

Minutes for Kansas City Neighborhood Advisory Council on 5/11/2004

KCNAC members in attendance: Lynda Callon, Forestine Beasley, Jay Stock, Steve Eklund, Rodney Sampson, and Greg Hugeback (late). Dennis Carroll, Bruce Pennington, and Cynthia Canady were not present.

City staff in attendance: Renea Nash, David Reynolds, Mike Simmons (Animal Control).

Meeting called to order at 3:45 pm.

Waste Management reported that they want to set up a meeting with Environmental Management, now that two months of RecycleFIRST have gone through but before the June cycle starts with Phase 2. They would like to address and correct problems before they become structural defects in the program; Jay wants to finalize the list of questions for that meeting today.

- For example, Deramus only being open on Saturday is a problem, but there appears to be no chance of getting that site open on Sundays without additional funding. As Jay brought up, the City/State/County offices are all generally open the same hours that everyone else works. In order to accommodate the people who work off-shifts or Saturdays, there have to be enough hours open on the weekend. But he gave EM credit for doing all they could; any additional hours will have to be in addition to the current budget expenditures. Steve suggested paying for it to be open on Sunday by charging per load. Jay mentioned that the advisory committee is fighting the idea of charging for drop-off loads at Deramus. Rodney brought up the idea of putting a bin and a chipper at the Recycling Centers to expand availability. Lynda pointed out that their chippers are very large and bulky, and require specially trained staff to avoid liability/injury, which would in no way alleviate the budgetary concern.
- David asked if the I-470 & Deramus Road site charging for multiple drop-offs plan ever went anywhere. Lynda mentioned that contractors and out-of-City users of the facility have to pay, but her own group makes 8 or 9 drop-offs on a weekend sometimes. They are wanting to go to a system where recognized neighborhood leaders can drop off multiple loads without paying a fee, similar to how the used tire drop-off works. Apparently that plan has not been implemented yet though.
- Jay brought up that he has never seen a rejection sticker on a bag of trash; he wants to explore the possibility of using door hangers instead.
- How frequent is the problem of extra bags being left out? Steve pointed out that in his area, the major problem comes from landlords cleaning out apartments and setting out 15 bags. Jay wants to find out more about the actual incidence of the problem. Rodney suggested having the trash enforcement officers follow the trash trucks, but this would be cost-prohibitive.
- Greg came in and reiterated the need for Sunday drop-off for leaf-and-brush. People are not willing to trade-off Sunday for Saturday though; that would be no improvement and possibly worse.
- Forestine asked about the evaluation of Phase 1 of RecycleFIRST; Jay said that that is going to occur, with EM and the WM committee having equal positions.
- What is happening when people are dumping extra bags or inappropriate items for Bulky Item pickup? There is 1 or 2 guys working in Illegal Dumping Enforcement now.
- What is the one number or person people can go to within EM to get answers? People are getting frustrated with the inability to get a straight answer, or talk to a real person. Greg was on hold for more than ten minutes today with Neighborhood Preservation. Rodney suggested having an email page for NP so that people don't have to wait forever on hold. Renea brought up the ncs@kcmo.org email which already exists and goes to Les' office; that can be used to route calls to Neighborhood Preservation. Animal Control has their own email at animalcontrol@kcmo.org as well; CCS has one at solutions_ncsd@kcmo.org for general use.

Rodney reported from PMAC that their next meeting will be next Tuesday at 4pm; this will be the meeting with Ed Loundes. The questions have not been compiled yet; they should be sent to Steve at coord@4963.org soon. Lynda asked about the other meetings with HUD, etc; the committee wants to see how the first one goes first. Another side project is to find a way to raise the fire insurance of buildings that have to be boarded up. Jay suggested going to the Insurance Institute, as they will likely be amenable to a plan that raises rates.

Greg also brought up the idea of a directory of KCNAC members. He brought his camera to take pictures.

