



## Super Neighborhood Alliance Minutes of Virtual General Meeting Held 14 June 2021

### Guests

Letitia Plummer, CM At-Large 4  
Jordan Frazier, Staff for CM At-Large 5  
DiDi Chavis, Staff for CM Dist K  
Carol Haddock, Dir Public Works  
Jack Valinski, DoN  
Rhonda Sauter, DoN  
Teresa Geisheker, P&D  
Carvana Cloud, HPD  
Francisco Castillo, Staff for HCC Pct 2  
Bert Keller, Staff for HCC Pct 3  
Roger Bridgewater, Staff for HCC Pct 3

Scott Packard, Houston Health Dept  
Christina Walsh, Staff for State HD 148  
Desmine Allen, SWD  
Joally Canales, Kinder Institute  
Margret Dunlap, METRO  
Linda Trevino, METRO  
Wilfredo Santamaria, METRO  
John Geiss  
Linda Scurlock  
Cristine Moreno-Conner  
Samone Carr

### Super Neighborhood Representatives

Philip Salerno, SNC 05  
Mark Klein, SNC 12  
Leigh Killgore, SNC 14  
Jeff Baker, SNC 17  
Stacie Fairchild, SNC 22  
Mike VanDusen, SNC 22  
Kay Warhol, SNC 24  
Doug Smith, SNC 25  
Barbara Quattro, SNC 25  
Sandra Rodriguez, SNC 27  
Kathie Easterly, SNC 28  
Terry Cominsky, SNC 31  
Cheryl O'Brien, SNC 32  
Cindy Chapman, SNC 37  
Becky Edmondson, SNC 37  
Stephen Polnaszek, SNC 38  
Lynae Novominsky, SNC 38

Deb Bonario-Martin, SNC 45  
Carol Kleiber, SNC 45  
Jesus DeAnda, SNC 45  
Larin Counciler, SNC 45  
Paula Parshal, SNC 45  
Tebben Lewis, SNC 46  
Juan Antonio Sorto, SNC 49,50  
Keith Downey, SNC 52  
Eric Thomas, SNC 55  
Kay Walton, SNC 62  
Jim Honey, SNC 62  
Roy Lira, SNC 63  
Kathleen O'Reilly, SNC 66  
Tomaro Bell, SNC 83  
Sammye Hughes, SNC 83

### Meeting convened at 6:30pm.

- I. **Minutes of the May 10 General Meeting** – A motion to accept was made by Tomaro Bell; second by Keith Downey. Minutes were approved without amendment.
- II. **Presentation by Houston Public Works Director, Carol Haddock** – Director Haddock stated HPW is responsible for most forms of city infrastructure: fire hydrants, street signage and markings, street maintenance access covers and inlet grates, traffic signals, water supply lines, wastewater pipes, storm water drainage, and building permits required for private enterprise to build in Houston. HPW gets about 90,000 311 requests per year. The five most common are: 1) water leaks, 2) sewage leaks, 3) traffic signal malfunction, 4) street hazards, and 5) questions about water bills. Next, Director Haddock enumerated the size of the infrastructure her department maintains.

Ms. Haddock explained how her department prepares for storms and hurricanes. A few days before a storm, staff are told how they are to be deployed during the storm, and what recovery actions will be taken after the storm. Critical equipment and supplies are logistically deployed. After a storm, focus is changed to preserving life and safety, maintaining a functional storm water system, and keeping the potable water supply available.

HPW is best notified of problems through the 311 reporting system, unless there is threat to life or safety which should be handled through the 911 call center.

Juan Sorto said he received notice the city council would be voting on a new CIP budget on 48 hours' notice. Director Haddock clarified there were no new HPW CIPs, and that council would be voting on existing project with updated costing information. New CIPs will be discussed in the fall of 2021.

Linda Scurlock said her District K neighborhood had storm sewer improvement projects. Yet the neighborhood still flooded during rain events of recent years. Ms. Haddock said she would investigate and respond.

Doug Smith commented that he was going to ask members of city council to tag the proposed increase in water rates so that the public would be better informed about the coming increases in water bills.

Deb Bonario-Martin indicated a trailer park in her community had a sewage tank freeze during the recent winter storm, and it is now a health hazard to the surrounding community. Director Haddock asked for the address of the park, and that HPW would work with the health department to find a solution. She pointed out that city sewage problems are handled by HPW, but private sewage problems are handled through the city health department.

Tomaro Bell said that with many families still recovering from past disaster events like Harvey, the proposed water rate increases will be very burdensome. She also questioned the merit of quickly agreeing to the detention requirements of Harris County when the land use in the inner city varies widely from that in the county. Ms. Haddock stated the redevelopment task force looked carefully at the burden of the proposed change and determined it was reasonable, so that new development would minimally impact surrounding properties. She indicated she did not think the new fees would impact development.

