

Approved Meeting Minutes

**CITY OF GLENDALE
CITIZENS ADVISORY COMMISSION ON NEIGHBORHOODS
Special Summer Meeting
First United Method Church of Glendale
7102 N. 58th Drive – Sunday School Room
Saturday, August 24, 2013
8:30 a.m. to Noon**

MEMBERS PRESENT: John Geurs, Chair - Ocotillo District
Davita Solter, Vice Chair – Sahuaro District
Cathy Corella – Barrel District
Leslie Sheeler– Ocotillo District
Josh Marshall - Cactus District
Rebecca Ontiveros – Ocotillo District
Ken Wixon - Cactus District

MEMBERS ABSENT: Carl Dietzman – Ocotillo District
Melissa Neighbors – Cholla District

STAFF PRESENT: Sam McAllen, Executive Director
Angie Wilkie, Neighborhood Services Coordinator
Angela Freeman, Crime Prevention Specialist
Christina Parry, Assistant City Attorney

I. Call to Order

Chair Geurs called the meeting to order at 8:37 a.m.

II. Roll Call and Self Introductions

Chair Geurs conducted roll call. Commissioners and staff introduced themselves and shared their backgrounds. Chair Geurs noted that Commissioners Dietzman and Neighbors were absent. Mr. McAllen noted that Commissioner Dixon submitted his resignation earlier in the week.

III. Approval of Minutes – June 5, 2013

Vice Chair Solter motioned to approve the June 5, 2013 meeting minutes with the correction that all references to “Commissioner Geurs” be corrected to “Vice Chair Geurs.” Commissioner Marshall made the second. The motion passed 7 - 0.

IV. Opening Comments and Objectives

Chair Geurs read aloud the following Glendale Code of Ordinances regarding the Citizens Advisory Commission on Neighborhoods:

- Section 2-300: Created
- Section 2-301: Members

- Section 2-302: Meetings, rules, etc.
- Section 2-303: Powers and duties.

Chair Geurs stressed that during the coming year, the Commission would focus on advising the city council on general policies, strategies and programs relating to the development, preservation, improvement and revitalization of Glendale's neighborhoods according to Section 2-303.

Chair Geurs noted that the Commission is to be comprised of eleven members. Mr. McAllen clarified that a quorum of the Commission is considered to be based on eleven members, regardless of any vacancies. Mr. McAllen noted that a quorum would be a majority of eleven members; therefore six members are needed for a quorum.

Chair Geurs stated that because the Commission is advisory in nature and since there are no more neighborhood grants, he would like to take the direction of establishing a theme for the monthly meetings. Chair Geurs explained that during the meeting, there would be a presentation on an issue pertaining to the theme by City staff or an organization. Furthermore, Commissioners can discuss any issues in their districts relative to the theme and/or provide suggestions for resolution to Council or staff. Chair Geurs added that based on developments at the meeting, the Commission could then make a recommendation to the Council. Chair Geurs suggested that each of the Commissioners volunteer to spearhead each of the meeting themes. All Commissioners agreed.

Chair Geurs commented that the Ordinance relating to the Commission may need to be revised because the Ordinance was written in 1994. Mr. McAllen will follow-up on any necessary changes to the wording in the Ordinance.

V. Fiscal Year 2012-13 Commission Accomplishment Review

Mr. McAllen commented on the following accomplishments:

- Last year, staff and the Commission focused on better communication with the neighborhoods. A new online system was established for neighborhood leaders to enter neighborhood newsletters into easy-to-use templates for printing and mailing by staff.
- The Commissioners hosted the Recognition Event held in December to show appreciation and encouragement to the neighborhood leaders. This event was hosted pot-luck style as there were no funds in the budget for catering. The event was well-attended and will be held again this year.
- Chair Geurs worked with Ms. Wilkie to create a postcard to send to neighborhood leaders advertising dates of important city, community and neighborhood events.
- The Commissioners participated in a wide variety of volunteer events.
- The Commissioners personally called neighborhood leaders at the start of last fiscal year to invite the leaders to the Commission meetings.