Dennis was not present to report for Liquor Control; Lynda will check with him and report back. David also mentioned that it was brought up at a CAN center meeting that the Nuisance Business Task Force is in the process of being restarted. A lot of people, including Judy Hadley, are interested in that coming back. Greg asked if there was any update on the review of the liquor ordinances; that is one of the things to ask Dennis. Steve pointed out that the review committee was supposed to consist of 6 neighborhood representatives, 6 industry people, and 4 lawyers, but none of the neighborhood people had/have any legal experience, so they are at a disadvantage here. Steve also mentioned that there was a slot open for District 1, but they could possibly come from District 2 as long as they were up north. He is suggesting a neighborhood person with some sort of legal background would be very helpful.

Steve had some confusion on whether he was officially on a 'Community Policing' subcommittee for KCNAC; David said the minutes didn't reflect any official consensus to do so, but that the group had discussed the idea favorably several times. He would be serving as a liaison from KCNAC to the Community Policing Steering Committee, and allow information to be transmitted back from CPSC to the neighborhoods via that mechanism, and especially in a condensed form. Steve agreed to serve in that capacity. The CPSC is undergoing some difficulties and struggles with finding relevance and an effective voice. Lynda especially is concerned with the PD's inability to work with the immigrant populations, to the point where they are starting to set up their own parallel justice systems because they can't get any response from the 'real' system. The next meeting will be Tuesday, June 3rd at the Tony Aguire Community Center at 8:00 AM.

In tandem with this, there has been a lot of concern about the Police Department going back to STATS. The Roundtable requested Chief Easley come and speak about this with them, and are expecting Officer Jason White (who obviously does not have any authority over the system). Steve brought up the Move-Up community forum meetings (next one is tonight), and he spoke to the Commander of South Patrol, who seems to "get" community policing. She said STATS can be used to support community policing, but Lynda brought up that if it's not on their checklist, it doesn't have any relationship built in. Jay pointed out that STATS does have issues, but without it there's no data on what data is coming out of the police department. He related it to the policy of measuring how much the Codes inspectors were doing, which improved their accountability, according to Les himself. Steve suggested that rather than trying to kill STATS, they should try to ensure that STATS supports community policing. They will look into getting Jim Rice to come out to a KCNAC meeting. David reminded the council that they spoke in March about finding a way to get the CPSC some 'teeth' so that the PD could not ignore them at will.

Michael Simmons, Investigator II from Animal Control, has been with the department for nearly 20 years. He ran the enforcement program last time it was around 12 years ago, and they asked him back to run it again this time. Last time the problem was that people licensed their pets when enforcement was strict and slacked off when the program ended. So Robyn Kendrick went to the Council and asked for a full-time, never-ending program of enforcement with dedicated staff. If 20% of the pet owners are licensing their

pets, why do 80% get off with paying nothing? The new program has been in effect for two months, everywhere from Gracemor to Ward Parkway to 47th & Sterling.

What they have asked Michael to do is be available to go out and speak to neighborhood groups and associations about enforcement and inform people about the benefits of licensing their pets. AC would rather people have their pets licensed, than have to be fined. However for right now they have adopted a zero-tolerance policy. Renea pointed out that the flyer from AC went out with the spring newsletter, and is working on getting information packets prepared for people who pick up block party barricades from CCS. Jay asked about how this program impacts the animal control efforts on the street; Michael explained that his crew's mandate only applies to license enforcement. He does go through ahead of them and make sure the neighborhood is safe and free of dangerous animals, but the real benefit is secondary. If they can get to a 50% licensing rate, the income from that will pay for the manpower shortage AC is experiencing currently. In September 2002, they had 7 officers left on the force (a city this size should have 30+), and had to do away with the evening shift. Jay and Lynda both expressed some frustration with trying to call them on the weekend and getting a recording telling them to call back on Monday. Michael pointed out that in an emergency situation, calling 9-1-1 would get ahold of Animal Control.

