenda
- III. Approval of May 12, 2014 Meeting Minutes
- IV. Reading and Acceptance of Treasurer's Report
- V. Reports of Officers, Committees
- VI. Community Policing Report: TPD Officer Matthew Blassingame
- VII. Property Maintenance Report: Dennis Boyles
- VIII. Citizens Advisory Council (CAC) Report: Donald Fortin
- IX. City Council Report: Karen Hiller
- X. Old Business:
  - A. National Night Out Against Crime Update: Emma Ray
  - B. Neighborhood Empowerment Grant Update
  - C. Tennessee Town as a Target Neighborhood for HUD Funds (SORT)
  - D. Housing Summit Report (see Reports of Officers and Committees)
    1. Meeting Notice Cards
  - E. Neighborhood Survey Results (see copy of Housing Summit meeting agenda)
  - F. Neighborhood Goals (see handout)
  - G. Tennessee Town Website, E-Mail
    1. Website: <http://tenntownnia.weebly.com> (all NIA meetings, activities posted)
    2. E-Mail: [tenntown@yahoo.com](mailto:tenntown@yahoo.com)
- XI. New Business:
  - A. Tennessee Town Basketball Tournament Update
  - B. Cornerstone of Topeka, Inc.'s New House in Tennessee Town (see Reports of Officers and Committees)
  - C. Open Discussion
- XII. Announcements:
  - A. Retirement Event for Topeka Police Chief Ron Miller: Noon - 3 p.m. (program begins at 1 p.m.), Friday, Aug. 8, 2014, Heritage Hall (Expocentre Grounds), SW 17th and Topeka Blvd. Public is Invited
  - B. Project Elder Cool: As of July 11, 17 window-unit air conditioners available through Jayhawk Area Agency on Aging for income-qualified seniors. Call 235-1367 or go to <http://jhawkaaa.org/>.
  - C. Next Meeting: 6:30 p.m., Monday, September 8, 2014, Buchanan Center, 1195 SW Buchanan
- XIII. Adjournment

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Minutes of May 12, 2014 General Membership Meeting:

Meeting called to order at 6:30 p.m. by President Michael Bell.

Attendees: Michael Bell, Vice-President Pat DeLapp, Secretary-Treasurer Sandra Lassiter, City Councilmember Karen Hiller, City Neighborhood Liaison Capt. Darin Scott, City of Topeka's Shane Wilson, HCCI's Chris Burk, TPD Ofcs. Robby Sachs and Charles Wilson, Code Ofc. Dennis Boyles, HND's Brad Reiff, Planning's Susan Hanzlik, Public Work's Doug Whitacre, Cornerstone's Chris Palmer, Topeka Mural Project's Jamie Colon, Fabian Griffin, Joyce Revely, John Lewis, Leroy Wedeking, Cassie Saunders, and Ron Lett.

The agenda for the May 12, 2014 meeting was unanimously approved.

The minutes of the March 10, 2014 meeting were approved without corrections.

Topeka Police Department Ofc. Robby Sachs presented the Tennessee Town NIA community policing report and fielded questions.

Code Compliance Officer Dennis Boyles presented the code compliance report and fielded questions.

Attendees were referred to the meeting packet for Reports of Officers and Committees.

District One City Councilmember Karen Hiller reported on city issues and activities associated with the upcoming Brown v. Board 60th anniversary recognition. Bell offered to make reports from Hiller a part of each meeting agenda. Hiller accepted.

There was no Citizens Advisory Council report.

The city's Shane Wilson gave a presentation on Nextdoor.com and fielded questions.

Discussion on the 2014 Neighborhood Goals that Bell presented at the March 10 meeting was deferred to the July 14, 2014 meeting.

The Topeka Mural Project's Jamie Colon discussed the mural to be painted on the south wall of WCW Property Management, at 1238 SW Lane, in Tennessee Town.

Emma Ray was unable to attend to give a report on Tennessee Town's National Night Out Against Crime event. Attendees were referred to Reports of Officers and Committees for an update on NNO.

Housing and Neighborhood Development Director Brad Reiff gave a presentation on HND services, the Takeover/Makeover neighborhood clean up, to be held on May 17, 2014; the Neighborhood Empowerment Grant, and Target Neighborhoods (SORT).

The Planning Department's Susan Hanzlik gave a presentation on Planning services, updating the Tennessee Town neighborhood plan, and community gardens.

Public Works Director Doug Whitacre gave a presentation on Public Works services, sidewalks and street/sidewalk lighting.

Cornerstone of Topeka Director Chris Palmer presented on Cornerstone services, the importance of rental and transitional housing and the Cornerstone house under construction in the first 1200 block of SW Clay in Tennessee Town.

Housing and Credit Counseling's Chris Burke presented on HCCI services, including the TOTO Program.

Discussion occurred on the Neighborhood Empowerment Grant. There was consensus that Tennessee Town should submit an application. Bell recommended, based on responses given on the returned neighborhood survey cards, that Tennessee Town submit 2 applications, one for mid-block lighting and one for sidewalks. A motion to adopt Bell's recommendations was made and seconded. The motion was unanimously approved.

Discussion occurred on the Tennessee Town NIA Housing Summit, to be held from 10 a.m. - 2 p.m. on Saturday, June 21, 2014, in Marvin Auditorium 101C of the Topeka and Shawnee County Public Library.

Discussion on the SORT was deferred to the July 14, 2014 meeting.

The availability of rental assistance through the Topeka Housing Authority was announced, and attendees were reminded that the NIA's website was up and running (<http://tenntownnia.weebly.com>).

Joyce Revely moved adjournment. Sandy Lassiter seconded the motion, which was unanimously approved.

Next meeting scheduled for 6:30 p.m., Monday, July 14, 2014, at the Buchanan Center.

