



ADVISORY NEIGHBORHOOD COMMISSION 1B

Government of the District of Columbia

Minutes

Thursday, September 3, 2009. 7:00 PM, Reeves Center, 2000 14th Street N.W.

The regular monthly meeting of ANC1B occurred on Thursday, September 3, 2009, at 7:00 pm in the Reeves Center, Commissioner Nadeau being present as Chair and Commissioner E. Gail Anderson Holness as Secretary. Other Commissioners present during the meeting: Rosemary Akinmboni, Eduardo Ferrer, Peter Raia, Sedrick Muhammad, and Deborah Thomas.

Chairperson Nadeau observed the presence of a quorum and called the meeting to order at 7:03 PM. She began the meeting by asking Commissioners to introduce themselves.

Chairperson Nadeau then made the following announcement:

We ask that you silence your cell phones. By “silence” I mean either put them on “silence” or turn them off if you are able. The vibration and rings interfere with our recording and we sometimes lose valuable information.

- ✓ This meeting is audio-recorded for the public record and the draft minutes of the meeting, which will be published on our website within one week.
- ✓ We welcome and encourage public comment at appropriate points in the meeting. Normally, we will ask for public comment on issues before the Commission before any motion is offered for official action. Once a motion has been made and seconded, comment and discussion is confined to Commissioners.
- ✓ We ask that all those making presentations, asking questions, or making comments speak loudly and clearly for the benefit of our recording device. You can come forward and sit at the witness table and make sure that your comments are picked up. Please state your name, residence address, and what organization you represent. If you are representing yourself as a resident, rather than an organization, please say so.
- ✓ For the accuracy of our public records, we ask that all those making presentations, asking questions, or making comments complete the very brief speaker information form located on the sign in table at the back of the room.

Please give the completed form to our Staff Director, Jim Irwin, either before or after you speak to the Commission. The purpose of this form is to assure correct spelling of your name in the minutes, accurate address and accurate statement of representation.

Thank you for your attendance, participation and cooperation.

Community Events and Announcements

Commission Announcements

Commissioner Muhammad announced that the South Columbia Heights Neighborhood Association, of which he is the President, would be holding its monthly meeting on September 16th. The guest speaker will be Fire Chief Dennis Rubin, discussing fire safety and prevention. Blood pressure and glucose level checks will be available to those attending.

Commissioner Anderson Holness announced that ANC 1B11 will hold its regular monthly meeting on September 14th at the LeDroit Senior Building Community Room, 2125 4th Street N.W. Representatives of the Howard Town Center project will be guests at the meeting. On the third Saturday of the month, September 19th, from 10:00 AM to 1:30 PM, the ANC 1B Empowerment Project will hold its regular monthly meeting at the same location. This includes a story hour for children, a senior computer literacy program, a youth program with students from Howard University, and a program with Janice Rankin of the Department of Parks and Recreation.

Community Announcements

Mr. Reggie Kelly of Sherman Avenue N.W. and Ms. Mara Cherkasky 603 Rock Creek Church Road N.W., a representative of Cultural Tourism DC, announced that they are getting ready to launch the Columbia Heights Heritage Trail. The opening of the trail will be October 24th. They are seeking financial and other support from ANCs. Ms. Cherkasky said that ANC 1A is purchasing an ad in the printed program for the launch as a way of providing support. She expressed the hope that ANC 1B might do the same. Mr. Kelly and Ms. Cherkasky provided maps and other information to the Commissioners.

Chairperson Nadeau noted that this project was presented to the Commission about two years ago. She noted that the deadline for ads is October 9th and said that the Commission would consider this request at the October 1st meeting.

Commissioner Raia announced that people 65 years and older have until September 15th to file their applications for tax relief.

Treasurer's Report

Chairperson Nadeau noted that Treasurer Juan Lopez was unavoidably delayed on his way back from the west coast and would be unable to attend the meeting. She said that he would submit a Treasurer's Report at the next meeting

Chairperson Nadeau noted that Commissioners had received work logs for Staff Director Jim Irwin for his work in August. His wages for August total \$658.75. She moved that the Commission approve the payment of \$658.75 to James Irwin.

Commissioner Muhammad seconded the motion.

The motion was adopted unanimously, 6-0.