Ms. Wilkie stated that many of the Commission and staff accomplishments were noted in the May Commission meeting minutes, which was included in the Commission packet. Ms. Wilkie highlighted the following:

- Community Volunteer Program: 109 volunteer projects and 2,311 volunteers
- MLK Day of Service: 45 tons of grapefruit gleaned and donated to St. Mary's Food Bank
- Serve Day: 21 different projects and 500 volunteers
- 27 Adopt-A-Street Clean-ups
- Tool Lending Program
- HOA Training Academy and Glendale University 101, Glendale University Graduate Class
- Working with 193 registered neighborhoods
- October 26: Rock & Roll Paint-a-Thon

Commissioner Sheeler inquired about inactive neighborhoods. Ms. Wilkie explained that sometimes, neighborhood leaders move away but do not contact staff to make the change on the neighborhood register. Also, some neighborhoods just become inactive because there is really nothing of significance occurring in the community. Therefore, the register can become outdated at times. Ms. Wilkie commented that at the beginning of last fiscal year, the Commissioners each volunteered to call a block of neighborhood leaders in order to determine the veracity of the neighborhood register. Mr. McAllen and Ms. Wilkie agreed that this was very helpful. It was agreed that the Commissioners would again reach out to neighborhood leaders to confirm contact status. Ms. Wilkie will provide each Commissioner with a contact list.

Vice Chair Solter commented that the pot luck Recognition Event was very enjoyable and should be continued. Vice Chair Solter volunteered for fruit gleaning at a senior couple's home on Serve Day and also fruit gleaning at Sahuaro Ranch Park on Martin Luther King Jr. Day. Vice Chair Solter enjoyed both projects and seeing members of the community helping each other.

Chair Geurs added that he has also participated in neighborhood clean-ups and stated that once one property is cleaned up, the nearby residents begin to clean up their properties too. Chair Geurs' neighborhood has experienced this ripple effect.

Ms. Wilkie stated that feedback from the volunteer projects is very important and having the Commissioners involved in the projects is of great benefit.

VI. Commission Member Roles, Responsibilities and Opportunities

Chair Geurs suggested a "hospitality" Commissioner for each meeting, who would be responsible for bringing water and a small snack, such as cookies. All Commissioners agreed.

Chair Geurs asked for suggestions and volunteers for the monthly meeting themes as agreed earlier in the meeting.

The following monthly meeting themes were proposed:

- September 11: Irrigation/Chair Geurs to spearhead
- October 2: GAIN and Transportation/ Commissioner Corella
- November 6: Sanitation/Vice Chair Solter
- December 4: Recognition Event

- January 8: Absentee Owners and Rentals/Commissioner Sheeler
- February 5: Parks and Recreation/Commissioner Ontiveros
- March 5: Traffic
- April 2: To be determined
- May 7: To be determined
- June 4: To be determined

It was agreed that the discussion of plans for the December recognition event will be added to the September Commission agenda.

Mr. McAllen stated that the agenda item "Commissioner Comments" is the time whereby the Commissioners can make comments on issues discussed during the meeting or comment on any issues they feel are important for the Councilmembers to take note. Mr. McAllen will contact the Council Office to ensure that the Councilmembers are directed to read the Commissioners Comments in the meeting minutes.

Mr. McAllen added that if there was a need for a formal recommendation to the City Council, the vote would have to be posted on the Commission's agenda.

VII. Break

A break was taken from 10:00 to 10:10

VIII. Getting Arizona Involved in Neighborhoods (GAIN) Presentation

Ms. Freeman, Crime Prevention Specialist, addressed the Commission in regards to the upcoming GAIN night scheduled for Saturday, October 26th.

Ms. Freeman noted that GAIN is an annual event designed to get residents to come together, meet each other and share community issues with each other. Ms. Freeman stated that there will not be a separate kick-off for the event as in years past.

Ms. Freeman distributed an informational flyer on GAIN night.

Ms. Freeman stated that neighborhoods can register online for the event. Representatives from the police and fire department will visit the events in those neighborhoods formally registered for GAIN night. Mr. McAllen added that members of City staff and Councilmembers also visit the neighborhood parties on GAIN night. Mr. McAllen encouraged the Commissioners to participate as well.

