

Minutes

SDNA Neighborhood Association Meeting

Tuesday Nov. 15, 2022 @ 6pm - 7:30pm

Purpose Place/Dream City–611 Southgate Ave (In-person)

Attendance: Angie Jordan, Tianna Newell (Resident/Dream City), Maria Martin (ICCSD/Grantwood), Robyn Hepler, Diana Wood (ICCSD/Alexander), Chris Gibson (ICCSD/Alexander), Temple Hiatt (Grantwood/ Moms Demand Action), Barbara Jay (Grantwood), Veronica May (ICPD outreach), Ayman Sharif (City of Iowa City), Anne Russett (City of Iowa City), Nora Garde (Table to Table), Creighton Gaynr (Natural Talent Music), Eric Harris, Elinor A. Levin, Diana Henry, Abdias Torres, Autumn McConeghey, Bob Opplinger

Old Business

- Approve September Meeting Minutes
 - Moved to approve: Bob Opplinger
 - Second: Eric Harris
- Elections for vacant leadership positions
 - Vice President Officer Position (Vacant: Must be a South District Resident and attend Leadership Committee meetings)
 - **Eric Harris** elected
 - Treasurer Officer Position (Vacant: Must be a South District Resident and attend Leadership Committee meetings) none
 - Left vacant

New Business

- **Committee Reports/Updates**
 - Leadership Committee (Kelcey)
 - Met with Ayman Sharif:
 - Neighborhood council is starting up again.
 - Neighborhood Council is made up of the 28 neighborhood associations in Iowa City.
 - Meant to be an interface between residents and City
 - Soccer:
 - Goal posts put up! (See Abi-Dias' soccer update below)
 - SDNA will gift local soccer group \$100 worth of paint for soccer markings.
 - Communication Committee (Tim)
 - Not present, more updates to come.
 - SD SSMID Representative Update (Elinor)
 - The SSMID is: Self Supported Municipal Improvement District
 - Self-imposed tax from businesses
 - Funds are pooled and re-invested in placemaking, revitalization, wayfinding, etc.
 - Hired executive director (Angie Jordan)
 - The SSMID is beginning to work on creating a brand that is easy to

- explain and recognizable
 - Received first disbursement of funds in October.
 - **Now is the time to let us know what you want the SSMID to be!**
Please engage. We want it to reflect the people
 - Email Angie: angie.southdistrictssmid@gmail.com
- Soccer Ideas Update (Abi-Dias)
 - Currently organizing pickup soccer games at Wetherby Park
 - Goal: Invite different people from different backgrounds to play soccer
 - Came to the SDNA and expressed a need for goal posts at Wetherby Park for Pickup soccer games. Within a week was connected with the City and less than three weeks later new goal posts were put up! Big thanks to everyone involved!
- Harvest Feast
 - Parkview Church, faith academy, Dram city, etc. are organizing a potluck near Thanksgiving time. Come alone, with family, friends, etc. Different organizations will have different activities.
 - Friday November 18th. 5:30pm

Quarterly Financial Report (Angie)

Financial report will be attached in the SDNA email.

- Quarter: April-June.
 - Heavy fundraising for diversity markets. Mainly for entertainment, hiring entertainment coordinator, purchasing sound equipment. Every performer was paid!
 - City gave us \$15,000. All went back into the Diversity Market vendors. Purchased a generator for the rent-to-own program, entertainment, etc.
- If you have questions reach out to Angie: southdistrictneighborhood@gmail.com

Discussion (Elinor) regarding Letter of Support for Dream City's proposal to the City of Iowa City and Johnson County for ARPA funding to purchase, renovate and install a commercial kitchen at property location along with exploring purchase of adjacent lot.

- *Question* for Tiana Newell—what does Dream City want to do?
 - *Answer:* Get the space paid off. Put funds towards programming for youth. Renovations. Bring space up to code.
 - Currently the building is owned by a church, Kingdom Center. We want everything under the Dream City name, and not the Church anymore.
- *Comments:* The Dream City building is a community hub, seems appropriate to get everything under Dream City name.
 - We do early voting here. The building is huge. Many organizations meet here, use the building.
 - Dream City has a history of partnering with our community.
 - From a practical standpoint, change of ownership has been a barrier to satellite voting petitions. Clarifying ownership going forward will make things much easier.
- Motion to approve the letter of support: Temple Hiatt
 - Second: Eric Harris

Guest Speaker and Q&A: South District Neighborhood Elementary School Leadership

- Chris Gibson, Archibald Alexander Elementary Principal
- Maria Martin, Grant Wood Elementary School Principal
- Diana Wood, ICCSD School Counselor

