

ANC6A Community Outreach Committee
April 18, 2011 Minutes
Church of the Lord Jesus Christ of the Apostolic Faith annex, 1235 C St. NE

Meeting called to order at 7:30 p.m.

Committee members present: Elizabeth Nelson (Chair), Rose Williams, Pat Joseph, Jean Kohanek (quorum)

Committee members absent: Necothia Bowens, Mark Roy, Louis Barbash

Commissioners present: Drew Ronneberg, David Holmes, Nick Alberti

Community members present: Vira Sisolak (CHGC), John Gibson (Eastern PTSA)

- I. Agenda
Adopted.
- II. Status report on ANC/COC activities.
No feedback or assignments.
- III. Vira Sisolak presented a grant application on behalf of the Capitol Hill Garden Club (CHGC) to pay for bulbs to be planted in public space within ANC 6A.
 1. Ms. Sisolak reported that the program was successful last year. All bulbs went to qualified applicants/locations. They plan to run the program the same way this year, including outreach through print media, listservs and the ANC 6A website.
 2. Ms. Nelson reported that she handled the 6A portion of the bulb distribution as she did the year before. Several organizations (including Sherwood, Miner and Maury) have indicated that they intend to request bulbs again this year.
 3. Other committee members remarked that they have been favorably impressed with the program, that the bulbs are very visible, are noticeably increasing as a result of the program, that the choice of bulbs is good as daffodils come back every year and are a "harbinger of spring".
 4. **Motion: Ms. Kohanek moved that the COC recommend that ANC 6A fund the grant application from the Capitol Hill Garden Club to purchase bulbs at a cost of \$650 for planting in public areas within ANC 6A. Seconded by Ms. Joseph. Vote 4 in favor none opposed.**
- IV. John Gibson presented a grant application on behalf of the Eastern SHS PTSA for funding for percussion instruments for the Eastern band.
 1. Mr. Gibson outlined the recent history of the Eastern band program and that DCPS has no plans to provide any funding at all for instruments and related materials. The band does have uniforms thanks to donations (including from ANC 6A) which were stored by friends of the band during the renovation. Unfortunately, they were unable to store the instruments (such as they were) and many were ruined during the move. Currently there are fewer instruments than student participants, which is an unacceptable situation. The situation is expected to be worse next year as an additional 100 incoming students have indicated that they wish to participate in the band program, particularly in the percussion section. Despite the difficulties, the band has been very competitive, doing well at competitions.

2. Ninth grade students currently at Elliot JHS have been allowed to participate and many of these will continue in the program next year when they enroll at Eastern. The DC Youth Orchestra Program (DCYOP) housed at Eastern but not part of DCPS has been partnering with the band program. Shared resources are also used during classroom music instruction as well as the after-school program. Douglas explained that parents, faculty and staff at Maury are all working to improve test scores. This is of obvious benefit to the students in the testing grades but it is also important to the overall success of the school as test scores affect enrollment decisions at all grade levels. Teachers, in particular, are working hard to differentiate instruction to reach each child on his/her level. They try to plan ahead but need to be able to respond "in the moment" to interests and questions as they are expressed in the classroom.
3. The band has a few brass instruments and hopes to acquire more, also wind instruments but percussion is the priority. The entire cost for percussion alone will be in the \$12,000 range. The PTSA has been very aggressive in grant writing, having approached the Capitol Hill Community Foundation, The Holland Opus Foundation and the Fender Music Foundation. The students do some fundraising to pay for maintenance of the uniforms, trips and incidentals but the PTSA believes that children should not carry the burden of providing basic equipment. The PTSA is working toward a partnership with the local military bands in the hopes of acquiring used instruments. The Commissions present suggested ways to acquire additional donated used equipment.
4. Ms. Kohanek raised questions about the adequacy of storage, given that many of the few old instruments the band had, were destroyed in the move. Mr. Gibson replied that the renovated building has a "state of the art" band room and that additional storage is planned. Also, no significant renovations/disruptions are anticipated and the building will be in operation (and secure) this summer to house DCYOP and band camp, among other activities.
5. Ms. Nelson expressed satisfaction that the students in our community will be well served by the cooperative working relationships that the Eastern band has established with the DCYOP, Elliott JHS, and the classroom music instruction program at Eastern SHS. COC members expressed agreement with the value of the program to the students involved and to the community surrounding the school. Music instruction is known to improve academic performance. The band has a history of providing a safe, productive, wholesome activity for youth. It also provides structure and a positive sense of identity.
6. Ms. Williams expressed concern that Eastern might not be in a position to safeguard the instruments and that, since it is just re-opening, she is not certain that the new principal will be committed to the band program. She would not want the instruments to be damaged or go unused. Mr. Gibson replied that Principal Skerritt is entirely supportive of the PTSA's efforts as regards the band and intends to renew Eastern's musical traditions, including the Choir. Also, the Band Director is highly qualified.
7. Eastern SHS is within the ANC 6A boundaries, is in-boundaries to most of ANC 6A and a significant percentage of the student population reside within ANC 6A.
8. **Motion:** Ms. Joseph moved that the COC recommend that ANC 6A fund the grant application from the Eastern SHS PTSA to purchase percussion instruments for the Eastern SHS band, not to exceed \$4,000. Seconded by Ms. Kohanek. Vote 3 in favor (Nelson, Kohanek, Joseph), 1 opposed (Williams).

