



AHNA

HARTFORD
HAS IT

Asylum Hill Neighborhood Association A Neighborhood NRZ

Board Members;

Jackie McKinney

Chairperson

Nancy Rion

Secretary

Louisa Barton

Duguay

Treasurer

Janice Castle

Mayor's Office

Georges Annan-Kingsley

Wayne Benjamin

Esther Gonzalez-Torres

Ken Johnson

Lynn Johnson

Marian Leist

Elender Mathis

Mervin Mathurin

Yvonne Matthews

Michelle McFarland

Jeanine McMahon

Paul O'Mara

Executive Director David MacDonald

AHNA General Meeting (Virtual – Zoom & Phone) Minutes – June 7, 2021

Board Members Present: Jackie McKinney, Nancy Rion, Paul O'Mara, Ken Johnson, Louisa Barton Duguay, Wayne Benjamin, Marian Leist, Lynn Johnson, Yvonne Matthews

Board Members Absent: Michelle McFarland, Janine McMahon, Mervin Mathurin, Susan Tebolt, Kolsie Mathis, Michael Barr, Georges Annan-Kingsley, Esther Gonzalez-Torres

AHNA Staff, City Representatives and Members Present: Bernie Michel, David MacDonald, Jesus Lopez, Interim Chief Barco, Andrene Bent-Jarvis, Paul Bengston, Nichelle Hudson, Doug Ovian, Sarah Adanti, Carolyn Austin, Sue Carey, Ted Carroll, David Corrigan, Sarah Morin, Barbara Morton, Barbara Robbins, Katherine Anne Simcic, Lynn Webber, Cathy Zeiner

Visitors: Alffe Blake, Kevin Burnham, Barbara Carman, Viviana Conner, Elizabeth Dill, Marion Griffin, Virgen Guadarrama, Casey Hardin, Elsa Koula, Lauren Little, Marcy Miller, Flora Padro, Kyle Parrish, John Prescod, Sonsearae Sawyer, Devonn Smith, Kiera Steele, Jennifer Stevens, Leslie Torres-Rodriguez, Tiffany West

The meeting was called to order by Jackie McKinney at 6:15. About 45 people introduced themselves on zoom or the phone. Jackie read the AHNA Mission and an acknowledgement that Asylum Hill is located on native lands.

Executive Director's Report: David is focusing his time on Strategic Planning for Asylum Hill. The Taskforces have been meeting and developing their recommendations that they will share in the Steering Committee meeting on June 23. David and Jackie met with LIST, a housing non-profit that is also developing a strategic plan. They agreed to collaborate on their work in housing in Asylum Hill. David expressed appreciation that The Hartford announced a \$1 million investment to address blighted properties in Asylum Hill. David reported that a Composting Pilot Project began last week in an effort to demonstrate to the city the public interest and importance of composting.

Treasurer's Report: Louisa reported

May income	\$ 10,200 (\$10,000 from AHCC)
May expenses	\$ 3,319 (payroll)
June 7 operating balance	\$ 15,500
Restricted fund balance	\$ 1,500

REPORTS FROM THE CITY:

- **Police Department Report:** Asylum Hill's CSO, Sid Palmieri, (palmc002@hartford.gov) was unable to attend.
- **Fire Department Report:** Lt. Jesus Lopez, (860-757-4523), Special Services Unit reported the most recent stats for Asylum Hill. Hartford reports 16,401 cases of COVID. Interim Fire Department Chief Barco reported that the Fire Department is working with the Police Department to address issues around fireworks and July 4 celebrations.
- **City Update:** Andrene reported that in May there were 47 311 calls from Asylum Hill residents. She said residents will be reminded about recycling protocol. Parking restrictions are on Wethersfield Ave because of parties and disturbances there. A Juneteenth celebration will take place on Trinity St.

- **Hartford Planning Department Update:** Paul Bengston reported approval of two projects and 2 solar installations in Asylum Hill in May. He reminded residents to visit meetinginfo.org for an update on all committees. The Department is seeking to hire more planners.
- **Community Court Report:** Doug Ovian (douglas.ovian@jud.ct.gov) reminded residents of the public defender hotline.

Committee Reports:

- **Economic Development:** The Committee arranged a tour of 85 Sigourney. Site plans are being developed for the Comet.
- **Communication:** The Committee will meet next week with the agenda to include the compost project and tree counting
- **Fund Development:** The Committee is planning a breakfast event in September to recognize volunteers in Asylum Hill.

Review of Minutes: The May General Meeting minutes were not addressed because of lack of time.

Presentation by Dr. Leslie Torres-Rodriguez, Superintendent, Hartford Public Schools: The Superintendent introduced three colleagues: Elizabeth Dill, Viviana Conner and Flora Padro (incoming Principal of Hartford High School). She reported that HPS has almost 18,000 students in 39 schools, including 18 magnets. During COVID, 47% have been chronically absent. She described the many inequities in the system, especially for ESL students, and those in special education or experiencing housing insecurity.

Strategies to address the current challenges include expanding the Community School model, increasing engagement with families, and creating a parent and caregiver Academy. Federal and state monies will be invested in expanding learning time (summer school, and weekend and evening classes) - \$15M, increasing teacher support - \$10M, pairing students with adult advocates - \$7M, and developing a teacher pipeline (recruiting teachers of color and encouraging paras to become teachers) - \$5M.

The Superintendent hopes that HPS can work closely with residents of Asylum Hill. Residents and community partners can provide internships and job shadowing, donate to teacher projects, and volunteer through the Welcome Center, 860-695-8400.

Greater Hartford Mobility Study: Casey Hardin described the program - details available at www.hartfordmobility.com. He noted that the study includes I-84, the railroad station and corridor, and fastrack. They are currently documenting transit needs. Then they will select options to study for the next year. AHNA asked that we continue to get updates on progress.

United Way: John Prescod introduced Virgen Guadarramo from Working Cities Initiatives and Devon Smith from Young Legends. All are working together with the Urban League in Asylum Hill to address the barriers to employment experienced by young adults. Their goal is to develop a young, educated workforce.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:15.