

**Austin Neighborhoods Council
General Meeting
August 24, 2005**

Agenda

1. Call to Order and review of agenda (7:00 p.m.)
2. Roll call of member association (7:01)
3. Program (7:10)
 - City of Austin Budget Briefings
 - Council Members Brewster McCracken and Lee Leffingwell
4. Announcements (8:10)
 - a. Meals on Wheels & More – Joy Stollings, VP Development
 - b. Alliance for Social Justice Speakers Bureau
5. Business and discussion items (8:25)
 - a. Mayor’s Fitness Council/Neighborhoods and Zoning – Joseph Martinez
 - b. City Budget – Jeff Jack
 - c. Becoming TUNA – Carol Gibbs
 - d. NACA NP amendment – Zoning Hearing 8/25 – Linda Moore
6. Adjourn (9:00 p.m.)

Minutes

1. **Call to Order** 7:02 p.m.
2. **Roster and Roll Call** – there were 12 paid members of ANC present, along with 6 of 7 officers.
3. **Program:** Council Members McCracken and Leffingwell shared the head table and discussed key aspects of the proposed 2006 COA Budget:

Council Member McCracken spoke first:

- 65 – 75% of the budget is spent on public safety (police/fire/EMS)
- He was concerned about the long term future of expenditures on public safety and the impact on budget items like parks, libraries, technology, and other community needs.

- Need to try and synchronize contracts for police and firefighters to hold fast at 60 – 65% of the budget for public safety expenditures.

Council Member Leffingwell commented:

- Agreed with proposal to sync collective bargaining contracts for police and firefighters and examine again in 3 years.
- Discussed property tax rate comparing effective tax rate (which generates the same revenue with higher residential values [\$0.4319/\$100 val) versus nominal tax rate (which would be same as last year [\$0.4395/\$100 val.]) A city council vote would be needed to exceed Effective Tax Rate.
- Commercial property values are increasing, some as much as 20%
- At nominal rate, some residents would receive property tax savings.
- Maximum rate is \$0.4430. Discussions will be ensuing.
- Homestead exemptions – the City of Austin does not offer any Homestead Exemptions as does Travis County. Council Member Leffingwell has requested information on effect of fixed rate Homestead Exemption in future budgets.

Secretary's note: For 2005, property tax rates and values were divided as follows:

	<u>% of Rate</u>	<u>% of Tax</u>
Austin ISD	61.7%	59.8%
City of Austin	16.8%	18.1%
Travis County	18.5%	15.9%
Travis County Hosp. Dist.	3.0%	2.6%
Austin Comm Coll Dist	3.4%	3.6%

There was a question and answer period following the opening comments

Q: Re: May of 200 Bond election

A: \$280 million available without a tax increase

Q: What do comparable cities spend on Public Safety?

A: 40% - 60%; Our police officers earn 20 – 40% more than peers.

Q: Can city renegotiate contracts before 3 years are up?

A: No

Q: What about EMS pay raise?

A: EMS is an employee association, not a union, and very happy at this time. Their pay is indexed to R.N. pay at Brackenridge.

The \$309.7 million budgeted for police/fire/EMS is as follows:

Police	\$ 183
Firefighters	\$ 91.5
EMS	\$ 35.2

Q: Reference to Statesman article on residency of police/firefighters.

A. Roughly 2/3 of police and firefighters live outside Austin city limits
Roughly 2/3 of all other city employees live inside Austin city limits.

Next issue is working on diversity of forces

One of the major questions for the councilmen was: “What is long term vision for the city of Austin?” The public is telling the COA survey (which can be skewed), public safety is priority, but there is a general feeling the survey does not capture the values of the community, especially with regard to parks, libraries, and other quality of life issues.

There have been Federal mandates which have impacted the public safety budget, mainly airport security operations. There have been other Homeland Security expenses in other parts of the city.

Nine new Land Development Code inspectors have been added and now housed in Solid Waste Services, funded by garbage portion of utility bill. There are also some new building inspectors in Watershed Protection.

Another key issue for budgetary consideration: NEW MONEY
Where does it come from? New taxes? Build new tax base at the expense of neighborhoods? Many feel developers are going after the city’s weak spot – in-fill

One of the final comments was praise for city council stopping expansion of the South Austin Tennis Center, as opposed by the Galindo Elementary Neighborhood Association, which mobilized an excellent campaign.

4. Announcements

- a. Joy Stollings – Meals on Wheels and More
MoWaM serve 2,000 meals a day. They currently have 41 vacancies on routes, which are 90% volunteers. Joy passed out her business card and brochure explaining all the volunteer opportunities, such as Handy Wheels, Care Calls, and Medi Wheels. The schedules are flexible enough to work with any time availability you might have. Call 476-6325, or online at www.mealsonwheelsandmore.org.
- b. Salia Israel and Sue Marriott - Alliance for Social Justice
Voicing opposition to Amendment #2 – prohibition of same sex couples – legal contracts, private agreements. Same-sex marriage is already against the law in Texas, this measure would strip away all legal rights. More info online at www.NoNonenseInNovember.com.

5. Business and Discussion Items

- a. Joseph Martinez - Mayor’s Fitness Council / Neighborhoods & Zoning
 - i. Goal of Fitness Council – make Austin the fittest city through work with neighborhood networks promoting the theme “I Thrive”. May 2006 is national fitness month and the city is looking for a variety of events across the city.
 - ii. Zoning and Platting Commission – ANC needs to educate neighborhood on how to come before ZAP to make a solid case

against a developer's proposal. Galindo Elementary NA's attack on South Austin Tennis Center was the model for neighborhood activism against development which violates neighborhood plan or city code. City staff is not indifferent – they do what makes their job easier. When sitting on ZAP, Joseph will ask for rebuttal from neighborhood.

- b. Jeff Jack, City Budget
City Council Meetings of note: 8/25 – City Manager's report on budget impact, time certain 2:00 p.m.; 9/1 – Public hearing on city budget 6:00 p.m.
 - c. Carol Gibbs, Becoming TUUNAA
Texas Uniform Unincorporated Non-profit Association Act, enacted 9/1/95. Allows Neighborhood associations to designate one person as the agent for the N.A. Benefit – being a non-profit, being TUUNAA-fied protects individuals from being sued. Notice of suit goes to unincorporated non-profit. Cost to N.A. - \$25. Cost to change agent - \$5
 - d. Linda Moore – NACA NP Amendment – Zoning Hearing 8/25/05
#C14050030. Request to amend plan to re-zone from MF-3 to General Retail. NACA opposes.
 - e. Susan Pascoe - Building Zoning Database – Send email to (ancdatabase@yahoo.com) with specific information on illegal business operations, notice of violations, problems AND solutions, including good stories.
6. Adjourn: 9:05 p.m.