Commissioner Raia asked that Mr. Irwin's work logs be sent as one document, rather than four weekly documents.

Secretary's Report

Secretary Anderson Holness moved that the minutes of the August 6, 2009 be approved, subject to any corrections or additions.

Chairperson Nadeau asked if there were any corrections or additions to the minutes.

Commissioner Raia asked that Commissioners' questions to presenters and members of the community be recorded verbatim in the minutes.

There were no other corrections or additions.

Commissioner Ferrer seconded the motion.

The minutes were approved unanimously, 6-0.

Public Safety and Public Safety Committee Report

Chairperson Nadeau noted that Commissioner Moss, Chairperson of the Public Safety Committee was unable to attend the meeting, and so there would be no Committee report. She asked if any Commissioners had public safety announcements.

Commissioner Muhammad announced that a homicide had occurred on 14th Street N.W. on Saturday. On Saturday evening, a 17-year old was arrested in the murder of Ms. Deborah Brown.

Commissioner Raia announced that the PSA 305 public safety meeting would be Tuesday, September 8th at 7:00 PM at the Housing Finance Agency, 9th and U Streets N.W. Commissioner Muhammad announced that the PSA 304 public safety meeting

will be on September 16th in conjunction with the South Columbia Heights Neighborhood Association meeting.

Presentations

Green Team application for funding

Chairperson Nadeau said that the Green Team is requesting funds from the Neighborhood Investment Program, which is a grant program. Applicants can come before the Commission to request support. The Commission may express its support for a funding application, but the money actually comes from a pool of funds under the Deputy Mayor for Planning and Economic Development, who makes the final funding decision.

Chairperson Nadeau introduced Mr. Scott Pomeroy, 2035 13th Street N.W. and Ms. Denise Snead, 1816 12th Street N.W., #201, to present the Green Team's application to the Commission.

Mr. Pomeroy said that the Green Team will be seeking funding from the Logan Circle Neighborhood Investment Fund, one of eleven programs within the Neighborhood Investment Program. The Logan Circle Fund has \$865,000 available for grants.

The area covered runs from M Street N.W. to U Street N.W. and from 11th Street to 15th Street N.W, so that part of the area covered includes ANC 1B. They are asking ANC 1B to support the application now so that it can be submitted early to get funding as soon as possible after October 1st. This funding will be important to keep the Green Team operational in FY 2010, maintaining the jobs already in place and expanding the program.

Chairperson Nadeau asked Mr. Pomeroy and Ms. Snead to explain the full range of services provided by the Green Team.

Ms. Snead said the Green Team provides jobs for unemployed persons, including ex-offenders. They provide services in many areas of the city, including Shaw and the Rhode Island Avenue area. Services include cleaning debris from streets and sidewalks, cleaning tree boxes, removing trash, removing graffiti, removing abandoned furniture or appliances, working with police officers to address safety issues and generally keeping the community livable.

Commissioner Raia expressed his support for the Green Team. He asked how neighborhoods could get more garbage cans. Mr. Pomeroy said that would be an issue for the Department of Public Works (DPW), The Green Team is considering applying for funding to participate in the public recycling program,.

Commissioner Raia said he had observed the Green Team working on main streets and asked if they do side streets as well. Ms. Snead said they do. Commissioner Raia

asked if citizens could ask Green Team members to work on a side street if cleaning needs to be done. Mr. Pomeroy said side streets are cleaned on a special needs basis and are specified in the contract, so the service is limited.

Mr. Pomeroy noted that the Green Team has been successful as an employment program. The Green Team retention rate is 48% which compares very favorably with the norm of 18% for such programs.

Commissioner Ferrer asked if the Green Team is limited to the Logan Circle area. Mr. Pomeroy said Councilmember Graham has an allotment of funds that can be used for Green Team services in other parts of Ward One, and the Commission could express support for allocating funds for Green Team services in other areas, such as Georgia Avenue.

Chairperson Nadeau asked if there were questions from the community. There were none.

Chairperson Nadeau moved that ANC 1B support the Green Team's application to the Neighborhood Investment Program for grant funds.

Commissioner Anderson Holness seconded the motion.

The motion was adopted unanimously, 7-0.