Michael gave an example of an extreme situation where he was the only AC officer on duty in the City when a woman was bit near the Plaza, and the doctor said she nearly died. Every other department in the City has seen cuts or stagnation; Robyn was able to sell the Council on hiring new officers. The goal is to enforce licensing requirements to increase revenue in order to hire those additional street officers. Lynda asked about whether he would be able to do licensing on the spot when he was out talking with groups; the issue there is collecting potentially large sums of money at a neighborhood meeting and the risk of victimization associated with that; he's not armed and isn't prepared to get shot over \$700 in pet fees. Lynda pointed out that AC's hours and location is not very helpful to many people who do not get out of their neighborhood very often. She wants to cover in the next meeting ways to help AC facilitate people getting their pets licensed. Michael mentioned that one of their goals is to have several more of the rabies shot/pet licensing clinics like they had at Animal Control last month, but move them around the City. Lynda expressed some concern about having a large number of dogs and children at a neighborhood picnic; it may be easier with block parties because of the smaller density of people. They will need about a 4-week lead up to get all of the shots, tags, etc in order for a public event. There is also an expansion underway to get the licensing available in half of the veterinary clinics in the City. Michael also brought up the Dangerous Dog ordinance that recently went into effect; it makes these animals nearly prohibitive to own because of the licensing and insurance requirements. Greg asked if there was an electronic version of the material that Michael Simmons brought; Renea will send it to him, as well as announcing it to the Roundtable, and CCS' distribution list.

Criteria for KCNAC Membership: Les asked that the group talk about membership criteria, partly so that no member becomes an embarrassment. Some examples include:

- Have to live in Kansas City, Missouri.
- No housing code violations. It was brought up that this needs to be stipulated to be outstanding bench warrants for housing court, because anyone who is active in the neighborhood can be the target of a vindictive enforcement campaign.
- Rodney pointed out that it should probably be no outstanding bench warrants, period.
- Jay brought up the restriction on not being a current employee of the City, or an employee of a major contractor for the City. Troy Nash was very adamant on them not being City employees. Lynda suggested perhaps they make it a requirement that anyone who is serving on the council disclose their relationship to any contractors and let the council decide if it is a conflict of interest.

- Rodney brought up that having a City employee, even a clerk in Water Services, on the council makes it uncomfortable for them in their work environment if they cannot be outspoken as a member of the committee. Greg suggested that employees who get into a conflict of interest must recuse themselves from issues that affect the area of their own job. Jay suggested that they table it until the next meeting, so David can find out more from Legal on the definition of ‘major contractor’.
- Attendance requirements are already in the by-laws.
- Steve wondered if nominees should be put forward by their neighborhoods; Lynda pointed out that Rodney, for example, is not representing an active neighborhood association right now but has taken it upon himself to be active on their behalf (and on behalf of other neighborhoods in that area).
- Greg asked if there could be some sort of application form; Lynda is working on the draft for this. Jay suggested getting a look at the one that NNI is using.
- Forestine suggested someone who has at least some familiarity with the City’s structure; something regarding their “demonstrated civic involvement”. Renea pointed out that people who are on KCNAC subcommittees are excellent candidates for the main council.
- Jay asked people to picture themselves as City Councilpeople, and envision what embarrass them.
- No felony convictions.
- There should not be anyone representing themselves as “speaking for” the Neighborhood Advisory Council without a vote and decision by the Council itself.
- Greg suggested that they should be a registered voter; this would avoid the ‘felony conviction’ stigma and instead be a positive criteria.
- Jay brought up the issue of back-due property taxes. It was suggested to expand that to not being delinquent on real or personal property taxes. Someone else mentioned the earnings tax, for those who are self-employed or run their own businesses.
- This will have to be resolved before they can start to add new members.

David asked if anyone had heard from Bruce Pennington; apparently he has been very busy with life and it would be nice to find out if he is still interested in serving on the committee.

Bob Fisher is also apparently not doing well, health-wise; Lynda will call him or his wife and see how they’re doing.

Next meeting will be on 6/8/2004.

Meeting adjourned at 5:35 PM.