Ms. Haddock clarified that for residents who use 3,000 gallons per month or less, the water rate increase should not be burdensome, and that the new rates are designed to promote conservation. At this point, a detailed discussion ensued, showing that the 3,000 gallons per month customer will see their bill increase almost 70% over the next 5 years. The main objection being that the public was not properly informed of the coming rate increases.

Leigh Killgore brought up the topic of impact fees being insufficient to pay for the required infrastructure to support new high-density projects in an existing low-density area. Haddock explained the impact fee is being charged to access existing excess infrastructure already being provided by the city.

Roy Lira commented that many disadvantaged households culturally have larger families, and these households will be more greatly impacted by the new rate structure. Roy also asked how the city plans to inform the multicultural residents of Houston of the coming rate increases, and guidelines on how best to minimize the impact on those families. Director Haddock said HPW has provided council members with information that can be distributed to residents, and that some information will be included in future water bills.

Jordan Frazier mentioned the rate change FAQ is available from Council Member Alcorn's office.

Council Member Plummer asked that anyone still having question could send them to her office so they may be answered prior to the vote on Wednesday.

III. **Houston Police Department Update by Community Affairs Director, Carvana Cloud** – Director Cloud was not present in the meeting.

Juan Sorto mentioned low-income communities have historically been impacted by crime. Lately, crime has become more wide-spread, and many times these crimes are being committed by repeat offenders. To better understand and address these threats to neighborhoods, the SNA will be forming a Public Safety Taskforce, to be led by Stacie Fairchild.

The goal of the taskforce is collect input from super neighborhoods regarding the crime they are experiencing. This information will be consolidated and presented to elected officials so they may better understand the affect crime is having on Houston residents.

Kathleen O'Reilly stated her SN has restarted their security alliance because of rising crime.

Tomaro Bell said that her neighborhood has had more murders in the last 10 months than in the previous 30 years. She feels public safety requires the support of the city and county elected officials, alike.

Juan asked anyone wanting to participate in the taskforce to email the SNA at [snacoh@gmail.com](mailto:snacoh@gmail.com).

IV. **Update on COVID-19 Testing and Vaccine Distribution** – Juan Sorto stated the SNA would survey the membership in the fall to determine when the organization could return to in-person meetings.

Scott Packard, with the Houston Health Department, stated the daily number of new cases, the positivity rate, hospitalizations, and death rates are continuing to trend downward, and that the number of people getting vaccinated continues to increase. This allowed Harris County to lower its threat level from Significant to Moderate. The Moderate level means hospitals are well under capacity, and that vaccines are widely available.

57% of Houstonians have a first dose of vaccines, and 49% are fully vaccinated. 98% of 60+ individuals have a first dose, with 88.2% fully vaccinated. The Center for Disease Control guidelines state that people who are fully vaccinated do not need to wear masks nor social distance.

Keith Downey commented that people who are vaccinated should not think they are finished with COVID-19. He encouraged HHD and neighborhood leaders to continue communicating the status of the pandemic, and that vaccinated people should not think their lives are back to normal. Mr. Packard responded that HHD publishes a weekly update on COVID-19, which can be forwarded to interested parties. He also said HHD does door-to-door canvassing in neighborhoods where Internet access or social media may not be widely available.

V. **Kinder Institute Community Outreach Coordinator, Jolly Canales** – The Kinder Institute is partnering with University of Texas Health to create the Greater Houston Community Panel. The Panel will be reaching out to residents of Houston to hear their needs, and will ask them to complete four surveys each year to better determine community needs. This should enable the Panel to make elected officials aware of unique needs in a diverse city.

VI. **SWOT Analysis Update** – Juan said the SWOT community meetings are going well, and that the next meeting will be in August.

VII. **Open Comments** - Desmine Allen, with the Solid Waste Management department, mentioned Council Member Tarsha Jackson introduced a budget amendment allowing neighborhood trash depositories to remain open Tuesday through Sunday. The department has also hired contractors to assist in collecting curbside heavy trash. He acknowledged the city is behind on heavy trash pickup, and encourages residents to check with the department Facebook page to get the latest schedule updates.

Council Member Letitia Plummer announced she had sponsored a budget amendment that would allow the inspection of C and D class apartments to help improve their safety and habitability. Juan responded by inviting Ms Plummer, or her staff, to be a member of the Public Safety Taskforce being formed in the SNA.

Doug Smith suggested that anyone concerned about the water rate increases contact their council members and ask the amendment be tagged this week, so as to allow residents more time to understand the proposed rate increases and the funding options available.

Tomaro Bell announced the Children's Museum is now open, and that tickets must be purchased online.

Keith Downey asked people stay vigilant regarding their surroundings. We know crime is increasing, and people need to be extra careful regarding their personal safety.

Juan Sorto announced earlier in the meeting that Council Member Sallie Alcorn sponsored a budget amendment to continue funding the SNA general meeting recordings, available Houston Television.

VIII. **Adjournment**

The meeting adjourned at 8:12pm.