

Yakima City Council Committee Minutes
Neighborhood & Community Building Committee (NCBC)
 2nd Floor Conference Room, City Hall
 May 19, 2016

Committee Members	Staff	Others	
Dulce Gutiérrez (Chair)	Mark Kunkler, Acting City Manager	Ellicott Dandy	Lowel Krueger
Avina Gutiérrez	Joan Davenport, Community Dev Director	Phil Mattoon	Steve Hill
Carmen Méndez	Rosalinda Ibarra	Lynn Buchanan	Carole Folsom Hill
	Ken Wilkinson	Raquel Ferrell-Crowley	Jeff Bakers
	Valerie Smith	Mary Lopez	Nereida Espinoza
	Archie Matthews	Francisco Fernandez	Jorge Alvarez
	Sara Watkins	Jose Castrejon	Angelica Sanchez
		Bob Strader	

Chair D. Gutiérrez called the meeting to order at 2:00 p.m.

Introductions – Everyone in attendance provided a brief introduction. Spanish interpretation was available.

Armory Proposal / Homeless Issues – Lowel Krueger, Executive Director of Yakima Housing Authority, provided a quick overview of a proposal to use the Armory site, located in the vicinity of S. 16th Ave & Tahoma Ave, to provide housing and services to homeless veterans in the Yakima area. Part of this proposal is a joint collaboration with Perry Technical Institute which is introducing a new program that would provide workforce training to veterans using their services. After a brief discussion about the partnership with Perry Technical and traffic concerns, the committee was generally in favor of supporting this project and recommended that it be presented to the full council at an upcoming business meeting with answers that address questions such as traffic flow, sidewalks, project timeframe, and any other anticipated needs.

Exploratory Committees - Bike/Pedestrian Committee, Ethics, and Community Integration –

D. Gutiérrez reminded the audience that regular meetings for these committees will be held separately once they have been established.

Bike/Pedestrian Committee – Sara noted that the previous policies and procedures could be reviewed and revised for the re-instated Bike/Pedestrian Committee. C. Méndez to coordinate a meeting with Joan and Sara to discuss monthly meeting schedule and steps on how to increase public participation since staff support will be minimal.

In response to inquiries about addressing transportation issues, D. Gutiérrez clarified that those concerns should be presented to the full council so that direction can be given at that level. Issues related to transportation are overseen by the Economic Development Committee at this time.

Several practices are in place to ensure community engagement for equitable representation such as the city website, press releases, and announcements at public meetings.

Ethics and Community Integration – Sara reported on research of what other cities have adopted for committees that focus on enforcing ordinances established by the local jurisdictions such as human rights, discrimination, equality issues, fair housing. In regards to formulating the procedures for the city ethics committee, Sara suggested evaluating present ordinances and enacting one dealing with

human civil rights. Also, having a member with background or experience in the legal field would benefit the ethics committee.

Sara referred to the City of Portland as an example of a starting point for the vision of the community integration committee to include components such as community programming, cultural events, immigration services, and diverse community engagement. C. Méndez suggested looking into how a human services department could potentially fit into one of these committees.

The next step is to establish parameters, draft policies and procedures will be presented at the next NCBC meeting.

Update on Parks Report – Ken Wilkinson reported an overview and updated the committee on the Parks Report. Reporting parameters are divided by council districts displaying parks operational costs, current staff resources, future park improvements, and fees for services being provided. Additional information was requested to be included in the report such as the year of the latest capital improvement for each park, costs to new facilities at Cherry Park, a list of facilities that have been added to the responsibilities of the Parks department, and an actual total of revenue collected due to the 2013 fee increase. Ken reported that the Parks survey is being drafted and will be sent out to random property owners. As requested by C. Méndez, he provided a copy of the maintenance contract with Perry Tech which expires in December 31, 2018. Discussion continued regarding partnership agreements with public and private entities providing recreational opportunities for the community and better ways of tracking information regarding park issues. Joe Caruso provided an update on the house that burned on the property adjacent to Cherry Park. He indicated there may be a possibility of the city obtaining it to expand that park.

Steve Hill expressed concern about the inability for the general public to utilize the ball fields at Kiwanis Park. He feels that the community could have a greater benefit by using them. Ken responded that only one field remains unlocked and is available for use. Due to vandalism, access to these fields is limited to groups for tournaments, school games, and parks programs. However, Elks Parks has ball fields that are always available. Issues that affect the quality of life for the surrounding neighborhood were discussed.