Ms. Freeman will provide Ms. Wilkie with the final list of neighborhoods that have been registered for GAIN night.

Commissioner Sheeler wondered if the neighborhoods could partner with local schools for the GAIN night events. Ms. Freeman replied in the positive and noted that the neighborhood leaders would have to contact the school representatives regarding a GAIN partnership.

Chair Geurs stated that, on GAIN night, originally some of his neighbors would go inside when the police representatives came to visit because they may have feared someone was getting arrested. Chair Geurs explained since the police have established a relationship of friendly visits through GAIN night, the neighbors now stay outside when the police come for the event.

Mr. McAllen reminded the Commissioners that there was a formal process to have a street in the neighborhood blocked off for GAIN night. Ms. Freeman noted that on the City website, there is a link that can be used to request a street to be blocked off.

Chair Geurs reminded the Commissioners to wear their Commission name badges when visiting GAIN events.

Chair Geurs thanked Ms. Freeman for her presentation.

IX. Open Meeting Law and Commission Member Communications

Ms. Parry, Assistant City Attorney, gave a presentation on Open Meeting Law (OML), which included the following information:

- Legislative Statement
 - It is the public policy of this state that all meetings of public bodies be conducted openly.
- Application
 - The OML is general law that strictly applies to very specific, factually-oriented situations.
 - Application depends on factual circumstances.
 - Sometimes, no definitive legal answer to a question
- Interpretation
 - Any person charged with the interpretation of the OML must construe that law in favor of open and public meetings.
 - Therefore, when there is no definitive answer, the City Attorney's Office is legally required to recommend an open meeting.
- Requirements
 - All meetings of any public body must be public meetings and all persons so desiring must be permitted to attend and listen to the discussions, deliberations and proceeding.
 - Public body: Council, all appointed boards and commissions, multi-member agencies, corporations with elected or appointed board members.
 - Public meeting: Property notice gathering of a quorum of a public body at which legal action is discussed, proposed, deliberated or taken.
 - Attend and listen: No right to speak under the OML.
- Requirements
 - All legal actions of public bodies must occur during a public meeting.
 - Legal action: a collective decision or commitment pursuant to the body's scope of duties.
- Meetings
 - Any form of discussion that relates to the business or jurisdiction of the public body.

- Cities have very broad business purposed and jurisdiction.
- Excludes social gatherings. Perception alone can still cause a complaint. Discussion can quickly turn to an issue that is prohibited.
- No exception for convenience. Inconvenience is the price paid for the benefits of open government.
- Violations
 - Discussions or deliberations between less than a quorum, or other device, when used to circumvent the purpose of the OML, violate that law.
 - Can be done by meeting to discuss a topic within jurisdiction of the public body by any means: in person, on telephone, electronically.
- Unintentional Meetings
 - A quorum of the City Council is four members.
 - Members should never “splinter” that quorum.
 - Means of splintering include a “daisy chain” and a “hub and spoke”.
- Use of Staff
 - Members of public bodies must not knowingly direct any staff member to communicate in violation of the OML.
 - It is a violation to merely direct.
 - Does not matter if an actual violation occurred.
- Executive Session
 - Only seven specific types of matters may be discussed in an executive session.
 - No legal action may be taken.
 - All discussions and materials presented are confidential.
- Penalties
 - Nullification of any action.
 - Civil Penalties
 - Persons knowingly violating the OML
 - Persons aiding, agreeing to aid, or attempting to aid another in the violation.
 - Removal from office
 - Violations with the intent to deprive the public of information.
 - Persons aiding, agreeing to aid, or attempting to aid another in the violation may be assessed civil penalties.
 - Civil penalties may be up to \$500 for each violation
 - Assessment is against the person.
 - Public body cannot pay the penalty.

Mr. McAllen stated that since the Commission is to be comprised of eleven members based on City Ordinance, the quorum is six members.

Ms. Parry stressed that during any email communication to the Commissioners, when replying, the Commissioners should not use the “reply all” function.

Chair Geurs suggested revision of the agenda to allow the public to comment at the end of the Commission meeting or at the end of each agenda item. Mr. McAllen will follow-up on this suggestion.

Mr. McAllen thanked Ms. Parry for her presentation.