14th and Girard Street Park Mural

Mr. Mazi Mutafa, Executive Director of Words Beats & Life, 1525 Newton Street N.W. and Ms. Deirdre Ehlen, DC Commission on the Arts and Humanities, 1371 Harvard Street N.W., introduced themselves.

Mr. Mutafa said his organization was selected in a competitive process by the D.C. Commission on the Arts and Humanities to produce a mural at the 14th and Girard Street Park. They have contacted a list of 20 non-governmental organizations (NGOs) that work with youth in the area of the park to invite their youth members to apply to participate in creating the mural. They will be holding five planning meetings with youth and one meeting with adults to get ideas and input. Ten youth will work directly on the mural and another ten will help with community outreach, business outreach, publicity and other support activities. Each NGO will be asked to designate two youth candidates to be interviewed for selection as one of the final twenty youth on the mural team.

Chairperson Nadeau invited questions from the Commission.

Commissioner Anderson Holness asked that Mr. Mutafa provide a list of the NGOs to be included in the minutes of the meeting. The list as provided by Mr. Mutafa is:

Capitol Manor Cooperative
Adams Morgan Youth Leadership
Centro Nia
Columbia Heights Youth Club
Columbia Heights Village Together, Inc.
Faircliff West/East
Helping Hands/Opportunity Access Network
Hands on the Future (Columbia Heights Rec)
Keely's District Boxing and Youth Center
Latin American Youth Center (WISE)
Mary's Center for Maternal and Child Care
Multicultural Career Intern Program (Bell)
Multicultural Community Services
Peaceholics
Vietnamese-American Community Service Center
Wardman Court
Washington Parks and People
Martha's Table
In Da Street

Commissioner Thomas asked Mr. Mutafa to what extent youth from Ward One will be involved in the project and to clarify the selection process.

Mr. Mutafa said that his organization runs an after-school program and they plan to select three youth from that program to participate in creation of the mural. In addition, they will be selecting youth from other NGOs that work with youth in the visual arts to form a group of twenty youth to be involved in a visioning process. From that group, ten will be selected to actually help create the mural.

Commissioner Thomas expressed concern that only twenty youth would be involved. Mr. Mutafa said the number had to be limited because the physical space to be occupied by the mural is limited. Ms. Ehlen said the area to be painted is about 150 square feet. Mr. Mutafa said that ten youth, plus three more from his organization and adult supervisors, would mean a lot of people crowded around a small space.

Commissioner Thomas asked if there are other mural projects planned.

Mr. Mutafa said that his organization has been selected to create two additional murals for Murals DC, a project of the Commission on Arts and Humanities. Their organization works with 150 youth throughout the city and these projects will provide additional opportunities. Ms. Ehlen said that Councilmember Graham has been instrumental in getting funding and that additional projects are being planned for Ward One. Mr. Mutafa said that a majority of the youth involved in the mural projects are from Ward One.

Commissioner Muhammad said he is aware of the work done by Words Beats and Life and he wanted to say that it is an extremely positive organization doing very constructive and positive work in the community.

Commissioner Anderson Holness agreed with Commissioner Muhammad.

Commissioner Akinmboni said there was concern that the youth who live in the neighborhood should be involved in the new park and proud of what has been done. This mural project will help contribute to that.

Mr. Mutafa said that he wanted to acknowledge the organization Albus Cavus, which is the co-lead organization on the mural project. Commissioner Anderson Holness asked what the name means. Ms. Ehlen said that it means "the basement." Mr. Mutafa said it is an arts organization that started as a basement art gallery in New Jersey. The founder moved to Washington about two years ago. They focus on public art projects and worked with Mr. Mutafa's organization on the Benning Park Recreation Center mural.

Chairperson Nadeau invited questions from the community. There were none.

Commissioner Akinmboni moved that ANC 1B support the 14th and Girard Street Park mural project.

Commissioner Anderson Holness seconded the motion.

The motion was adopted unanimously, 7-0.

Design Review Applications and Design Committee Report

ARTS Overlay Committee Report & Recommendations

Chairperson Nadeau said that there had been a quite lengthy presentation on this issue at the August Commission meeting. She did not think the entire discussion needed to be repeated at this meeting and suggested that, since all Commissioners had received and reviewed the memo outlining the Committee's report and recommendations, discussion should be limited to ANC 1B Commissioners only.