V. Discussion of advertising on The Hill Is Home (THIH) blog.

1. Ms. Kohanek presented a report showing page views and click-through rates for the existing ANC ad. She pointed out that the rate is "normal". Ms. Williams noted that this type of advertising is a good way to connect to new residents. That sentiment was shared by the other COC members who agree that it is appropriate to do outreach in multiple ways (print advertising, such as the Rag and electronically, including the listservs and now, THIH).
2. The possibility of changing ad size and/or location was discussed and the possibility of skipping months. But it was agreed that consistency is a good thing and that we should stick with the current plan for another 3 months, re-evaluating after that time.
3. **Motion:** Ms. Willimas moved that the COC recommend that ANC 6A approve the allocation of an additional \$350 to cover the costs of an additional 3-month run on the ad in The Hill Is Home. Seconded by Ms. Kohanek. Vote 4 in favor, none opposed.

VI. Request for ANC 6A support for a Father's Day event at Sherwood Recreation Center.

1. Mr. Jordan Washington was not present to present his request in person, though he was notified of the date/time/venue by both Ms. Nelson and Commissioner Ronneberg.
2. All but one of the committee members and all three commissioners present are familiar with past Father's Day events organized by Mr. Washington. Most have witnessed the proceedings in person, have seen the aftermath and/or have reviewed significant community complaints about the activity. The ANC has a long history of opposition to the event, most notably by former Commissioner Joseph Fengler. Commissioner Ronneberg presented a file of ANC correspondence on the topic as documentation. Chief Kamperin has also opposed the event this year.
3. Commissioner Ronneberg reported that the event is generally attended by large number of people from outside of the neighborhood and that there have been significant problems with alcohol consumption, public urination, trash, hostile behavior, loud music and noise. Commissioner Alberti pointed out that the party is not confined to the Recreation Center grounds, but spills out into the street and that there does not seem to be the level of family interaction commonly associated with Father's Day as the men congregate in one location while the children entertain themselves, largely without adult supervision, in another. Commissioner Holmes reported that at times the streets have been closed without the proper procedures.
4. As Ms. Kohanek remarked, the organizers had several opportunities to improve the event but have not taken done anything to solve the reported problem. They have not accepted responsibility for the problems
5. Commissioner Alberti pointed out that, even if the event itself were not problematic, he would have reservations about supporting it because there is no evidence that it is sponsored by a legitimate community group and he does not think the ANC should support individuals' parties in public facilities. Mr. Washington is not a District resident and the group with which he is associated is not a bona fide 501 (c)(3) organization.
6. **Motion:** Commissioner Ronneberg moved that the COC recommend that ANC 6A oppose Mr. Washington's request for support of a 2011 Father's Day event at Sherwood Recreation Center. Seconded by Ms. Williams. Vote 6 in favor (incl. Ronneberg, Alberti), none opposed.

VII. Meeting adjourned at 8:50 p.m.

VIII. The next meeting will take place Monday, May 16, at 7:30 p.m. at 1235 C St. NE