

Minutes

FERGUSON ROAD INITIATIVE COMMUNITY CONNECTION ANNUAL MEETING

Tuesday, February 12, 2013

6:30-8:30 p.m.

White Rock Church of Christ, Fellowship Hall, 9220 Ferguson Road

A special thank you to our friends at Starbucks @ Casa Linda and Highland Park Cafeteria for providing refreshments for this evening's Meet & Greet!

Mark your calendar: Our next FRI Community Connection Meeting will be Tuesday, September 10, 6:30-8:30 p.m. @ White Rock Hills Branch Library, 9150 Ferguson Road

- 6:30-7 p.m.—Dedication of library sculpture, *FENESTRAE AETERNITATIS: DOORWAYS TO KNOWLEDGE* by Jon Barlow Hudson
 - 7-8:15 p.m.—FRI Community Connection Townhall Meeting
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Meeting Purpose: To update the community on our progress and gather input on key issues and challenges.

Outcomes:

1. Approved Minutes from our September 11, 2012 meeting.
2. Elected a slate for the FRI Board of Directors.
3. Reviewed Reading Partners Program.
4. Reviewed status of White Rock East Area Land Use Study.
5. Reviewed Public Safety in Far East Dallas.
6. Reviewed the State of FRI
7. Reviewed FRI's Vision for the Future
8. Reviewed upcoming events.

Roles:

- *Sponsors:* FRI Board of Directors
- *Facilitator:* Vikki J. Martin, President
- *Scribe:* Gary Lawler
- *Timekeeper:* John Van Buskirk

Rules:

- Listen and respect the comments and ideas of others.
- Honor time limits, stick to the agenda.
- Share your experience and perspective with the group

Decision Making:

Consensus, Fallback: Majority vote.

Meeting Participants:

MEMBERS		GUESTS	
Diane Anderson	Earl Johnson	Sallie Adams	Margaret King
Susan Ayoob	Imelda Banda	Israel Aguilar	Marion King
Neely Kerr		Kay Knox	
Lee Barron	Harriett Mason	Ananda Boardman	Chuck Kobdish
Dee Bert	Willie Morgan	Lionel Cortez	Charlie Magness
Bobbi Bilnoski	Mike Nurre	Chrissie McBryde	Helene McKinney
Charles Phillips		Juan Nino	
Brad Boling	Doris Phillips	Eva Ayala-Cisneros	Betty Obenhaus
Louise Bosco	Diana Pollak	Bridget Cockrum	Bob Obenhaus
Carolyn Castro	Martha Quigley	Sunny Coffman	Linda Redd
Ellen Childress	Raymond Quigley	Jennifer Collier	Franceslia Rodriguez
Debra Chitsey	Yvonne Salazar	Lauren Cone	Rosemary Simmons
Leela Cooper	Jeff Snoyer	Justin Coppedge	Charles R. Smith
Robert Cooper	Lynn Snoyer	Lauren Coppedge	John Stetler
Mary Crockhom	Tiffany Sutton	Clarence Cope	Francy Tafur
Beatrice Deen	John Van Buskirk	Larry DeBolt	Desi Tanner
Greg Estell	Linda Van Buskirk	Judy Edwards	Jeff Taylor
Kathy Estell	Lynn Vogt	Kaitlin G.	Ann Teague
Steve Floyd		Jennifer Garrison	Louise Watkins
Diana Gilbert	Nancy Weber	Richard Jankins	Brenda Myers Wilson
		Tricia Johnson	Jean _____
			Maria Pentor
CITY STAFF, OFFICIALS		FRI	
Amanda Chase, Community Prosecutor		Jerry Clancy	Vikki Martin
Carolyn Davis, City Council, District 7		William Coleman	Jeff Moore
Michael Hellman, Dallas Parks & Recreation		Kerry Goodwin	Edwin Snyder
Sheffie Kadane, City Council, District 9		Dr. Gerry Jones	Maria Valenzuela
Sandra King, White Rock Hills Library		Gary Lawler	Susan Walker
Merry Vickers, Service Coordinator			
Kraig Willis, Dallas Library Dept.			
Willis Winters, Dallas Parks & Recreation, Dir.			
OTHER OFFICIALS			
Daniel Clayton for Senator Royce West			
Theresa Daniel, County Commissioner			
Daniel Micciche, DISD School Board, District 3			

Minutes

Meeting Start Up

- Vikki J. Martin convened the meeting at 6:55 p.m..
- Martin introduced elected and other officials.

Minutes Approval

Dr. Gerry Jones moved and Bill Coleman seconded a motion to approve the September 11, 2012 meeting minutes. The motion passed.

Board Election

Susan Walker introduced the slate for the FRI Board of Directors. The slate was approved. The following are the 2013 Board of Directors for FRI:

Eric Boon

Doctors Hospital at White Rock Lake, Dir of Business Dev.