X. Commission Monthly Meetings – Discussion of Monthly Meeting Themes

Previously discussed.

XI. Developing a Commission Plan for Fiscal Year 2013-14

Mr. McAllen re-capped the following action items:

- The agenda will be revised to allow for additional opportunities for public comment.
- City and community event dates and information will be provided to the Commissioners for personal use and to provide to neighborhood leaders.
- Commissioners are invited and encouraged to participate in the Rock & Roll Paint-a-Thon, the MLK Day projects, Serve Day, Glendale University and the HOA Academy.
- Commissioners can attend and also be ambassadors of volunteer programs.
- Commissioners will be provided with a contact list for leaders from registered neighborhoods in order to update the contact list and invite the leaders to upcoming meetings and any community events.

Commissioner Sheeler suggested outreach to the increasing refugee population in the City. Commissioner Sheeler stated that many of the refugees have been brought to the City for safety, but do not have ongoing support or knowledge of local customs.

It was agreed that the April monthly theme would be on refugees and the various outreach and education that can be provided to them. Chair Geurs suggested that a representative from one of the local churches who facilitate the refugee programs could be invited to the Commission meeting for a presentation.

Chair Geurs requested that staff email a copy of the monthly Commission agenda and meeting minutes to registered neighborhood leaders. Mr. McAllen and Ms. Wilkie will pursue this suggestion.

Mr. McAllen asked the Commissioners to promote the use of neighborhood newsletters when speaking with neighborhood leaders as they are a very effective communication tool.

Mr. McAllen encouraged all Commissioners to sign up for their specific Councilmember's electronic district newsletter.

Chair Geurs suggested a mobile meeting at a newly registered neighborhood which would include a tour of the neighborhood. All Commissioners agreed. Mr. McAllen will pursue a location.

Chair Geurs stressed revision of the agenda in regards to public comment opportunities. Commissioner Sheeler stated that when she was on the Aviation Commission, blue and gold speaker cards were to be filled out by the public prior to speaking. Commissioner Sheeler added that the Chair of the Aviation Commission

also read aloud legal verbiage regarding public comment prior to the start of the meeting. Mr. McAllen will follow-up on this suggestion.

Chair Geurs stressed the need for an agenda item for clear communication to the Council regarding the monthly themes or other neighborhood issues. It was agreed that in the future, the agenda will include two separate items: Commission Reports for comments on activities the Commissioners have participated in and other general comments and Comments to Council which would include specific comments intended as recommendations to Council.

XII. Commissioner Comments and Suggestions

Commissioner Wixon stated that he enjoyed the meeting and learned a great deal as well.

Commissioner Corella is unable to participate in events on Saturday mornings, but can assist with planning, phoning and emailing for the events.

Vice Chair Solter learned a lot at the meeting. Vice Chair Solter requested an updated Commissioner roster.

Commissioner Ontiveros praised the Chair and Vice Chair for an excellent meeting and thanked staff for their hard work.

Commissioner Sheeler complimented the work of the police department, Graffiti Busters, staff and others who have helped to decrease the graffiti and vandalism in her neighborhood. Commissioner Sheeler stated that four arrests have been made in the case of vandalism in her neighborhood within 30 days and this has really cleaned up the community.

Commissioner Sheeler stressed the use of recycling and cost cutting for the City. Commissioner Sheeler requested that staff bring a recycling container to the meeting for discarded paper and that Commissioners bring their own water bottles to the meetings to save on cost to the City.

Commissioner Sheeler praised the police department and wants to recognize their efforts for the outstanding job the officers do on a daily basis.

Commissioner Marshall enjoyed the retreat and thanked Chair Geurs for the food and refreshments. Commissioner Marshall stated that the presentation on Open Meeting Law was very informative.

Chair Geurs thanked all of the Commissioners and staff for attending the meeting. Chair Geurs stressed that with neighborhood communication and outreach; much good can be done in a community.

XIII. Adjourn

Commissioner Sheeler motioned to adjourn the meeting at 12:07 p.m. Vice Chair Solter made the second. The motion passed 7 - 0.

Respectfully Submitted,

Denise Kazmierczak