



**Guests**

Kimberly Hatter, Mayor's Office  
Katie Stewart, CM Karla Cisneros  
Teresa Geisheker, Planning & Development Dept.  
Rhonda Sauter, Citizens Assistance Office,  
DON  
Lindsey Ray, CM Amanda Edwards  
Rashad Cove, City of Houston  
Robert Miden, PWE

**Super Neighborhood Representatives**

Philip Salerno, SNC 05  
Ricky Miller, SNC 05  
Mark Klein, SNC 12  
Pedro Ayarzagotia, SNC 15  
Greg Sergesketter, SNC 16  
Randy Jones, SNC 16  
Steve Ashy, SNA Secretary, SNC 17  
Michael Huffmaster, SNA Chairman, SNC 18  
Judson Bryant, SNC 18  
Jane West, SNA Past-Chairwoman, SNC 22  
Jim Von Suskil, SNC 22  
Kay Warhol, SNC 24  
Doug Smith, SNC 25  
Sandra Rodriguez, SNC 27  
Harold L. Harris, SNC 31  
John Nienhuser, SNC 32  
Lynae Novominsky, SNC 38  
Stan Sarman, SNC 43  
Albert Coleman, SNC 49/50  
Randall Baxley, SNC 51  
Stella Mireles, SNC 51  
Keith Downey, SNC 52  
Kathy Blueford-Daniels, SNC 55  
Bridgette Murray, SNC 57  
Thomas Wang, SNC 62  
Kathleen O'Reilly, SNC 66  
Assata Richards, SNC 67  
Tomaro Bell, SNC 83  
Scott Cubbler, SNC 84

## **I. Introductions and Approval of Minutes from June 12, 2017, and August 14, 2017, Meetings:**

Introductions conducted. Approval of meeting minutes deferred.

## **II. City Financial Matters - Bond Elections**

**A. CM Jack Christie presented the City Council perspective.** When Mayor Turner invited him to serve as chairman of City Council's Budget and Fiscal Affairs Committee, the city faced a \$160M deficit and an even larger pension funding crisis. He agreed to serve as committee chairman if the mayor agreed to include pensions in the charge. The mayor agreed. After ~15 months of meetings, a plan was devised for addressing the pension crisis pursuant to which all existing debt to the municipal unions would be put into one credit facility with a financing cost of 4% as opposed to the existing 7.5% cost of financing. Two of the city's three unions agreed to support the plan (municipal employees and police officers); the firefighters' union did not agree. Last year's budget deficit was resolved and the coming year's budget deficit is expected to be lower, ~\$120M. He expressed belief that the city's elected officials get along and are largely promoting the best interests of the city.

**B. Controller Chris Brown presented the finance perspective.** The November ballot will have two bond measures for voters: the pension bonds and the public improvement bonds. Regarding the pension bonds, the firefighters filed a lawsuit challenging the pension agreement, but lost. The pension bonds will — if approved by voters — allow the city to issue \$1B in bonds to repay and lower existing pension debt. The issuance of these bonds is expected to result in ~\$2.8B in savings for the city; ~\$1.8B of the savings will be related to financing costs. Previously, the firefighters' pension was the only one of the three city pension plans that the city fully funded each year. From now on, all three pensions must be paid in full. The pension bonds will have a 30-year payoff period, and even though they will be new debt, they will reduce the city's overall debt; analogous to refinancing a home mortgage at a lower interest rate. The second bond measure will — if approved — allow the city to issue \$0.5B in public improvement bonds.

Bond funds will NOT be used to address damage caused by Hurricane Harvey. Federal funds are expected for that purpose. The city has experienced a slight downturn in sales tax revenues following the hurricane, but the long term outlook is good because as damaged properties are repaired and rebuilt property values will rise. Moreover, tens of billions of dollars are expected to be coming to the local economy for rebuilding and jobs will be created. The city is forming teams of people to manage and track the federal funds expected to be invested here in the near future. The immediate response efforts now underway relate to debris removal. The city expects to have all hurricane-related debris cleared by the end of the year and possibly even earlier. In addition to funds for rebuilding damaged homes, funds are expected to improve area infrastructure and to increase resiliency, e.g, by building the "Ike Dike" coastal spine and/or a third reservoir on the west side.

In response to questions about whether the city will develop policies to insure that disaster relief funds are used equitably to fund development that includes affordable housing, CM Christie said that the mayor will not short change communities in need. In response to questions about reappraising flood damaged property, Controller Brown said that he would support reappraising damaged properties by acknowledged that was a complicated issue that would particularly difficult to accomplish at this stage of the taxing cycle. In response to questions about the city's tax rate, Controller Brown said that the city's tax rate has decreased ~9% over time due to the voter-imposed cap on property tax revenue. The mayor has long stated his desire to ask the voters to repeal that property tax cap, had intended to do so this year, but in fear of jeopardizing the pension bond election decided against asking voters to repeal the property tax cap this year. In response to questions about storm relief for people without insurance, Controller Brown stated that FEMA representatives are in the city taking applications for assistance. In response to questions about Rebuild Houston and how the city is spending drainage fee funds, Controller Brown stated that a full-scale audit would be released with the next 3-4 weeks.