There was no objection to this suggestion.

Chairperson Nadeau moved that ANC 1B support the recommendations of the Arts Overlay Committee commissioned by ANC 2F. She said that she felt these recommendations would allow great work to be done on the 14th Street corridor and continue the work that ANC 1B has done.

Commissioner Anderson Holness seconded the motion.

Chairperson Nadeau invited discussion and comment from Commissioners.

Commissioner Raia asked if the intent of the motion was to support every recommendation of the Committee.

Chairperson Nadeau said that was the intent of the motion. She observed that the Committee had done a lot of work and its recommendations had been thoroughly vetted by the community. Commissioner Raia agreed. She said that a couple of ANC 1B Commissioners attended meetings of the Committee and had input. If there were any concerns, they would have been discussed by now.

Commissioner Raia asked if it would not be advisable to hear comments on the recommendations from the community.

Chairperson Nadeau said that she thought the Commission had already heard from the community at great length.

There was no other comment from Commissioners.

Chairperson Nadeau called for a vote on her motion.

The motion was adopted 6-0-1, Commissioner Raia abstaining.

Easter Seals Public Space Permit Application

Commissioner Akinmboni said she visited Easter Seals after receiving an e-mail about their plans to construct a fence. She wanted to see the site and project plan for herself. She said she thought the organization had done a very good job of designing the proposed fence.

Ms. Marilyn Ricker, Vice President, Children's Programs, Easter Seals said that the facility at 13th and Girard Streets NW has been in operation since 1959. It houses a high-quality early childhood program for children with special needs. They have been expanding their program, increasing classroom facilities and the number of children involved. They want to build a fence around the perimeter of their front yard fronting on 13th and Girard Streets to enclose the green space and make it a safe play area. It is now unusable because it is not properly fenced. She emphasized that they do not intend to install any playground equipment. All they intend is to enclose the green space so it can be used for play, gardening and intergenerational activities.

Commissioner Anderson Holness said that she knows the work of Easter Seals very well and that she has worked with the organization over the years. She strongly supports Easter Seals because they do excellent work not only in ANC 1B but throughout the Washington D.C. area. She thanked Ms. Ricker for Easter Seals' outstanding work.

Ms. Ricker thanked Commissioner Anderson Holness and observed that Easter Seals now has a waiting list of over 300 children. She said Easter Seals is the only organization in the D.C. area providing these services to special needs children.

Chairperson Nadeau invited questions or comments from the community.

Mr. Phil Spalding, 1929 13th Street N.W., asked for a description of the planned fence.

Ms. Ricker said the fence would extend along the property on 13th and Girard Streets, then run back toward the building to enclose the yard. She said it would not be a chain link fence. It would be wrought iron, six feet high. She said that their existing playground was created when they had 50 children in the program, but they have now greatly increased the number of children involved and need more space.

Commissioner Akinmboni moved that ANC 1B support Easter Seals' application for a public space permit to construct a wrought-iron fence.

Commissioner Muhammad seconded the motion

The motion was adopted unanimously, 7-0.

Liquor Licenses & ABC Committee Report

Commissioner Raia said that the Committee did not meet in August and there was no report.

Grants Applications & Grants Committee Report

Commissioner Akinmboni said that, because she had to be out of town in August, there was no Committee meeting. She reported that receipts and a statement of use of funds have been received from Arose Youth documenting their grant expenditures.

Chairperson Nadeau noted that receipts and statement of use of funds have also been received from the 2009 Youth Leadership March.

Chairperson Nadeau asked Commissioner Akinmboni to notify the Commission when the Grant Committee meets to review the criteria for grants. She said that she and other Commissioners would like to participate in that discussion.

Greater U Street Historical Foundation grant application

Commissioner Raia noted that all Commissioners had received a copy of the grant application. He said that he had worked with the Greater U Street Historical Foundation (GUSHF) to assure that funds requested would be applied to permissible expenditures.

