

Minutes - Adopted on April 10, 2008
Safe Takoma, Inc. Board Meeting
March 6, 2008 - City of Takoma Park Community Center, 7 p.m.
7500 Maple Ave., Takoma Park, MD

Present:

Seth Grimes, President
Faith Wheeler, Vice President
Andy Kelemen, Treasurer
Sara Green, Secretary
Natasha Wilkins, Board Member
Joy Austin-Lane, Advisory Committee Member
Wolfgang Mergner, Conflict Resolution Center of Montgomery County
Peter Meleney, Manager, Youth Program, Conflict Resolution Center of
Montgomery County
Christopher King - Youth Director, Takoma Park Action Group

Votes:

1. The Board unanimously agreed to Mr. Kelemen's motion to adopt the minutes from the February 5, 2008 Board Meeting, as amended. The fifth bullet point on page two of the draft, which detailed a contact with Coolidge High School, was deleted.
2. The Board unanimously agreed to Mr. Grimes' motion to appoint Mr. Grimes as STI's resident agent for the Maryland State Department of Assessment and Taxation, replacing Patti Ghezzi. The official address would be changed to 7300 Willow Street, Takoma Park, Maryland.

Reports and Discussions:

1. Mr. King discussed the Takoma Action Group's programs, including a Cultural Day, computer game tournaments, and other activities designed to engage young people.
2. Mr. Grimes reported he had filed the Internal Revenue Service's 990 Form, and that STI must use the fiscal year (Oct. 1- Sept. 30) for its reports.
3. Ms. Wheeler reported on the February 28-March 2 Conflict Resolution Training Program, and noted that she was going to have a follow-up discussion with the teens who participated via email or in person. The discussions would emphasize what to do to get more teens involved.

It was agreed that it is difficult to get teens to commit to a weekend session and that the focus should be to design shorter sessions of several hours or less.

4. Ms. Wilkins said the group needs to be clear about its end goal, and not offer "training for the sake of training." Ms. Wheeler said she feels strongly that the goal is to reduce tension in each community. (more)

Ms. Wilkins agreed, and said that the people who are trained should be those who have a leadership role in an organization. STI needs to continue to look for an opportunity to work with other groups so that STI can support their programs.

Mr. King said his group uses a football video game tournament as a way to get its young participants involved in other programs that might not have a similarly strong appeal. He also said he would change the name from "Conflict Resolution" to something that is more appealing to teens. Mr. Meleney said the term, "The Daily Rap," is used in Baltimore.

5. Mr. Grimes said that he thought STI's Work Plan might have three areas of interest; conflict resolution, community outreach, and working with youth offenders. He said that Council Member Josh Wright suggested two areas, neighborhood engagement and youth development. Mr. Grimes said he would circulate a revised draft work plan for comment and adoption at the next board meeting.

7. Mr. Kelemen suggested that STI work to hook-up with planned summer recreation programs and camps. Ms. Green said she would contact Takoma Recreation Center staff to discuss ways to do this. Mr. Mergner said the Conflict Resolution Center of Montgomery County might be able to find someone who could perform the training, and noted several possible candidates.

8. It was agreed that Ms. Wheeler, Ms. Wilkins, and Mr. King work on what steps might be good for the next conflict resolution training program and decide on some possible dates.

9. Ms. Austin-Lane said that she thinks that the staff person STI hires should have solid fundraising experience.

Concluding Consensus:

STI's Work Plan and a job description are the most important tasks at this time. The goal is to submit them to the City of Takoma Park, draw up and sign a Memorandum of Understanding, receive a check from the City of Takoma Park, hire a staff person, and do this as quickly as possible.

--- Submitted By Sara Green, Secretary