

MINUTES Safe Takoma Board of Directors

January 22, 2008, Adopted February 4, 2008

Takoma Park Community Center, Maple Avenue, Takoma Park, Maryland

5 p.m. - 6 p.m.

Present

Seth Grimes, President

Faith Wheeler, Vice President

Andy Kelemen, Treasurer

Sara Green, Secretary

City of Takoma Park Police Department Captain Edward Coursey

City of Takoma Park City Council Member Josh Wright

City of Takoma Park City Council Member Terry Seamens

Actions and Votes

1. The Board unanimously agreed to Ms. Wheeler's motion to hire a staff person and get approval from DC MPD 4th District Commander Linda Gilmore-Brown and City of Takoma Park Police Department Chief Ronald A. Ricucci to use the D.C. grant money over the next funding year -- to April 2009.

Ms. Wheeler agreed to write a job description that could be shared with the police leaders and with others. This would be similar to one that was written earlier.

There was a general discussion about the pros and cons of hiring staff, with nearly everyone stating that a part-time person is necessary and that the delay in hiring is limiting the group's effectiveness. Ms. Green said she was concerned about finding someone who is qualified to work on varied programs and wants a short-term, part-time job.

2. The Board unanimously agreed to Ms. Wheeler's motion to ask that the City of Takoma Park authorize the balance of the \$75,000 in their budget for Safe Takoma to roll over to the next fiscal year (FY 2009) and then disperse it in \$25,000 tranches to Safe Takoma. The payments would be March 1, July 1, and October 1, with monthly reports.

Council Member Wright initiated the suggestion about the incremental payments and everyone agreed it is a good idea.

3. The Board unanimously agreed to Ms. Green's motion to purchase 100 whistles and lanyards.

Council Member Wright said his mother worked with a whistle program in Boston that is successful, and noted that the whistles are part of a larger crime awareness plan. The group agreed that it wanted to pursue a similar community program, recognizing that

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our community is not as dense and urban as others that use the whistles. Also to be determined is the possible cost-sharing of the whistle and lanyard with the participants.

Mr. Grimes said he wanted to purchase only 25 whistles, as was earlier agreed. Ms. Green and Ms. Wheeler said that they feel it is hard to do a successful test of the program with such a small number. Ms. Green said that the largely senior citizens group she discussed the program with were very supportive. All wanted whistles.

Discussions

1. Council Member Seamens told the group about the discussions he is having in his community about programs that young people want. He noted that young people are asking for hands-on training in computers and other skills, along with substance abuse counseling. He said he has one area group, The Digital Divide, that might help, and that he plans to work with local car repair and barber businesses to do the same.

Mr. Kelemen said the goal would be to bring both D.C. and Maryland teens into the program to share these opportunities. Ms. Green said that Safe Takoma was organized to deal with crime around the Metro Station and should not try to organize job training.

2. Ms. Wheeler reported on the upcoming HIPP conflict resolution training, set for the end of February and early March.

Council Member Wright asked that the course be spread out into two-hour segments to make it easier for those with 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. jobs to participate. City of Takoma Park and the District of Columbia recreation and city staff, for example, are often able to leave their desks for two-hour periods but cannot take off five days at one time, he said. Everyone agreed this is a good idea.

Ms. Wheeler also said she is asking the IKEDO, a martial-arts training program located on Butternut Street, NW, to get involved.

Mr. Grimes said he will contact different community resources, including the Presbyterian Church, the Seekers Church and the Takoma Park Community Center to find out if they have space available for the training.

Mr. Kelemen said he is concerned about the follow-up reporting on the HIPP training. He wants to make it clear to those who participate that they are obliged to help evaluate it and respond to follow-up queries about how they are using the training. Ms. Wheeler said that she agrees it is important.

The next meeting was set for February 5 at the Takoma Park Community Center.

--- Submitted by Sara Green, Secretary