

Minutes of the Regular Meeting of
THE SOUTH SIDE NEIGHBORHOOD TASK FORCE (SSNTF)
Northern Plains Resource Council, 220 South 27th Street, Billings, Montana
February 20, 2020

Present: Tirza Asbell, Craig Barthel, Jan Begger, Caroline Canarios, Kathleen Candelaria, Genna Carlisle, Shelley Carpenter, Linda Deavila, Brandi DeMars, Kayla Deroches, Jace Dyckman, Melissa Henderson, Max Hoffman, Marguerite Jodry, Daniel Morgan, Lynnadele Nielsen, Suzy Paddock, Nathan Schara, Kendra Shaw, Jess Sheldahl and Joe Stockburger.

Task Force Chair Catherine Card called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. Card introduced a power point to aid with the meeting process. Card noted that Joe Stockburger and Kayla Deroches would be taping parts of the meeting for a future podcast. All attendees introduced themselves and all were welcomed.

Officer Nathan Schara of the Billings Police presented a monthly report. He answered member questions regarding welfare checks and having reliable vehicle insurance. Shelley Carpenter inquired about vehicles parked the wrong way and Schara advised that Code Enforcement be notified. Schara also offered that if anyone would like to do a ride-along, they should contact the Police Department and, after a background check, they would be scheduled. Kathleen Candelaria asked where things were at with the Battleship Property; since the recent fire is still under investigation, it was determined to ask the Fire Marshall. Report is available upon request.

Kendra Shaw presented a City Council report. Shaw reported that it had been 15 years since a public safety mill levy was passed. This mill levy is big and expensive and would support public safety, including a full-time staff person for the Substance Abuse Connect coalition, a Crisis Stabilization Center and the MT 211 crisis line which alleviates all the non-emergency/non-pertinent calls which the police department receives. This would also serve to connect people to the services offered in our area. Mayor Cole recommended asking Brenda Lundgren of United Way to do a presentation regarding program.

Card presented November minutes for member approval. A motion to approve them was seconded, and the motion passed. Marguerite presented the Treasurer's Report. A motion to approve the report was seconded and the motion passed.

Max Hoffman presented a report regarding the latest meeting of the Phillips 66 Citizens Advisory Council (CAC). At the CAC's March meeting, Phillip 66 management will seek guidance about philanthropic projects in the community that the company should support monetarily.

Jan Begger and Suzy Paddock presented a video about Alternatives. They have existed for 40 years. Begger noted that attendee Kathleen Candelaria, South Side resident, serves on Alternatives Board as well as a screening committee. The screening committee checks out all people who apply to the program. It tries to accommodate Yellowstone County residents as much as possible. Begger noted that people thrive with structure and accountability. 90% have drug and alcohol issues. Mayor Cole reported that more parolees have substance abuse issues and that they are coming directly from prison straight into the Billings community. Suzy Paddock reported that they work hard to help people move forward with housing and employment. Transportation plays a factor. Probation officers work with landlords to educate. Some South Side landlords are not safe and are therefore bypassed for housing options. Paddock stated that not all are bad people but just make bad choices. She stated that they do what they can to help them. Begger reported that it is hard to track what happens once a person leaves their

program. Begger expressed her thanks for how the SSNTF has embraced and treated the Passages women.

Updates from Neighborhood Agencies:

Lynnadele Nielsen reported that the Great American Cleanup, in conjunction with the United Way Day of Service, would take place on April 25th. This will be posted on SSNTF Facebook page.

Craig Barthels with St. Vincent DePaul provided an update on the Saturday brunches. He said that they have had good turnouts each week. He also noted that alcohol and drug use seem to be on the rise in the community.

Melissa Henderson reported on the poetry workshop being offered by Healthy by Design on Saturday, February 22 from 10 AM to 2 PM.

Old Business:

Card reported on the upcoming graffiti clean-up project. She contacted the Montana Department of Transportation who granted permission for painting/mural at the underpass. Card, Henderson, Hoffman will coordinate efforts to write a proposal for a Big Sky Economic Development grant for this, possibly partnering with the Central-Terry Task Force, to submit the proposal to the Big Sky EDA Space2Place no later than March 5, 2020.

Card reported on the Easter Egg Hunt. She asked that anyone willing to help please contact her.

Card reported on two properties, 114 and 118 South 29th Street. In a recent letter, Code Enforcement Officer Craig Salzman had outlined the steps that will be taken resolve the dangerous building and nuisance conditions with these buildings: pre-demolition asbestos abatement in February, followed by demolition bids from contractors, selection of the contractor and removal of the buildings on both properties. The process will take 4-8 weeks.

There was a discussion about the difficulty SSNTF representatives have had keeping up with the hearings on these properties and the last- minute cancellation of hearings. Mayor Cole reported that the SSNTF should reach out to Nicole Cromwell with Code Enforcement to receive up-to-date notifications of court date cancellations, etc. Card explained that had been done, but it seems Code Enforcement does not always know ahead of time that a hearing is being cancelled. Cole suggested SSNTF representatives should contact the judge in advance of the hearing.

New Business:

Card presented an opportunity for SSNTF members to tour the City Jail. Dennis Pitman provided 3 options: March 6th, March 20th and March 25th. After a show of hands, it was determined that Wednesday, March 25, 2020 at 1pm would work. Card will follow up with members.

Meeting adjourned at 8:15pm.

The next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, March 19th, 220 South 27th (Northern Plains Resource Council building).

Respectfully Submitted,
Genna Carlisle