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Reports of Officers, Committees:

- A. Meeting with Public Works' Shawn Bruns and Mark Schreiner Regarding the NIA's Neighborhood Empowerment Grant Applications:  
Bell and DeLapp attended the May 16, 2014, meeting, where it was revealed that street/sidewalk lighting and new sidewalks, which were identified at the May 12, 2014 NIA meeting as the two projects for which the NIA would submit Neighborhood Empowerment Grant (NEG) applications, would cost \$5,000 per pole for the lighting and \$30,000 (\$61/linear foot) for a new sidewalk for one side of a 500-foot block. The NEG had a total of \$150,000 available.
- As a result of the estimates for lighting and sidewalks and only \$150,000 being available through the NEG, the NIA's executive committee (Bell, DeLapp and Lassiter) met via e-mail and agreed to change the NIA's application to new matting for the playground equipment at King's Court, which already had been identified as an option. Bell drafted and submitted the NEG application to the city's Department of Housing and Neighborhood Development on May 9, 2014.
- B. Meeting with Topeka Habitat for Humanity:  
On May 20, 2014, Bell met with Topeka Habitat Director Michelle de la Isla and Development Director Shelley Bearman about Habitat being involved in housing activities in Tennessee Town. All agreed to investigate and, when possible, act on future housing opportunities.
- C. National Night Out (NNO) Against Crime Planning Meeting:  
Bell and Tennessee Town NIA NNO Coordinator Emma Ray attended the second city-wide NNO planning meeting on May 21, 2014, at the Topeka and Shawnee County Public Library.
- D. Topeka Community Conversation on Poverty:  
Per a stipend from HND, Bell attended the June 11, 2014 workshop at Washburn University, which was sponsored by Washburn and Heartland Visioning and was billed as an "unconference," meaning that the day's discussions were directed not by the sponsors but by attendees. The day included three breakout sessions on individual topics. Bell attended sessions on Job Creation, Quality of Life in Impoverished Neighborhoods, and Increased Political Involvement. A report is to be issued on the day's activities by the event's sponsors.
- E. Tennessee Town Housing Summit:  
Bell and DeLapp attended the June 21, 2014 summit, held at the Topeka and Shawnee County Public Library. Attendees also included the NIA's city council representative Karen Hiller, the city's Planning Department's Susan Hanzlik, HND's Warren Woodruff, Topeka Police Department Officers Matt Wilson and Jason Cooper, Topeka Property Maintenance Officer Dennis Boyles, Topeka Habitat for Humanity's Shelley Bearman, Shawnee County Landlord Association President Margie Eklund, and Christmas In Action's Jewell Welch. Hanzlik and Warren Woodruff gave a joint presentation and Bearman presented on Habitat's activities.
- Hanzlik presented on the NIA's move forward from being entirely "intensive care" to being a majority "outpatient" neighborhood from 2000-2011. (Note: In the late 1990s the Planning Department created a neighborhood health continuum to describe conditions within each of the city's neighborhoods. An "intensive care" rating signifies the most distressed neighborhoods in Topeka, an "at-risk" rating is one step above "intensive care, an "outpatient" rating is one step above an "at-risk" rating and one step below a "healthy" rating.) Hanzlik also discussed the NIA's neighborhood plan, its implementation during the same period and updating it through being designated a SORT neighborhood (more on the SORT below).

Woodruff presented on the various programs available through HND to enable new and rehabbed housing activities both on an individual and area-wide basis [i.e. the Topeka Opportunity to Own (TOTO) program] as well as its Emergency Repair, Accessibility and Voluntary Demolition programs. He also spoke on the Strategies of Resource Targeting (SORT) program, which identifies two specific neighborhoods for revitalization activities. The next SORT applications are due in November.

Habitat's Bearman presented on Topeka Habitat's current projects, its new focus on owner-occupied housing rehabilitation and its work in the Hi-Crest NIA. She said Habitat's work in Hi-Crest has focused on owner- and tenant-occupied housing where applicants must be at or below 80% of area median income. Up to \$40,000 in funding is available for those projects, she said. She said Habitat wants to be involved in Tennessee Town and that its involvement would primarily focus on housing rehabilitation.

The NIA presented on vision and goals, public/private partnerships, housing opportunities in the NIA and a holistic approach to taking advantage of them, and finding funds to augment those available through the city's Consolidated Plan (see copy of Housing Summit agenda for details).

F. National Night Out/Tennessee Town Basketball Tournament Meeting:

Bell, Lassiter and Ray met on June 26, 2014, to find out where each event was in its planning and to find out if there were opportunities to combine activities. This year both events will be held on Saturday, August 9. The basketball tournament, held at King's Court at SW Lincoln and Munson Sts., will run from 9 a.m.-2 p.m.; while the NNO observance, held at SW 12th and Buchanan Sts., will run from 3-6 p.m.

An opportunity to use the same vendor for the inflatable house was identified. Dave Collins now will furnish the inflatable house for both events at a net savings.

G. Cornerstone of Topeka, Inc.'s New House in Tennessee Town:

Bell and DeLapp attended the ribbon-cutting ceremony for Cornerstone's new house at 1231 SW Clay. Cornerstone of Topeka, Inc. Director Chris Palmer, as well as other Cornerstone staff and board members; city officials, members of the Topeka Chamber of Commerce, and our new neighbors, the Thompsons, all were in attendance. At the ceremony Cornerstone also marked the completion of two other houses, located at 1933 SW Clay and 1320 NW Eugene. The construction of the three houses was financed by the Kansas Housing Resources Corporation, The City of Topeka's Housing and Neighborhood Development department and Community Bank.

H. Executive Committee Meeting:

The NIA's executive committee met on July 10, 2014, to plan the agenda for the July 14, 2014 general membership meeting.