



SETTING THE BLAZE

MINUTES

August 20, 2018

St. Elizabeth's Catholic Church, 2712 2nd Ave.

1. Open in prayer and introductions. The list of attendees are attached.
2. We reviewed the mission statement, did not make changes in this meeting but noted that we would get to this in a future meeting.
3. We reviewed what is going to be discussed in the Highland Park Quality of Life Community Teams tomorrow, August 21st at 5:30PM.

Beautifications and Blight Team,

- Speaking with the City about starting some type of ambassadorship program giving community members the ability to become advocates and liaisons for a clean Highland Park. Ellen explained that they did this in the past where they got 2 people on the block to be ambassadors to keep the street cleaned and those 2 people got people on the next block and so on. Jo mentioned that we're doing about the same thing now but we're asking for block captains. Perhaps we can have block captains being somewhat of the lead on the block and block ambassadors to keep the block clean.
- We have free positive message blocks and flower boxes for a some community members
- Butch said that people use the gutters to put their trash in. Ellen will look into signs for the gutters. Jo asked if we could have garbage cans at those locations, Ellen said send a list of locations and she'll see what she can do.
- It was mentioned that some garbage cans get filled and the trash overflows onto the street. Jo said that we can get the HPQL Blight Team take some trash out of the cans when they appear to be getting full.

Safety & Community Connections Team Members,

- COP (Citizens on Patrol). Chief Durham would like to re-establish walking patrols such as what we do with the Guardian Angels but we haven't done one in a couple of years. We will talk about how to make this happen with the community members
- Building the Neighborhood Watch. We have \$100 to give to 20 block captains. (\$100 each)
- Establishing a Welcome Wagon
- Starting a 6 Points Civic Association

4. Chief Durham called into the meeting and was put on speaker phone. He talked about what the police are doing to help in Highland Park and voiced his concerns about the community getting involved and not leaving it all up to the police. He's going to do community walks with us. He also voiced his concerns about the criminals being let out on the streets shortly after they get them off the streets.

Captain Blackwell addressed the issue about the courts releasing people shortly after they are taken in also. He said there is a point system they use to decide who they keep in or send home but it really doesn't help a lot when they let them right back out on the streets.

5. Set the Blaze launch, 5th Sunday
 - We decided on doing the team 1 project, the community relationship walk and service projects.
 - For the community relationship walk we will not mention a church, only the name of the coalition which must still be decided. Most people felt that Setting the Blaze would turn non churched community members off. So we need a name that is more community friendly.
 - We will meet with as many of the 11 churches in the community that will allow us to meet with them to discuss the coalition and find out what service projects people in their congregation need or their church itself. We will have this done by our next meeting on September 10th.
 - The Council of Churches could have about 100 youth coming from Glenside if we feel they can help
 - Pastor Manny wasn't there due to an emergency but he works with a coalition of churches that will help on this day
 - We'll hold off "The Feast" for later because we feel that would be too much to do on that 1 day.
6. Mario thought that it would be good to have a bright T-Shirt with an awesome logo. That would enhance our participants identify as part of the movement making people more at ease when they open the doors for us. We need to come up with a name first and then work on the logo and go after the money for the shirts.
7. There were other things that we didn't have time to get to but we can discuss them in future meetings including:
 - Website review <https://settingtheblazefor.wixsite.com/forgod>. I'll change this to reflect whatever name we come up with.
 - Memorandum of Understanding
8. Other
 - Father Jim said they're starting a program called Boys to Men which will be a program to mentor young men at risk.
9. Next meeting date is September 10th, 11AM at 5th Street Baptist Church/Grace Street Center, 1302 Victor Street.

10. Things to do for that meeting:
- Everyone please send names that you feel would fit the name of the group
 - Church Directory showing what each church offers to the community such as child care: (Joni and Virginia)
 - Visit as many of the 11 churches that will meet with us to see if they are open to the type of relationship we are talking about with the group and the community. (Jo and Mario?)
 - Projects for setting the blaze from the churches
 - Map of streets with number of houses for walkers so we can figure out how many walker we need to cover the area. (Jo)
 - Send Jo a list of garbage cans that keep getting filled so she can get the Blight Team to keep an eye on them.
 - Send Jo a list of places you feel we need garbage cans so she can put all of them together in an email to Ellen
10. Adjournment 1:55PM

Attendees:

Church/Organization Affiliation	Person
5th Street Baptist Church	Marquitta Williams
Council of Churches	Ed Rossmore
Highland Park Community Church	Pastor Butch Johnson
Holy Light New Deliverance	Sonya Thornton
St. Elizabeth's	Father James Arsenault
St. Elizabeth's	Chris Barrett
St. Elizabeth's	Ronald Timmons, Youth Ministry
St. Giles	Jo White
St. Michaels Catholic Church	Karen Yesolitis
St. Michaels Catholic Church	Thomas Grant
St. Paul's	Lorraine Wells
Attorney General's Office	William Shackelford
HELP - Hampton Rds Ecumenical Lodging & Provisions	Rev. Charles Cheek
JobsRVA	Ajai Blue Saunders
LISC	Shekina Mitchell
Richmond Department of Justice Services (DJS)	Mario Woodard

Richmond City Council
Richmond Police Department
Richmond Police Department
Richmond Police Department
Community resident

Ellen Robertson
Chief Alfred Durham (by phone)
Captain Blackwell
Lt. Richard Edwards
Joni Watling