

CITY OF FALCON HEIGHTS
Community Engagement Commission
City Hall
2077 West Larpenteur Avenue

AGENDA
May, 20 2024 at 6:30 P.M.

- A. CALL TO ORDER:
- B. WELCOME:
- C. ROLL CALL:
Karen Cooley-Kistler____ Julie Ebbesen____ Zach Lindstrom____ Curt Stockford____
Mishy Wang____ Rebecca Leighton____ Denise King____
STAFF PRESENT:
Elke Van der Werff____
COUNCIL LIAISON:
Melanie Leehy____
- D. APPROVAL OF AGENDA
- E. PRESENTATION:
 - 1. GET TO KNOW EACH OTHER
- F. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:
 - 1. April 15, 2024 Community Engagement Commission Meeting Minutes
- G. AGENDA
 - Unfinished business
 - 1. Neighborhood Liaison Handbook
- H. INFORMATION/ANNOUNCEMENT

- J. ADJOURNMENT:

Next Regular Meeting is on Monday, June 17 at 6:30 PM

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CITY OF FALCON HEIGHTS
Community Engagement Commission
City Hall
2077 West Larpenteur Avenue

MINUTES
April, 15 2024 at 6:30 P.M.

A. CALL TO ORDER: 6:31 PM

B. WELCOME:

C. ROLL CALL:

Karen Cooley-Kistler_X_ Julie Ebbesen_X_ Zach Lindstrom_X_ Curt Stockford_X_
Mishy Wang_X_ Rebecca Leighton_X_ Denise King_X_

STAFF PRESENT:

Elke Van der Werff_X__

COUNCIL LIAISON:

Melanie Leehy__X__

D. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Agenda approved motioned Cooley-Kistler, 2nd King. Agenda approved unanimously.

E. PRESENTATION:

1. GET TO KNOW EACH OTHER

Commissioner introductions – introducing new commissioner Denise King

F. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

1. March 18, 2024 Community Engagement Commission & Parks and Rec Commission Joint Meeting Minutes

Approval of minutes – Addition of Parks attendees prior to posting Motion Leighton, 2nd Wang, Minutes approved unanimously.

G. AGENDA

- Unfinished business
- Neighborhood Liaison Handbook
 - Leehy confirming goal of document to update information and consolidate information.

- Stockton verified and that is correct. Some information was outdated and the defined volunteer “roles” were more complicated and could have been a barrier to participation.
- Leehy inquired about training opportunities similar to what the program had earlier in the commission life time.
- Van der Werff discussed options for training/programming possibilities in the future – including C.E.R.T training, first aid, car set checks, etc.
- Stockford recommends we will continue to discuss programs/activities now that the commission is fully seated.
- Ebbesen stated that the existing list of liaisons was not up to date and there was difficulty getting individuals on the existing list to respond to requests to update information. The goal is to reduce the barrier to people to identify themselves as liaisons and get involved.
- Leehy acknowledges that there are concerns with continued CERT training but sees value in it. Stockford recommends the Lions program for training opportunities as a place to start.
- Leehy CERT history – CERT develops a network of residents to activate in response to an emergency. Came in handy for North Minneapolis tornado in 20XX. Minneapolis CERT had then disbanded but other trained citizen were able to assist. Currently tabled for Falcon Heights and would take effort to review and dig in to reigniting the program.
- King- sees value in CERT program and believes it would be a benefit to community members and the community itself. Consider grants and highlighting opportunities for training “Early Bird” bonuses (priority training) for those who would like to volunteer as neighborhood liaisons.
- King suggests revising and offering more reasons and why the program and the participants are important. Consider creating 3 documents including:
 - Informational 1 pager
 - Handbook
 - Detailed privacy standard
- Stockford – agrees the document is brief and uncomplicated. We
- Leighton – start with a recruitment flyer to sell people on the program and then send them this document
- Leehy – Liaison program built to create a network of neighborhood leaders and strengthen the sense of community. Would include a representative from Police and Fire to attend meetings.
- Stockford – consider explaining the liaison concept vs the block captain concept to generate visibility for the program.
- Stockford – take what we have today and edit so it does grab the attention of the reader in the first couple of sentences.
- King proposes a working session to finalize the document. Could be valuable to discuss with the other citizens. Leighton agrees.

