

## WEST UNIVERSITY SENIORS BOARD MEETING

Minutes June 13, 2019

**Presiding:** Candyce Beneke

The meeting was called to order at 2:00 p.m. **Roll call:**

**Present:** Ann Crowley, Joan Johnson, Stan McCandless, Judy Faulkner, Susan Davis, George Baker, Rebecca Dozier, Carlos de la Torre, Carol O'Neill, Candyce Beneke

**Absent:**, Virginia Lootens, Selby Clark, John Palmer, Karen Kenny, Tom Brombacher

**Minutes:** The minutes were amended and approved.

**Guests: Residents:** John Barnes (City Council), Alida Drewes, Mardi Turner, Dorothy Zink

**Resident comments:** Asks for a review of fee schedule for seniors, as there has been no adjustment in 10 years. Laments the lack of a park for seniors and the unavailability of a coach for seniors at the gym. Expresses concern for low-income seniors (Alida)

Discussion: Asks about the availability of a list of low-income seniors (Joan)

Regarding Christmas trees left in Colonial Park for pickup by the City, residents should be encouraged to strip the trees of all lights. (Mardi).

**City Council:** The City is in contentious negotiations with South Side Place and the Harris County Flood Control District about the zoning for the drainage of "Poor Farm Ditch." Litigation may be required.

**Background:** At issue is the finding of a 2014 study that the capacity of Poor Farm Ditch between University Avenue and Bellaire Boulevard needs to be enlarged by as much as 75% to convey runoff from a 100-year storm event.

**References:**

[https://westutx.gov/DocumentCenter/View/3305/Attachment-B---Fact-Sheet---Poor-Farm-Ditch\\_Kilmarnock-Ditch-HCFCD-AUG-2014?bidId=](https://westutx.gov/DocumentCenter/View/3305/Attachment-B---Fact-Sheet---Poor-Farm-Ditch_Kilmarnock-Ditch-HCFCD-AUG-2014?bidId=)

<https://westutx.gov/682/City-Wide-Drainage-Study>

The Council considered the issue of the keeping of honeybees as a nuisance to neighbors. As an outcome of one reported complaint, a bee-keeping resident has moved the bees away from an adjoining fence.

**APAC Report:** No July meeting. Karen Kenny submitted a very detailed report via email from the June meeting. Highlights that were discussed were the ombudsman program which Susan Davis would like to learn more about.

Harris County Ombudsman program – volunteer program with 57 active and 85 part-time. Goal is to train 85 volunteers per year. Ombudsmen are to fix problems for individuals in nursing homes or assisted living facilities. There are roughly 100 nursing homes and 295 assisted living facilities in the area. There are no mandatory requirements for reporting for the Ombudsman. Texas Health and Human Services is the enforcement side.

Common issues Ombudsman called to help is Involuntary discharge from a facility. The existing Texas rules are pretty good to keep residents in place. Interestingly, nonpayment is not a reason for discharge.

When a family places their loved one in a facility, they are not required to sign the arbitration agreement or the financial agreement. Just strike through those clauses. These actions maintain the family's ability to take legal action if needed and will not ruin their credit score.

Looking for more volunteer Ombudsman. Next classes are in September and November. If interested contact Greg Shelley, Program Manager, Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program, [Gregory.K.Shelley@uth.tmc.edu](mailto:Gregory.K.Shelley@uth.tmc.edu), (713) 500-9930.

New area plan under development. This plan will be a 2 year. The entire state will use the same template for consistency. Area plans are due March 2020. Regional needs and SWAT analysis are due August 2, 2019.

Precision Medicine – The lead researcher, Dr. Dara Richardson, will speak at the Aging in Texas Conference, June 26-28, at the Omni Hotel, Houston. “All of Us” is sponsored by the NIH. Dr. Richardson’s “efforts are to engage and retain one million or more volunteers to advance innovative health research that may lead to more precise treatments and prevention strategies. *All of Us*, a cornerstone initiative of the National Institutes of Health (NIH), aims to build one of the largest biomedical data sets in the world, involving participants from diverse communities across the United States. Richardson is responsible for forging partnerships with research participants, health care professionals, and national and community-based organizations to raise awareness of the program, with a special focus on populations that have been historically underrepresented in research.”

Two roundtable discussion groups are scheduled to coincide with the conference on June 26<sup>th</sup>(see flyer).

As part of Older American Month, Houston Area Agency on Aging (AAA) visited 33 centenarians based on the in-home servicing programs. The centenarians received a proclamation from Mayor Sylvester Turner, a gift card, and flowers. The group included some impressive citizens including one individual that is still driving and woman that is a care giver for her 89-year-old sister.

AAA conducted a “Will-a-thon” in partnership with Beacon. There were 45 participants. Will attempt to schedule once a quarter.

Portable Air Conditioning Program. AAA and collaboration with Reliant Energy. Department of Health matched the funding. Last year 178 AC were installed. The goal for this summer is another 178 installation of portable ACs (Houston program).

Texas legislature was active this session with many bills passed that benefit seniors (no details given).

Complimentary Tai Chi seniors including Tai Chi

**Parks and Recreation:** Toby Brooks reported per Susan Whites email communication, which was also distributed.

**Whitt Johnson Park** On May 20, City Council approved the recommended updates for Whitt Johnson Park. Staff has begun the purchasing process, and the project is scheduled to begin in early September. The project is estimated to be completed by the end of October 2019. Please refer to the weekly reports for updates and visit the project webpage for the latest information - <https://www.westutx.gov/685/Whitt-Johnson-Park-Project>. Generously funded by the Friends of West U Parks Fund, Inc.

**Judson Park** A 15ft x 15ft shade topper will be added to the 2-5year old play structure. Scheduled to be completed by the end of this month. Generously funded by the Friends of West U Parks Fund, Inc.

**Colonial Park Pool** <https://westutx.gov/290/Colonial-Park-Pool> Colonial Park Pool is now open daily for the season.

**West U Recreation Center** Construction on the front desk area is expected to be completed by the end of next month. The pool will be resurfaced when the building is closed for maintenance week at the end of August.

**Special Events** <https://westutx.gov/475/News-and-Events>

Party on the Patio Concerts – Friday Nights in June from 7-9pm.

**June 7: The Fab 5, June 14: Dee Dee & Mike and the Moondance Band, June 21: Mango Punch, June 28: Vital Signs**

Independence Day Bike Parade & Pool Party – Thursday, July 4, 9-Noon

Dive-In Movies July 19 (MEMBERS ONLY) @ 8pm - Mary Poppins Returns (Rated PG)

August 2 @ 8pm - Wonder Park (Rated PG)

**Senior Report:** A Father's Day concert was held in the auditorium with the Houston Concert Band, in its 15 year. The Fall Newsletter is almost ready for print.

**Good Neighbor Team (Toby):** Notes that we are in hurricane season. Preparedness bags are being assembled with pill bottles and lid tops with critical medical information. Also space for information about pet care in case of hospitalization. There will be an ice cream social on July 18.

**Adjournment:** The meeting was adjourned at 2:57 p.m.

**Next meeting:** Meetings will not be held in July and August. The next meeting will be on September 12<sup>th</sup> at 2:00 p.m.

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Submitted: George Baker