### **III. SNA Activities Update: Meetings with Mayor Turner**

Chairman Huffmaster reported that members of the SNA's executive committee met with Mayor Turner on August 16th to discuss various issues including the bond elections and the mayor's willingness to participate in an SNA mentoring workshop aimed at encouraging the creation of more Super Neighborhood Councils. The mayor agreed to participate in the workshop but in light of the hurricane, that workshop is not likely to be held until sometime next year. Chairman Huffmaster reported that an additional meeting was scheduled with the mayor to discuss a proposed emergency tax increase to address storm damage, especially, debris removal, but that the mayor abandoned the proposed tax increase when Governor Abbott released state funds for storm response.

### **IV. New Business**

**A. Nominating Committee:** Deferred.

#### **B. Hurricane Harvey Discussion: Flooding and Drainage**

Mark Klein reported that post-Hurricane Harvey, SNA members should focus not just on the Top Ten list of flooding and drainage priorities, but also on establishment new standards based on the increasing magnitude of rain events and related flooding. The task force that the city's "Flood Czar" or Chief Resiliency Officer, Stephen Costello, has talked about forming to recommend new standards is scheduled to hold its first meeting on Wednesday, Oct. 11th, and several Super Neighborhood representatives have been invited to serve on that task force. Task force meetings will be open to the public although not advertised. They will be held bi-weekly from 3:30-5:30 p.m., at 601 Sawyer. The three issues that Costello intends to address are detention, fill, and recovery of the public right of way. Mr. Klein also reported that Costello is also working with the city's long term recovery team that will be assessing how to fund large projects; the estimated cost of such projects is ~\$22B. Marvin Odom, former president of Shell U.S.A. is heading the long term recovery team. Open discussion included expression of the need to improve means of communicating within Super Neighborhoods as residents' needs during the hurricane exceeded the capacity of public responders to respond. Disaster case management can be accessed by calling 211.

### **V. Old Business and Committee Reports**

#### **A. Standing Committees**

##### **1. Liveability (Transportation and Parks; Steve Ashy):**

Philip Salerno reported that on October 10th at 7:00 p.m., Citizens Transportation Coalition ("CTC") would be hosting an open presentation by Texas Central Partners about their effort to implement High Speed Rail ("HSR") service between Houston and Dallas. Mr. Salerno also reported that the last meeting of the Houston-Galveston Area Council's Transportation Policy Council included a discussion of the UpTown TIRZ request for an additional \$30M for the BRT project along Post Oak Boulevard that already costs ~\$110M. Harris County Judge Ed Emmett has expressed opposition to the request for additional funds. Houston's representatives on the TPC are CM Amanda Edwards and CM David Robinson.

**2. Infrastructure (Flooding and Drainage, Mark Klein):** See § IV.B, above.

**3. Growth and Economic Development (Ivory Mayhorn):** No report.

##### **4. Health, Public Safety, and Finance (Tomaro Bell):**

(a) Public Safety: Tomaro Bell reported about efforts that she and other SNA members made to provide relief during and immediately after the hurricane.

(b) Financial Oversight: See § II, above. Open discussion included expressions of need for better disaster management planning; concern about the mayor's apparent unwillingness to use either unincumbered bond funds or TIRZ funds to address storm damage.

**5. Transitions and Regulatory Affairs (Jane West):** No report.

## **B. Advisory Committee Updates:**

- 1. Complete Communities:** Teresa Geisheker from the Planning Department reported that the city has finalizing the following dates, times, and places for public meetings in each of the five pilot areas: Acres Homes, October 18th, 6:00-8:00 p.m. at the Acres Homes Multi-Service Center; Third Ward, October 30, 6:00-8:00 p.m., Emancipation Park; Near Northside, November 2nd, 6:30-8:30 p.m. at Marshall Middle School; Second Ward, November 6th, 6:00-8:00 p.m., place TBD; Gulfton, November 9th, 6:30-8:30 p.m., Southwest Multi-Service Center. In response to questions about what neighborhoods not included in the complete communities pilot program could do, Chairman Huffmaster and others said that several neighborhoods selected for the pilot program have existing plans to implement and all Super Neighborhood Councils could and should be encouraged to undertake their own planning efforts. It was also stated that each of the complete community pilot areas have Super Neighborhood Councils that have the opportunity to participate as leads for the Neighborhood Support Team (NST) that will exist for each area.

For more information on this initiative, see: [www.houstontx.gov/completeccommunities/](http://www.houstontx.gov/completeccommunities/)

2. Walkable Places: No Report.
3. Plan Downtown: No Report.
4. Complete Streets: No Report.
5. H-GAC Mobility: See § V.A.1, above.

## **VI. Announcements and Open Comments (5 minutes)**

The next SNA meeting will be November 13th.

## **VII. Adjournment: 8:15 p.m.**