

SONA Meeting Minutes for March 7, 2013

The meeting was brought to order by Mike Battershell at 7:03pm.

**Attendees:**

Mike Battershell – Hanscom Park NA Duane Brooks – Karen Western NA Trevor Fitzgerald – Legal Counsel, LD 5 Garry Gernandt – City Council District 4 Chris Jerram – City Council District 3 Tim Leininger – Social Settlement NA Elisha Novak – Omaha Mayor's Office Virgil Patlan – Burlington Road NA Jama Samiev – TFL, Inc Joyce Theiler – Beals NA Also present were an OPD Office and a representative from the Kroc Center.	Sue Bednarz – H&L CAG Oscar & Katie Duran – Deer Park NA Vince Furlong – Omaha Urban Neighborhoods Carol Haas – Leavenworth NA Mary Ann Krzemien – SOETF Lacey Merica – Social Settlement NA Dorothy Patach – SOBA Don Preister – SOETF Stephen Stout – Columbus Park NA Scott Wagner – Brown Park NA
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Mary Kerwin fell a couple of weeks ago, but is doing well! She is now at Via Christe near Duchesne. Her phone is still 731-1189.

There were no minutes taken at the February meeting.

**Treasurer's Report:** We received a thank you letter from the Budge Porter Project for serving as their 501(c)3 agent during their project. They also donated \$5000 as a thank you. Since January, we have taken in \$6132.09 and spent \$184. We currently have \$16,944.15. Of this, \$12,594.15 is SONA's and \$4350 is restricted grant funds. There is also currently \$3284.24 in the Budge Porter account.

**Police Report:** There has been a number of gas thefts in the 33<sup>rd</sup> and Center area. They have also identified a couple of gang houses in that area. Be sure you have a list of the serial numbers of your valuables! If they are ever stolen, they can be tracked using that number. Hondas are still the most popular stolen car. Graffiti is picking up with the warmer weather. Downtown issues are increasing as well. They are trying to use Ophelia to send out more information. Also, OPD is currently taking applications!

**City Council Updates:**

Garry Gernandt shared that the deadline for Mayor's Grants is coming up soon! You can apply for up to \$5000 per project. OPS is hiring. There was a Youth Violence Forum at the YMCA tonight. Chris Jerram shared that the Neighborhood Center has closed in Omaha. There will be meetings with SONA, NONA, MNA, SWONA, and NWONA and the Mayor's Office to discuss what can still be done for our neighborhood associations. There is interest in having a Neighborhood Center-like entity. They are working on a needs assessment to identify the needs of our neighborhood associations and alliances.

**Mayor's Office Update:** Elisha shared that the State of the City address was held in multiple parts of the city this year. There was a South Omaha address at Christie Heights that was attended by about 70 people. There will be a Small Business Expo on 3/21 at Benson High from 7:30-11:30. This is an opportunity for small businesses to learn how to get city contracts. Omaha will be hosting Omaha Play

Streets! The city received a grant for these events. On 5/26, L Street will be closed from L to N for activities and information about healthy eating. Also, Mayor's Grant applications are due on 3/25!

**Legislative Update:** Trevor Fitzgerald from Senator Mello's office shared that there is a bill in the Legislature to increase the fines for manure spills. This was advanced out of committee. Also, watch for LB 97. This deals with Land banking, which allows cities and other entities to rehabilitate vacant properties for new uses.

There will be a SOETF meeting on April 11<sup>th</sup> at 7:30am at the South Omaha Library.

### **Old Business:**

**Banquet Update:** Duane provided an update on banquet planning. This will be in June and will be at Sokol Hall and catered by Eddie's. There will be a social hour from 5:30-6:30 and dinner from 6:30-8:30. There will be a dance afterwards. Our goal is to raise \$5000 and have 300 people attend. We need to find at least 3 corporate sponsors to keep ticket prices low. We will send out solicitation letters to businesses. We would like all neighborhood associations to come and have a table! We also need award nominations! There is the Project of Merit and the Outstanding Volunteer award. These are due by 4/30. We will also be giving out school awards to students from Bryan and South again this year. Our speaker will be Elizabeth Mulkerrin, the curator of education from the Omaha Henry Doorly Zoo and Aquarium.

**Marketing Piece:** SONA and other are working on a marketing piece about South Omaha. There will be a hard copy brochure and a page on the Visitor's Bureau website. Vince Furlong took down suggestions of things that should be included on a list of things to experience in South Omaha.

**Dorothy Patach Environmental Area:** We are working on a plan for the next phase of the edible garden. We are working on this with the Omaha Parks & Recreation Department.

### **New Busienss:**

**Neighborhood Center Closing:** We discussed what is now missing without the Neighborhood Center. The list included training sessions, meeting space, mail/copy assistance, coordination work (for fall cleanup, etc), Neighborhood Scan, security cameras and signs. We do have a box of cameras for Neighborhood Associations to take and use, as well as graffiti wipes. We did also get the other graffiti supplies from the Neighborhood Center. Please email Mike if you need any.

**Spring Neighborhood Clean-Ups:** Members present voted, and decided SONA will post a list of the South Omaha clean-up dates on our website and Facebook page. You can also get new recycling bins at the South Omaha Library, and request that bins be available at your clean-up. If you need a metal recycler, Hanscom Park works with someone who splits the profit with neighborhood associations.

**Brown Park Fiscal Agent Request:** This was tabled to the April Meeting

**Bellevue Neighborhood Initiative:** SONA is helping launch Neighborhood Associations in Bellevue at the GreenBellevue meeting this weekend! Bellevue is working to replicate the SONA structure.

### **Announcements:**

- ⤴ The South Omaha Boys & Girls Club will be starting a late night teen program on 3/23. For 13-19 year olds, they will be open until 10pm on Tuesdays and Thursdays and midnight on Fridays and Saturdays.
- ⤴ On 3/27, the Art of Community Development Awards will be presented at the TipTop Ballroom as part of Community Development Week. One of the award winners is the Tree of Life!
- ⤴ Latino Police Officers' Association Easter Egg Hunt will be on 3/24 from 1-3 at Spring Lake Park. 3/30 is the Rain/Snow date.
- ⤴ On 5/18 there will be an Creativity Festival on Vinton Street with over 30 urban artists.
- ⤴ There is a lot going on at the Kroc Center! Feel free to stop by for a tour. They are choosing a 501(c)3 to partner with for a month to provide free space to them to meet for that month. They asked is SONA would like to be their partner of the year and meet at the Kroc Center for a year. This will be discussed further in April.
- ⤴ The South 24<sup>th</sup> Street Tours will be starting as the weather gets warmer.
- ⤴ Parks and Rec will be starting the renovations for a water park at Morton Park this spring!
- ⤴ Sue Bednarz thanked the South High Alumni Association. Information about her garden project was in the spring newsletter, and she has already received contributions from alumni!
- ⤴ On 6/22, BRNA will have a 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary celebration at Pulaski Park
- ⤴ Brown Park continues to patrol their neighborhood.
- ⤴ Hanscom Park will host an Easter Egg Hunt on 3/23.
- ⤴ Don't forget to vote on Tuesday, April 2<sup>nd</sup>!

The next SONA meeting is **April 4, 2013.**

The meeting adjourned at 8:26pm

Respectfully submitted by Lacey Merica