Equity Assessment – Joan reported that data collection is in place. Things such as street improvement and repairs, sidewalk conditions, fire and police stations, utilities, transit lines, schools, community centers, and environmental issues. The Comprehensive Plan will be reported by council district. D. Gutiérrez requested that Dr. Fraga's comparison be utilized in conjunction with the information from the Comprehensive Plan. She shared her thoughts about drafting a letter requesting interest from a university to assist in conducting an independent research study for developing the investment and needs assessment. She wants to ensure that the existing conditions report include all the required elements of the Comprehensive Plan. A. Gutiérrez mentioned other resources available such as the Yakima School District and the neighborhood studies conducted in the late 90's and in 2012. The timeline process was discussed; committee members hope to have some information available to them prior to the fiscal year in order to appropriate funds for the upcoming budget year, if possible.

Ellicott Dandy, One America, commended the committee members for their efforts in developing a needs assessment however, recommended an oversight committee to allow community members participation in a broader perspective. She offered support by One America as a tool to assist with the communication barriers and help the public understand transparency and accountability. Committee members expressed disagreement and mentioned some of the outreach methods being

utilized such as providing translation services at the committee meetings, distributing information in English and Spanish, engaging the public from their represented districts, having open discussions at public meetings.

In response to Jeff Baker's comments, D. Gutiérrez encouraged his continued participation with this committee to help identify and specify issues in the neighborhoods. The ongoing relationship between the City and the Yakima School District will contribute to address safe route to school concerns.

Board Appointed Reports – Standing Item

Comprehensive Plan Update – Valerie Smith reported that the Yakima Planning Commission will host a workshop with the consultant team, Berk Consulting, on Wednesday May 25, 2016 at 5:00 p.m. Various topics pertaining to the land use and housing element of the Comprehensive Plan will be discussed. Anyone interested in receiving notification can be added to the list of parties by contacting the Planning Division office. Public outreach will continue throughout the update process.

Homeless Network – The Homeless Network meeting was cancelled. Mark Kunkler shared a potential site for the temporary relocation of the homeless encampment. The property is located north of the new roundabout on Fair Avenue adjacent to the Cascade Mill site. Sunrise Outreach would be designated to handle the administration of the camp. Staff further explained the proposal. C. Méndez suggested this proposal to be presented to City Council along with a Letter of Intent from Yakima Valley Conference of Governments stating their contribution.

Parks & Recreation Commission – The Parks department provided a tour for Council members last week. The vacancy on the Parks & Rec Commission remains unfilled. Still seeking applicants.

South East Community Center (SECC) – A. Gutiérrez will be the liaison and will attend the next meeting in July. Ken reported that SECC discussed the need for a new HVAC system.

Historic Preservation – The next meeting is next week. No further updates provided.

Other Business/Audience Participation – Ms. Garcia expressed her concerns and inquired about immediate plans to address the current homeless situation on Chestnut Ave. D. Gutiérrez clarified the potential proposal to relocate that homeless community to a different location.

Raquel Ferrell commended the council for their efforts on responding to the homeless situation in an expedited manner. She attends board meetings of various agencies and is seeking ways of helping the City capitalize on opportunities such as grants to assist in the Council's efforts. She suggested that the Council look at Wenatchee's United Way project regarding poverty issues.

Carole Folsom-Hill appreciated all the work that City staff is doing in helping the folks at the homeless camp by providing sanitation facilities.

North 6th Avenue Portion of William O. Douglas Trail – Joan provided a memo in response to Mr. Buchanan's complaint about the status of the William O. Douglass Trail. The Streets department will post "No Parking" signs and install chevron markers at the trail entrances to prevent vehicles from parking there in the coming months. They will also utilize the curbing being removed from the Lincoln Underpass for replacing the damaged sections along the trail, as well as to comply with

the requirement of the State Recreation and Conservation Office grant to provide for a separation barrier between the trail and the street. Lynn Buchanan provided pictures for the committee members.

Other Business – C. Méndez requested a special meeting of the City Council on Wednesday May 25, 2016 to review the temporary homeless encampment proposal. Cally Price asked if the City Manager contract/agreement can be included as an item for approval at the same meeting; committee members agreed.

Adjourn – C. Méndez motioned/seconded by A. Gutiérrez to adjourn; motion carried unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 4:30 p.m. The next Neighborhood and Community Building Committee meeting will be at 2:00 p.m. on June 16, 2016.

Approved by: Dulce Gutierrez
Date Approved: 08/18/16

Prepared by: Rosalinda Ibarra, Community Development Administrative Assistant