He also noted that GUSHF would be requesting a larger amount than originally stated on the application since they are covering a larger area and having a greater impact. Mr. Ronald Briggs, GUSHF, 1610 16th Street N.W., said that he was presenting a memo to the Commission supplementing their original grant application. He reviewed GUSHF's plans for a parade and festival on September 19th to celebrate the renaming of the 1300 block of V Street N.W. as Langston Hughes Way. He noted that the original grant application was for \$2,000 to cover the cost of cleanup after the festival and the cost of 1-day parking passes for residents of the 1300 block of V Street N.W. and VIPs involved in the event. He said that since the event will cover two single-member districts (SMDs) in ANC 1B and since other activities have been added that expand the impact of the event, GUSHF was requesting, through Commissioners Raia and Smith, a grant of \$5,000, rather than the original \$2,000. The additional funds would provide for supplies and materials related to the KaBOOM Play Day at the Harrison Recreation Center, which is part of the festival and the rental of tents, tables and chairs for the Children's Pavilion and festival.

Chairperson Nadeau said that \$5,000 was a very large sum for the Commission to approve. She said that a \$4,000 grant had been approved two or three months ago, and that she was very uncomfortable with that amount. She said that the event was very laudable, but if the Commission was going to spend \$5,000, she needed to have a better understanding of the impact on the community beyond renaming a street and staging a block party.

Mr. Briggs said the Foundation plans a year-round effort to upgrade the Harrison recreation center and park. They think this event is a great starting point for announcing and promoting that project. They are hoping to attract the same kind of sponsorship for it as they have for the parade and festival.

Chairperson Nadeau observed that the \$5,000 would not be going to the recreation center over time. It would be spent on a one-day event.

Commissioner Thomas observed that Mr. Briggs had met with her a couple of times and had spoken to the youth that she is working with over the summer that live on W and V Streets N.W. She said that she could understand a \$5,000 request if it was going to support long-term benefits such as beautification or employment of neighborhood youth in long-term community service projects. However, she was not clear to what extent this grant would impact youth in the neighborhood. How would youth be involved, what youth would be involved, where do they come from, how does GUSHF identify and measure that impact? Are there any specific youth or groups in the neighborhood that will benefit from the expenditures? She said she was very concerned about these issues and reminded Mr. Briggs that she had raised these concerns with him when they met previously, but that she had not had any further conversations with him since he spoke to the neighborhood youth. She said before she could even consider \$2,000 she had to be much clearer about these details.

Mr. Briggs agreed that he had not communicated further with Commissioner Thomas and said that he had been working with Commissioner Raia. He said that he had tried to contact her today before the meeting, but her voice mail was full, and he apologized for not being able to talk with her sooner. He said he did want to provide to her and other Commissioners a handout on the KaBOOM service projects to show the impact.

Commissioner Thomas said she wanted to be very frank about the issue. She wanted specific details on how many youth and what youth from the immediate neighborhood would be involved in the event.

Commissioner Raia said that Mr. Briggs had walked the neighborhood and had gotten input from residents on how to involve youth in the project. He said that the Commission had made grants in the past to support events like this that included landscaping and other service projects, so there would be benefits left behind. The event would not be just a party.

Commissioner Thomas asked what exactly would be left behind.

Mr. Briggs referred Commissioner Thomas to the package of materials he had provided, detailing long-standing projects of GUSHF associated with the parade and festival. These include projects that children will do that will remain at the Harrison Recreation Center, providing a sense of pride. Martha's Table is providing fifty volunteers for the event, and their children will be involved in the event, doing a performance; in addition, the Studio School and the Duke Ellington School for the Performing Arts will be sponsoring projects during the day that children will be involved in.

Commissioner Thomas said that most of the children Mr. Briggs identified do not live in the neighborhood. She reiterated her concern that it was unclear how the children on V Street and the immediate area would be involved. She pointed out that Mr. Briggs had come to talk with the children about how they could be involved, the children had gotten excited about the event, but then had heard nothing more from him.

Mr. Briggs said that he did have three volunteers canvassing the neighborhood and talking with residents about the event. He said he would like to meet with Commissioner Thomas to discuss further how neighborhood youth could be involved, as there were still two weeks left to plan further additions to the parade and festival.

Chairperson Nadeau asked why it was necessary to finance one-day parking permits for residents. Why couldn't they just move their cars for one day? Commissioner Anderson Holness agreed and said that she thought \$500 for 50 permits was an astronomical amount. She said that if indeed the residents supported the event, they should be willing to move their cars for one day. She did not think that funds should be spent on parking permits. Commissioner Thomas observed that this is a community event like other block parties, and in those cases residents move their cars. They don't get parking permits financed by the event organizers. Commissioner Akinmboni added that it is not necessary to pay someone to move their car.

