

Super Neighborhood Alliance

Minutes of Virtual General Meeting Held 14 March 2022



Guests

Sallie Alcorn, CM At-Large 5
Troy Finner, HPD Chief of Police
Teresa Geisheker, P&D
Rhonda Sauter, DON
Jack Valinski, DON
Alyce Coffey, SWD
Kyle Maronie, HC PHS
Travis Leamons, HTV

Sheri Cortez, HCDAO
Travis Leamons, HTV Deb Bonario-
Martin
Mark Fairchild
Bessie Mansfield
Ken Fountain
Jamie Rickenbacker

Super Neighborhood Representatives

Philip Salerno, SNC 5
Ricky Miller, SNC 5
LaTisha Grant, SNC 6
Mark Klein, SNC 12
Tanya Debose, SNC 13
Leigh Killgore, SNC 14
John Zavala, SNC 14
Pedro Ayarzagotia, SNC 15
Jeff Baker, SNC 17
Mike VanDusen, SNC 22
Stacie Fairchild, SNC 22
Kay Warhol, SNC 24
Doug Smith, SNC SNC 25
Barbara Quattro, SNC 25
Kathie Easterly, SNC 28
Terry Cominski, SNC 31
Cindy Chapman, SNC 37
Stephen Polnaszek, SNC 38
Rhonda Jones, SNC 41

Willie Rainwater, SNC 41
Norberto Moreno, SNC 46
Jackie Mayhorn, SNC 47
Ivory Mayhorn, SNC 47
Vicky Martin, SNC 49, 50
Sylvia Cavazos, SNC 51
Keith Downey, SNC 52
Roshida Downey, SNC 52
Joetta Stevenson, SNC 55
Bridgette Murray, SNC 57
Tracy Stephens, SNC 57
Michael Lewis, SNC 62
Kay Walton, SNC 62
Jim Honey, SNC 62
Priscilla Argueta, SNC 65
Kathleen O'Reilly, SNC 66
Tomaro Bell, SNC 83
Sammye Hughes, SNC 83

Meeting convened at 6:30 PM.

- I. **Minutes of the February 14, 2022 General Meeting were delayed approval to April 11 meeting.**
- II. **Troy Finner, City of Houston HPD Chief of Police** – Stacie Fairchild introduced Chief Finner mentioning the Q&A format of tonight's meeting. Chief Finner shared how much he appreciates the support he and his department receives from the Super Neighborhood Alliance. He gave a brief overview of the One Safe Houston initiative to address violent crime. January was a terrible month with a 76% increase in homicides but he reported tonight that the city is at 17% in homicides compared to last year this month. Homicides are typically relational and a lot of work goes into solving these types of cases internally as well as with the community. Chief Finner is working to get more technology to help where there are staffing shortages such as license plate readers and cameras. The city administration and businesses are working together to put more technology in the

public domain. He also stressed the importance of saying something if residents witness a crime. From here, we quickly turned to the Q&A format. Five questions were submitted by Super Neighborhood leaders before the meeting. Stacie Fairchild read each question.

Terry Cominski asked if HPD could work with apartment complexes to put up cameras to track down problem individuals. Chief Finner said he's committed to doing a press conference really soon that encourages businesses and apartment complexes to put up cameras

Pedro Ayarzagotia asked how HPD can utilize officers in administrative roles to help with public safety. Chief Finner said HPD is down 50% in civilians and he would like to put civilians in administrative roles where a trained peace officer is not required. However, the budget does not support the need. Chief Finner is always looking for ways to move officers around so that they're more effective in their roles.

Cindy Chapman said that crime statistics used to be available by Super Neighborhood and it was very useful information. How does the Super Neighborhoods get that level of specific data? Chief Finner will look into making it available again online.

Cindy Chapman asked what challenges and opportunities for providing flexibility in working hours for DRT officers since they work Monday-Friday regular business hours. Chief Finner said that when officers apply for DRT positions that part of the application is to be flexible to work all hours to address the issues. The commander of each division should be adjusting DRT schedules based on criminal activity and the need for code enforcement. The chief said he would ask all of his commanders if they are doing that and would report back to the SNA in 30 days.

Cindy Chapman also asked Chief Finner what opportunities he sees for working more closely with the Harris County Constables. Chief Finner works with all eight Harris County Constables closely as well as the Constables in Montgomery County and Fort Bend County to address violent crime. Stacie Fairchild mentioned Harris County Precinct One is contracted for three neighborhoods on Washington Avenue but they are covering a lot more area than the contract.