Ed Leyden

Bishop Lynch High School, President

Dr. Kenneth Cantrell, Secretary

East Dallas Veterinary Clinic

Vikki J. Martin, President

Claremont Addition N.A. Resident

Jerry Clancy, Treasurer

Lone Star Credit Union, President

Monica Smith

Downs Smith, Attorneys

Bill Coleman

Casa Linda Forest N.A. Resident

Ed Snyder

Lakeland Hills Crime Watch Resident

Doug Hunt

Access Self Storage, Business Owner

J.T. Walker

Claremont Addition N. A. Resident

Dr. William "Gerry" Jones

Forest Hills N.A. Resident

Susan Walker, Vice-President

Lakeland Hills CrimeWatch, Resident

Reading Partners Program

Dan Micciche, DISD Board Trustee, spoke on the need for helping kids read at grade level. DISD is starting The Launch Collaborative at Kiest Elementary and the Reading Partners Program at Bayles and Truett Elementary Schools. Program requires 1 hour per week per volunteer. To volunteer at Bayles or Truett, contact Chrissie McBryde at chrissie.mcbryde@readingpartners.org or 214-980-8232. To volunteer at Kiest, contact Lauren Coppedge at lauren@thelaunchcollaborative.org or 719-337-1634.

Off Our Rockers—Reading Program for K-3 Grades, Senior Source

Off Our Rockers (OOR) provides a Reading Program for children, Grades K-3, who teachers have identified as needing special help in reading skills. Volunteers receive training and teachers provide the curriculum to fit the child's individual needs. OOR involves volunteers 50+ who want to help children and they are currently serving the following Far East Dallas schools; Gill, Casa View, Reinhardt, Truett, Conner, and Sanger Elementary Schools. Contact Louise Watkins (OOR Coordinator) at The Senior Source at 214-525-6165 or LWatkins@theseniorsource.org.

White Rock East Area Land Use Study

Desi Tanner spoke on 3 community meetings to review recommendations for future development of the White Rock East (formerly 2-Points *Weed & Seed*). The study was approved by the City Plan Commission on February 7 and may go before the City Council in March. If adopted, the study will be used as a guide for the area's future. (Update: City Council approved the WRE Area Land Use Plan on March 27, 2013)

Public Safety in Far East Dallas

- Major Melissa McGee, Dallas Police Department (DPD), Northeast Station, said general crime numbers in the area were down, although Burglaries from a Motor Vehicle (BMV) and property crimes are up. DPD has increased patrol officers in area, and has started a Metro Task Force in the John West Road area. They have officers not in uniform working on stolen vehicles, BMVs, and prostitution.
- DPD is working on a Police Athletic League (PAL) program, are seeking youth involvement.

- City Councilmember Carolyn Davis has requested a Chief on the Beat program for our area.
- Questions and comments from audience:
 - Resident concerned about thefts from alleys, in back yards.
 - There will be a Crime Watch Summit on March 12 (changed from March 4) at Dallas First Assembly of God, 11000 E. Northwest Highway.
 - Lower/middle Ferguson Road has become a “race track”. County program to address speeding has expired. Can we get sign showing vehicle speeds? McGee will look for site. *Note: Sign was in place week of 2-18-13.*

The State of FRI

- Vikki Martin spoke on FRI’s obligation to help the community. The FRI area includes 73,000 residents. She spoke on a Public Safety Grant, said FRI will apply for a \$10,000 grant for former *Weed & Seed* sites this summer.
- 2012 accomplishments include:
 - Library opening, People with Disabilities Accreditation, public sculpture dedication coming, about 400 people per week use the library.
 - A remodelled Harry Stone Recreation Center will be opening May 4.
 - FRI is hoping to get Jacobs Streetscape Plan for Ferguson Road, from a 1996 land use study, in the next bond election. This same land use study helped get Highland Road south of Ferguson Road reconstructed.

FRI’s Vision for the Future

- Bobbi Bilnoski spoke on a Regional Recreation Center (The Center), including a history of funding for a regular/standard sized center. The City will never have enough funding for a Regional Recreation Center desired by area resident. However, FRI is working with the City to create a public/private partnership to fund a larger center.
- The Center size will be between 40,000 to 100,000 sq. ft., instead of the usual 15,000-18,000 sq. ft. facility. It will serve a 5-mile radius, larger than the usual recreation center.
- The Center will tie into the White Rock Creek Trail South and a trail to St. Francis Park.
- The Center will encourage mixed income housing, retail and office use at Highland and Ferguson Roads.
- There are private and public schools interested in leasing The Center swimming pool for practice.
- Willis Winters, Dallas Parks and Recreation Department Director, said traditional-sized centers are outdated. Many cities, including Plano and Irving, are moving toward super centers. Dallas’s Renaissance Plan calls for 7 Regional Recreation Centers citywide. The City would like to have super center site extend to Ash Creek, to tie center to Ash Creek Green Belt.
- Additional \$15M in funding is needed for The Center, with perhaps an additional \$6.5M for aquatics facilities. The trail will be about \$1M. The project will need public/private funding, grants. He cited the City’s \$20M portion of the \$100M overall cost for the Klyde Warren Park over Woodall Rogers Freeway as an example of public/private funding.
- Bilnoski spoke on the desire for the wellness aspect. FRI has always directed our efforts to create a safe and healthy community.
- Dr. Gerry Jones outlined a 5-step plan for building The Center:
 - Obtaining the additional property needed.
 - Identifying potential funding partners.
 - Identifying community needs through a feasibility study/business plan.
 - Determining plans, programs, and a timeline.
 - Determining interim land uses while awaiting building construction.