- Alexander:
 - When Alexander Elementary was first created, our challenge was that kids/families felt divided with loyalty towards their old schools (Grantwood or Twain). There was a lot of violence.
 - We had to spend time building trusting with students and families and building community.
 - What we did/are doing:
 - Created a Statement of Beliefs, including: Every single child can succeed.
 - To us, this means that when we see undesired behaviors we don't look for excuses, we look to ourselves. What can we change or do to create an environment where we see desired behaviors instead?
 - Educate ourselves on how to meet needs
 - Voluntary book studies. Learned about culture of families, childhood trauma, resiliency, etc. behavior is communication
 - Aim to avoid escalation and be more preventative.
 - Relationship building with students.
 - If kids don't know us, they don't trust us.
 - All staff greet every child each morning. Each child should be greeted by name 4 times before they reach their classroom
 - Something we want to improve on: Hearing family's voices
 - We want to better know how to bridge the gap between the expectations we teach at school and expectations that families can support in their homes.
 - We want to create a space where parents/families can feel safe to communicate with us.
 - We try to communicate through lots of ways (email, newsletters, website, etc.) but we still aren't hearing all the voices so we want to learn how to improve our methods.

- Grantwood:
 - We are working on implementing culturally responsive teaching in our school.
 - Teaching our students compliance with a purpose they understand, not compliance just because "we said so"
 - We had to re-define our motto (originally Safe, Respectful, Responsible)
 - We noticed that a lot of referrals tie back to definition of Respect so we decided to replace "Respectful" with "Kindness"
 - Biggest challenges:
 - ODRs.
 - Bullying behaviors and social media misuse
 - Use of tech in the district. It was disseminated without education on how to use/how to teach others.
 - Social media issues. Online safety.
 - We suggest: Family Link for social media monitoring at home
 - Bully behaviors
 - Don't describe child, describe behavior

- Ask for community response
- We're calling parents to ask how we can work together.
- Our children are not bad children. They are loved.

Open questions for the panel:

- Q: Is your work connected with the middle school/high school? There seems to be a disconnect between the emotional environments of the schools. I see problems when kids transition from elementary to middle/high school.
 - A: We observe that the way the school system is set up, it seems that curriculum and credits trump children and relationships the older they get. The counseling department is looking to find ways to address that. We need to find creative ways within the current education system because it is difficult to change.
- Q: In schools it sometimes seems that we make decisions that value student relationships/emotional wellbeing at a cost to a rigorous education. Is that our choice here in our district?
 - A: I don't think it needs to be. It can be "how do we do both?" But if you're used to teaching differently, it requires a mind-shift. Not only for those allocating resources but those receiving them.
- Q: What can we an association do to support you?
 - Connect with your neighbors. Ask how they feel about their schools. If they have ideas/ suggestions, have them connect with us.
 - Encourage parents to attend PTO
 - Sign up to be an interpreter

Community Announcements & Open Discussion: this is an invitation to **briefly** share information on upcoming events, opportunities, resources, etc. If your organization has information to share, please create a flier and email a png/jpg version of it to us at southdistrictneighborhood@gmail.com with a description and contact information for folks to follow up with you directly. If you have an event that is FREE and OPEN to the public happening within the South District area, please list on our neighborhood calendar [HERE](#)

- Natural Talent Music
 - We work in IC/Cedar Rapids to bring different types of people together to experience and celebrate World music and World dance music from different cultures and countries.
 - We want to work more with the South District
 - To discuss at a later SDNA meeting:
 - What would bring SD residents to a Natural Talent Music Show? Or what can we do to make a show happen within the SD?
 - What music groups, types of music, etc. is the SD interested in?
 - How do we work with the SD on this? Is there a survey? A town hall discussion we can attend? etc.
- Interpreters needed for Parent-teacher conferences
 - Even though conferences are over this month, we need people for future conferences who are able and willing to interpret for us.
 - Please go to the school website and apply!

- <https://www.iowacityschools.org/domain/5379>
- Soccer cubs at school.
 - Is there any way to bring those back?
- Emma–Community Family Resources.
 - Residential outpatient and inpatient treatment is up and running again.
- Iowa City Comprehensive Plan.
 - Created a draft. There will be a need for feedback and info! The City will review the plan Dec 6th.
- Dream City is collaborating with the University of Iowa to host virtual reality workshops Mondays and Thursdays 5-7pm. Suggested age: 3rd grade and up

***Adjournment**

REMINDER: Next Neighborhood Meeting is **Tuesday, January 15, 2022 @ 6pm-7:30pm at Purpose Place/Dream City–611 Southgate Ave.**