Mr. Briggs said that, in collecting consent signatures from residents for the closure of V Street, one of the major questions asked was what would residents do about their cars, and GUSHF was trying to make the situation as easy and acceptable to residents as possible.

Chairperson Nadeau invited questions and comments from the community.

Ms. Lynn Coffin, 1929 13th Street N.W. asked what percentage of the budget was represented by the \$5,000 request. She also asked why Commissioner Thomas, whose SMD is most directly affected, was not more involved and informed.

Mr. Briggs said that not involving Commissioner Thomas was his oversight. He had been working with Commissioner Muhammad and Councilmember Jim Graham's office, and not including Commissioner Thomas was not intentional. He said that GUSHF's request was for \$5,000, and the total budget is \$70,000. The balance of the budget is coming from sponsorships, vendor fees and donations.

Commissioner Nadeau asked why \$21,500 was budgeted for entertainment. Mr. Briggs said they had to rent two sound stages, one at the Harrison Recreation Center and one at the Civil War Memorial. There will be two block parties as well as the parade and naming ceremony.

Commissioner Thomas pointed out that the Parks and Recreation Department has stages that could be provided. Mr. Briggs said they had put in a request to the department in June, but all available stages had already been reserved for other events in September.

Commissioner Thomas asked about the proposed grant expenditure for supervisors for cleanup work. She asked why this was necessary when the Green Team is available to do cleanup work. Mr. Briggs said that the cleanup work would be done by volunteers, but that there were two major sites to be cleaned and they proposed to pay \$500 for supervisors to oversee the volunteers to make sure the work was done properly.

Commissioner Thomas said that some of the expense items in the GUSHF grant request were things that could have been done at no charge. She was surprised that the request included items that far exceeded the standard items supported by the Commission and could have been free.

Ms. Denise Snead of the Green Team said that they would be happy to participate and provide cleanup services.

Chairperson Nadeau encouraged others in the community who could provide volunteer services to contact Mr. Briggs.

Commissioner Muhammad said that he was uncomfortable with the \$5,000 request, but he wondered if part of the funds could go directly to the Harrison Recreation Center, since it was a beneficiary of the grant proposal.

Chairperson Nadeau said that the Commission could only consider the grant application currently before it. She said that the only funds the Commission could allocate were through grants to community groups and that funds could not be expended on activities already financed by the D.C. government. She said that Commissioner Raia had worked very diligently to identify project costs that the Commission was permitted to support.

Commissioner Raia asked if the Green Team had the resources to provide cleanup services. Ms. Snead replied that they did not have the funds to provide free services, but if the grant was going to finance cleanup services, she thought the Green Team was the proper organization to receive that funding because the Green Team knows the community better than any other group.

Commissioner Thomas said that she wanted to state for the record that human resources are already present in the community. She wanted to make sure that they are being utilized and that ANC funds being provided through grants go directly to benefit people and activities in the community. She said that the fact that the whole parade and festival was planned and the grant proposal developed without even consulting her as the Commissioner representing the district most directly affected made her very, very angry. She wanted that noted for the record.

Commissioner Raia noted that it appeared the Commission was uncomfortable with the \$5,000 request, but that the Commission had previously approved a grant for \$4,000. He moved that ANC 1B approve the GUSHF grant application in the amount of \$3,500.

The motion failed for lack of a second.

Commissioner Akinmboni moved that ANC 1B approve the GUSHF grant application in the amount of \$2,000.

Commissioner Anderson Holness seconded the motion.

The motion was adopted, 6-1, Chairperson Nadeau voting no.

New Business

Chairperson Nadeau observed that the Commission would be considering and approving a budget in October. She said the Treasurer would be e-mailing a preliminary budget to all Commissioners, but that she would like to schedule a budget meeting for later in September to discuss how the budget would be formulated.

Commissioner Anderson Holness noted that she had been absent for the meetings in July and August due to a torn ligament and a trip to Guiana.

Commissioner Anderson Holness moved that the September 2009 meeting of ANC 1B be adjourned.

Commissioner Raia seconded the motion.

The meeting adjourned at 8:04 PM.