- Bilnoski reviewed letters to the Mayor for support for The Center for attendees to fill out and turn in at end of meeting.
- Questions and Comments:
 - An attendee asked about burned apartments across from center site. Our Plan Commissioner, Ann Bagley, indicates the owner has received permits to begin rehabilitation. However, no action has been seen on the property. This property will be addressed at the Community Prosecutor’s meeting on March 26 at the White Rock Hills Library. (Update: Heroes Housing Project is now under construction)
 - The Highland Bridge over Ash Creek needs improvement.
 - Sidewalks are needed for Ferguson Road.

Review of the State of FRI

Jeff Moore, former Executive Director of FRI, gave a financial overview of FRI.

- The first Community Connection membership drive was good, but fell short of goal.
- He spoke on FRI’s financial need to reduce their budget, programs, and staff.
- He spoke on how FRI has helped residents file taxes through VITA and deal with abuse through OVAG program, but will need to transfer these programs to other organizations.
- The FRI Board has formed working committees.
- The Board will be “laser focused” on getting The Center built.

Martin said that FRI is restructuring, is developing a 5-year Strategic Plan:

- Membership Programs
- Financial Sustainability
- Internal Operations
- Governance & Leadership

Ed Snyder spoke on the importance of FRI, the need for it to remain a viable organization, asked what organization is more important than a local one?

Martin spoke on a Call to Action:

- Become a member
- Make a pledge
- Join a committee
- Fill out a letter to Mayor Rawlings

Martin introduced Chris Binion, Casa Linda Branch Manager of Wells Fargo, FRI’s newest 3-year Founder’s Circle member. Binion spoke on how impressed he was by Far East Dallas community involvement, presented a check to FRI for \$3,000. Martin presented Wells Fargo with a Founders Circle plaque, and invited Binion to bring a Wells Fargo stagecoach to the Grand Opening of the Regional Recreation Center.

Dr. Gerry Jones stated that the Board has agreed to chair new committees, and the Board has offered to match up to \$10,000 total contributions/memberships to FRI made by June 1, 2013.

- Committee chairs reviewed the seven committee purposes and volunteer needs:
 - **Finance & Operations** (Jerry Clancy, chair), jclancy@lonestarcu.org
 - Accounting Skills
 - Auditing Skills
 - Budgeting
 - **Membership & Programs** (Bill Coleman, chair), billmcoleman@earthlink.net
 - Sales Force training

- Data entry/management
 - Volunteers to conduct membership renewal “warm” calls
 - Volunteers to call on business & corporate community
- **Economic Development**, Dr. Gerry Jones, chair), wgjonesmd@gmail.com
 - Finance
 - Fundraising
 - Commercial development
 - Landscaping/landscaping design
 - Publicity
 - Enthusiasm, hard work, passionate about our community!
- **Branding & Communications** (Ed Snyder, chair), eddiesnyder@gmail.com
 - Advertising sales (for FRIDays, bi-annual newsletter)
 - Newsletter writer/reporter
 - Newsletter editor (paid position)
 - Graphics designer
 - Photographer
 - Branding
 - Social media expert
- **Board Development** (Ken Cantrell, chair) *Vikki Martin made presentation.*, cantrellpearce@sbcglobal.net
 - Access to corporate, business, foundation & individual wealth
 - Access to local business
 - Experience in annual giving campaigns
 - Experience in capital & endowment campaigns
 - Experience in fundraising
 - Experience in board development, training, & recruiting
 - Special events planning
 - Board diversity
- **Community Volunteers** (Susan Walker, chair), sh.walker@sbcglobal.net
 - Chairing of annual fundraising benefits/events
 - Short term events; townhall meetings, litter clean-up, graffiti abatement, etc.
 - Volunteer training
 - Project management
 - Office mailings, errands, etc.
 - Technical office management
- **Grant & Fund Development** (Ed Leyden, Chair) *Vikki Martin made presentation.* ed.leyden@bishopllynch.org
 - Grant writers
 - Knowledge of local, state & federal grants
 - Donor cultivation program
 - People with access to local, private, & family foundations

(Update: FRI met our goal on this challenge on June 11th. Thanks to everyone who supported this effort!)