- Leehy recommends that we come back next time with our suggestions and adjustments.
- Lindstrom - agrees - feels that there is value to collecting perspectives from other citizens.
- Van der Werff- at Spring Together have a CEC table focused on Liaison program.
- Stockford - suggests “gimmick” to encourage participation - King suggests neighborhood location map to show where people live - posterboard with info about the program. Leehy - give ice cream ticket and pin to place on map
- Possible questions to encourage participation and increase visibility of the neighborhood liaison program
 - A leader in my community
 - Our neighborhood communicates by...
 - How do you keep in touch with your neighbors?
 - How do you care for your neighbors?
- MOTION - King propose we meet in a separate working session for 2-3 hours to revise and finalize Neighborhood liaison program. The motion would be after the Spring Together event. 2nd Wang (May 20 6:30 PM)
 - Stockford suggests that the commissioners take time between now and the workshop to generate ideas
 - Stockford suggests that commission members communicate availability issues if 3 events in May (Park commission joint meeting, Spring Together and CEC meeting) is too much for anyone.
- New Business
 1. Apartment Outreach
 - Stockford - we are being asked to develop a schedule - he requests councilmembers share availability.
 - Ebbesen clarifies that these events are intended to include commission members and councilmembers to gather at the apartment complexes to connect with the renters and create a sense of community and find out what renters are looking for and what community services are available and how the city can support and welcome renters in the community.
 - Leehy - when she was on the CEC she would independently plan “block parties” for the apartments and connect with neighbors and apartment management. For senior complexes they would set up during other planned social gatherings. Find out with apartment facilities to see if there are community rooms or spaces we might be able to host something.
 - Leehy - suggests to wait for at least 1 quarter due to current activity with the police taskforce. Can only have two council members attend each event.

- Stockford – Would need to identify resources. Leehy – look at grants. Stockford – the commission will be tasked with planning and identifying dates and times, then go to council with the plan and start scheduling visits. Leehy – include City Administrator.
- King – suggest splitting the list of managers and commissioners each take a group of contacts from the list and reach out to plan/schedule events.
- Leehy – suggests everyone uses the same script –King suggested scripts, “Hi I’m {name} we are trying to connect with our apartment dwelling residents to:
 - Share information about city resources
 - Hear what questions you have for the city
 - Would like to include residents in city discussions and activities
 - Want to make apartment dwellers feel welcome here in Falcon Heights to create long term relationships
 - Leighton – the ask - Do you have space or existing meeting times that we can hold coordinate with city commissioner and councilmember, can we discuss a date/time we can schedule a time to meet.
 - Goal meeting times September
- King will draft a script and share with Van der Werff and commissioners can respond to Van der Werff individually.
- Stockford requests Leehy communicates to the council that we will be moving forward.

2. Spring Together

- Stockford – Discuss reaching out to the apartment buildings to communicate the event to rental properties. We can send pdf to current list of managers and they will send to pdf to residents – King – suggests adding ics file attachment for recipients to easily add to calendars
- Van der Werff- will have fliers, banner (at Curtiss Field), Lion’s sign (City Hall)
- King will post on Nextdoor app
- Leighton will post in Falcon Heights neighbor facebook page
- Cooley-Kistler suggests CTC (U of M student housing)
- Stockford – Schools will publish if we can promote volunteer opportunities to fulfill community involvement
- Van der Werff will send flier and calendar file to apartment managers
- Cooley-Kistler will include digital flier in the Grove newsletter
- King will deliver fliers to Falcon Heights businesses
- Stockford will look for the contact for the major apartment manager

H. INFORMATION/ANNOUNCEMENT

J. ADJOURNMENT: 8:21 PM

Motion to Adjourn Ebbesen, 2nd King

Next Regular Meeting is on Monday, May 6 at 6:30 PM

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Meeting Date	May 20, 2024
Agenda Item	E1
Attachment	Neighborhood Liaison Updated Handbook
Submitted By	Elke van der Werff, Administrative & Communications Coordinator