Tomaro Bell said the City of Houston is full of law enforcement agencies and she asked why HPD isn't more collaborative with METRO PD. Chief Finner said that HPD works with METRO but not the backend in how their resources are deployed. He acknowledged there are a lot of law enforcement agencies to lean on and HPD is doing that but they can do better.

Tomaro Bell suggested that the Administrative and Regulatory Affairs department should be address loud noise calls so that HPD can focus on violent crime. If they can ticket and boot your car, they should be able to cite a DJ. Chief Finner said that a code enforcement task force would help free up officers and he would support it.

Kay Walton said her concern is that the noise ordinance is not being enforced even after the Mayor and Chief stated at a press conference it would be. However, Commander Johnson at South Central appears at Midtown Management meetings and repeatedly states that they will not enforce the sound ordinance unless she has a large amount of officers to address the call for service as it's too dangerous for them. How can a commander decide which laws she will enforce and if these establishments are too dangerous for law enforcement, why are neighborhoods expected to tolerate them and how did they get to become so dangerous that law enforcement won't respond? Chief Finner will ask Commander Johnson about her comments and follow up with you. He asked Kay to email him specific locations and he would take a look at them.

Norberto Moreno said that the biggest problem they have in Eastex/Jensen is prostitution and drugs. Is DRT an option to address it? Chief Finner asked for specific locations so that he could have the Narcotics and Vice divisions address the problems.

Sheri Cortez mentioned the statistic given at the One Safe Houston initiative that 3,600 guns stolen out of vehicles last year were used in a crime. She felt it was important that people hear from Chief Finner about preventative measures. The chief asked people to secure them in your vehicle you're your home. Invest in a lock box.

Deb Bonario-Martin asked when transfers out of patrol were going to take place. Chief Finner is not sure when because HPD is so short staffed on patrol. He needs as many patrol officers working right now to address violent crime.

Doug Smith said that CM Pollard has invested in license plate readers. What happens to the data, is it fed into a computer and distributed. Chief Finner stressed that HPD is not monitoring people like big brother. The data will roll up to HPD so officers can easily access the data to help solve crimes.

Sammie Hughes is concerned that someone's child is going to get killed because Southmore is used as a racetrack even during school. Chief Finner said he would get officers out there patrol.

Joetta Stevenson asked when bounty hunters go into communities are they supposed to notify law enforcement. Chief Finner said there is no legal obligation for bounty hunters to work with law enforcement but he hopes that they will work with HPD.

Vickie Martin said her question is related to temporary tags. In her area, there is an apartment complex that is performing vehicle repairs from transmission replacements to changing tires. The vehicles are towed there between midnight and 3:00 PM. Chief Finner agreed it is suspicious activity and he asked Vickie to give Stacie Fairchild the addresses where this is happening so he can address it.

Keith Downey said his area is having a problem with convenience stores. The FOIA requests show that there were 126 requests for calls for service. Chief Finner said he knows the location and will address it.

Stacie Fairchild asked if she could work through Chief Finner's scheduler to set up quarterly meetings. Chief Finner said yes.

- III. **SNA Bylaws Update** – Rhonda Sauter, with the Department of Neighborhoods said that she is working to streamline the bylaws and is working on a template. Rhonda separately reminded attendees to please mute themselves when they aren't speaking during the meeting to be respectful to the speakers.
- IV. **City Budget Process and Timelines** – Doug Smith said that the budget process will begin next month and the meetings for 26 departments of 30 minutes per department is a long, involved process. It's a useful process whereby Houstonians can interact with department heads. Doug shared [the link to the Budget and Fiscal Affairs committee](#) information. He also shared the [Finance committee link](#). The proposed budget will be published by the Finance committee. Doug recommends subscribing to both mailing lists if you have an interest in staying informed throughout the 2023 budget process, upcoming hearings and beyond. Doug attends both sets of meetings monthly.

- V. **Elected Officials Update** – CM Sallie Alcorn said the sound ordinance revisions go to the Regulatory and Neighborhood Affairs committee on April 12. She also mentioned she conducts an annual “Your Two Cents” survey about what neighborhoods want money spent on in the coming fiscal year. CM Alcorn believes there needs to be more public input in the budget process and encouraged SNA leaders to get engaged.
- VI. **Announcements** – Tomaro Bell said Riverside Park is having a mini-Rodeo on March 19 from 11:00 AM – 2:00 PM. Animals and games will be there, and everyone is invited.

Silvia Cavazos shared that she is working with the Harris County libraries. They got a grant for 40K free hot spots. So if you know anyone who doesn't have access to the internet, they can go into a Harris County library and ask for an activated hot spots with a library card. It's free 5G T-Mobile service through next year – one per household.

VII. **Adjournment**

The meeting adjourned at 7:58 PM.