Action Plan

WHAT	WHO	WHEN	STATUS
Contact Chrissie McBryde of Reading Partners for tutoring at Bayles or Truitt at 214-980-8232 or chrissie.mcbryde@readingpartners.org	All	Ongoing	
Contact Lauren Coppedge of The Launch Collaborative for tutoring at Kiest at 719-337-1634 or lauren@thelaunchcollaborative.org	All	Ongoing	
Contact Louise Watkins, Coordinator for Off Our Rockers, Reading Program, sponsored by Senior Source at 214-525-6165 or LWatkins@theseniorsource.org	All	Ongoing	
Locate a portable sign showing vehicle speeds on lower-middle Ferguson Road to help reduce speed	Maj. Melissa McGee, DPD		DONE

Upcoming Dates:

- Saturday, June 15 White Rock Hills Branch Library
1 year Birthday Celebration
9150 Ferguson Road
- September 10 6:30-7 p.m. FRI Community Connection Meeting
White Rock Hills Branch Library—Sculpture Dedication
7:8:15 p.m. FRI Townhall Meeting
White Rock Hills Branch Library, Auditorium
9150 Ferguson Road

FRI's Next Big Thing---Regional Recreation Center

FRI is Building on our Past, Focused on the Future

2013 is the kick-off of our 5 year plan to bring a state-of-the-art, Regional Recreation Center (The Center) to Far East Dallas! Together, we successfully made the landmark White Rock Hills Branch Library at 9150 Ferguson Road a reality in 2012. First conceived in 1995 at a community town hall meeting, **The Center** will be the first city of Dallas regional recreation center designed to serve residents of all ages! It will not be a standard 15,000 sq ft recreational facility but a 40,000-100,000 sq. ft .facility, with indoor and outdoor features. It will be the very first of it's kind, a part of the Dallas Park Department long-range Renaissance Plan. There will be a series of community town hall meetings to gather input on the types of programs and services the community would like. Other facilities similar in size offer indoor/outdoor running tracks aquatic features, basketball courts, exercise spaces, rock climbing, arts activities, health and wellness programs, as well as youth literacy and leadership programs, GED classes, and areas and activities for seniors. The cost will be determined by the programming needs of our community. **The ball is rolling!** 2229 Highland Road property has already been purchased, cleared and secured! We are well on the way.

FRI's Economic Development Committee is working with Mayor Rawlings and City Manager Mary Suhm to create a public private partnership to raise the funds needed, about \$37 million,

to realize our mutual vision of this flagship facility. The first step is to conduct a feasibility study and business plan and for design and construction. In 2006, FRI successfully mobilized the community to secure \$5 million in bond funds to design and build a standard Center. In, 2010, the Community voted to direct the City to use the \$5M bond money to purchase the land required for an enhanced regional recreation center – about 8 acres. The City is purchasing two aging apartment complexes adjacent to the future site of The Center. The residents will be relocated and the buildings demolish by early 2014. FRI will advocate for the development of green space or other creative uses while the public private partnership seeks a master developer for a mixed-use destination anchored by the Center and trailhead for the new White Rock South trail along Ash Creek. - We will create opportunities for the community to participate and celebrate as we work together to make this vision a reality.

New FRI Operational Plan

FRI operations are being restructured to laser focus on the main goal – the building of The Center. As good stewards of our member's dollars, we are being resourceful by focusing on core programs, right-sizing our staff and reducing our overhead so that we focus on what we do best – **provide Visionary Leadership, Facilitate Community Connection and Communication, and Advocate for Far East Dallas!**

Call to Action—We Deserve Better!

When FRI realized that our community did not have a library, we decided, *We Deserve Better!* And we got busy to build community support, mobilize, and advocate for a library in Far East Dallas. Now it's time to address the gap in recreational amenities for our youth, families, and all residents -- *We Deserve Better!* While other parts of Dallas have these things, Far East Dallas does not! We need recreation and wellness opportunities, program and services for all residents in our community!

The FRI board has shown their support with a community challenge. They will match up to \$10,000 in new memberships and donations until June 1, 2013. FRI can't do this without a strong show of community support. We need your help and full support by taking the following simple steps. . . **Step 1** – JOIN! Become a FRI member and refer someone you know to this great organization! **Step 2** – GIVE! Make a pledge and join our Founders Circle. **Step 3** – VOLUNTEER to participate on a board committee and **Step 4** – SEND a letter to Mayor Rawlings to advocate for our **Regional Recreation Center**.

Join us and invest in the future of YOUR COMMUNITY! To sign an on-line petition in support of the Regional Recreation Center or to learn more about the Regional Recreation Center contact FRI at www.fergusonroad.org