Item	Neighborhood Liaison
Description	<p>The goal of the Community Engagement Commission is to review and update the Neighborhood Liaison Handbook. The current online version was last revised on May, 2020.</p> <p>Based on recent discussions, staff created an updated Liaison Handbook using parts of the old handbook and suggestions from the commission.</p> <p>We did a gathering of data at the recent Spring Together event of how residents connect and interact with their neighbors these days. This data can be utilized to help update the liaison handbook.</p>
Budget Impact	N/A
Attachment(s)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Neighborhood Liaison Updated Handbook
Action(s) Requested	Review and suggest edits to the updated Liaison Handbook

Neighborhood Liaison Handbook

Community Engagement Commission

The Community Engagement Commission (CEC) advises the City Council on matters related to human needs, public awareness or local concerns, and human rights issues. It seeks ways that encourages all citizens to participate in the civic and social life of the Falcon Heights. The commission helps plan and facilitate Human Rights Day, the Ice Cream Social, and such other public events as may fulfill its mission.

In the course of its mission it will:

- Recruit and retain neighborhood liaisons
- Identify areas with no liaison and focus recruitment efforts there.
- Update and distribute a neighborhood liaison handbook
- Implement appropriate Neighborhood Liaison training
- Provide suggestions on how to best communicate with the residents to keep our neighborhoods connected with city government
- Act as a resource for neighborhood activities
- Recognize and work to include renters and apartment residents in Neighborhood Liaison Program plans and activities
- Provide regular reports to the City Council on the Neighborhood Liaison Program
- Attend Neighborhood Liaison training sessions.
- Plan, implement and evaluate city-wide events to promote community building.
- Begin including Falcon Heights businesses in community engagement efforts.
- Annually elect officers and review CEC's mission and goals progress, establish goals for the upcoming year, and report these to the City Council at their annual retreat

Community Engagement Commission Role in the Neighborhood Liaison Program:

The Community Engagement Commission (CEC) promotes opportunities for residents to be involved by endorsing and facilitating community outreach events. They will act as a human-bridge, defining ideas and activities that help to connect Falcon Heights City Council to the people they serve. The Commission will support the neighborhood Liaison Program and serve as a liaison between neighborhoods and the City Council. It will be the CEC's responsibility to refer concerns and recommendations that it receives from Neighborhoods through their Liaisons to the City Council for consideration.

What is a Neighborhood Liaison?

A Neighborhood Liaison is an extension to the Community Engagement Commission that formalizes a more localized outreach community engagement effort. They will provide a more familiar point of access to the assigned neighborhood community, while building and strengthening relationships. They will spend their time in the community talking with people, collecting suggested ideas, and forming relationships to keep the community connected.

Goals:

Curate relationships with neighbors to create safe spaces, safe streets and a welcoming community. Be a communication conduit between the city and your neighbors to help keep residents informed of important city updates and notify the city of concerns among a given neighborhood.

Connect individuals throughout the city that have already or are willing to develop a neighborhood network.

What does a Neighborhood Liaison do?

Help connect residents in your neighborhood by gathering and sharing contact information amongst neighbors.

Find ways to connect neighbors through gatherings of any size. These could include Night to Unite, block parties, cookie exchanges, happy hours, etc.

Receive and share regular updates from the city about upcoming city meetings and events, safety alerts and other news. If concerns or issues are raised in the neighborhood the Neighborhood Liaison can send information to the city.

Does it take a lot of work to be a Neighborhood Liaison?

Absolutely not! Many neighborhoods already have one or some people who already are connected on their blocks or neighborhood. We're want to connect with those individuals to be a point of contact for the city.

There may be occasions to gather liaisons to share concerns or success stories as a group but there will not be more than 3-4 voluntary meetings each year.

What kind of information is the city looking for?

The only contact information that the city will request is that of the individual(s) who volunteer to be connected with the city as a liaison. Any information gathered among neighbors will not be sent to the city, only shared with neighbors.

How will the city support the neighborhood liaisons?

The city will recommend communications, communication techniques and occasions to create neighborhood gatherings throughout the year. For some events the city may supply kits or supplies to help facilitate events.

Neighborhood Liaison Code of Ethics:

- Respect your neighbors
- Maintain a positive attitude and image
- Maintain local privacy of collected data
- Be a community builder