

Austin Neighborhoods Council
General Membership Meeting
Austin Energy Building, 721 Barton Springs Rd.
September 26, 2007
7:00pm to 9:00pm

Minutes prepared by Kevin Lewis, ANC Secretary.

President Laura Morrison called the meeting to order.

A quorum of the membership was present.

Austin's Education Gap: Is there a Solution?

Kathrin Brewer, Executive Director, Austin Partners in Education;
Susan Dawson, Executive Director, (Education Equals Economics) E3 Alliance;
Richard Franklin, Director, African American Mentoring Project
Suki Steinhauser, CEO, Communities in Schools Program

Susan Dawson, E3 Alliance

Schools are truly not failing us, but there's a growing gap between successful and less-successful students, as well as US vs. other countries.

In Central Texas 5 county region, there are 35 school districts, 265,000 students. There has been 15% growth over last 5 years. Lower socio-economic status and limited English proficiency student population is growing 3-times fa

Four key priorities for education today:

1. Early childhood education. Pre-K learning is key. If these
2. Math and science education—the gap is getting larger between low-performing and higher-performing students.
3. Limited English proficiency students. These students are the most challenged by every measure.
4. School redesign for middle schools and high schools. Students are performing fairly well in elementary schools, but middle and high schools are not meeting our needs.

E3 Alliance will be sponsoring a series of meetings to discuss this in October.

More information is available at www.e3alliance.org

Kathrin Brewer, Austin Partners in Education, Greater Austin Chamber

Key trends:

Funding vs. accountability.

42% poverty to 62% poverty status in last 15 years.

Goal is to measurably improve student performance in reading and math.

Volunteers are needed, especially at Webb, Johnston, other schools under threat of closure.

Suki Steinhauser, Communities in Schools

Communities in Schools will have full-time personnel on 40 campuses this year. They provide mentoring and tutoring programs on many campuses, as well as social workers.

Last year they served 5,000 students intensively, 35,000 in more limited fashion. Last year 56% of students referred to CIS were referred because of behavior issues. TEA considers 100,000 students to be at-risk for dropping out.

Richard Franklin, Director, African American Mentoring Project

Understanding 45% of African American males of school age do not graduate high school, the African American Mentoring Project has focused on positive pattern interrupt. That is having role models and peers talk to each other about the real world alternatives that are likely when students don't perform and stay in school.

Some of their campuses have included Covington Middle School. It is set up as a during-school part of the process. There is an ongoing challenge to get buy-in from AISD.

AISD Student Health Advisory Committee—Committee Member Kennard Wright

Student Health Advisory Committee (SHAC) addresses physical, cognitive, mental health needs of students. They have advised AISD on nutritional needs, physical education.

AISD Community Committee on Neighborhoods and Schools

Committee Members Susan Moffat, Kathie Tovo and Jim Walker

This committee was created to get input into how AISD should interact with neighborhood residents. They are working to state criteria for identifying underutilized and overcrowded schools, assessing possible actions (e.g. revitalizing, repurposing, realigning, closing). They will issue a report around February 2008.

ANC Business Items

Proposed Expenditures for Neighborhood Plan Bumper Stickers

Daniel moved that we authorize up to \$500 expenditure for bumper stickers and/or t-shirts. These would say "Neighborhood Plans: The Law of the Land". Motion was seconded. There was discussion. Motion passed.

Formation of the Nominating Committee for 2008 ANC Executive Committee

The Nominating Committee, led by committee member Ambrose Krumpke is seeking potential additional participants for nominating 2008 ANC officers.

Formation of the 200 ANC Holiday Party Committee

Committee members Susan Pascoe and Mark Boyden are seeking additional participants. The 2007 ANC Holiday party will be held in early December, location and date TBA.

Announcements

SOS Ordinance amendment—Colin Clark, Save Our Springs Alliance

Council Member Lee Leffingwell has proposed an amendment to the SOS water protection ordinance. There may be some benefits to this, but it would allow some projects to be approved by staff rather than City Council.

Seven Straight Nights for Equal Rights— Randall Terry, Cherrywood NA
On Weds. Oct. 10 at the south steps of the Capitol building, there will be a vigil of solidarity for equal rights between people of all sexual orientations—straight, gay and lesbian and transgendered.

Animal shelter lawsuit—Daniel Llanes, Govalle/Johnston Terrace
Several neighborhoods and FixAustin.org are preparing to sue the City over the question of moving the animal shelter from its present location.

Laura Morrison excused herself from the meeting and left the room, and Vice President Danette Chimenti assumed presiding status for this topic.

Linda MacNeilage of OWANA moved that ANC general membership ask the ANC Executive Committee look into the questions of whether ANC could become a party to the lawsuit and whether to commit funds toward the costs of the lawsuit, and make a recommendation to the general membership at the next general meeting. Motion was seconded. There was discussion. Motion passed.

Meeting was adjourned.

APPENDIX A—This notice was printed on the agenda.

Notice on Citizen Input on the Waller Creek Tunnel (From Jean Mather, SRCC)

The Waller Creek Advisory Committee has been asked to bring back a decision, from those stakeholders they represent, on the choice, natural or urban, for the creek banks. They were informed that there will be a lot of work in the creek itself and the banks will be pretty much destroyed in the process. They can rebuild natural looking riparian banks with trees and shrubs which will help to improve the water quality or build masonry walls. The only way they will hear from ordinary citizens is to write individually or take a vote at your neighborhood association meeting.

Contact Joe Pantalion, joe.pantalion@ci.austin.tx.us.