

**SOUTH SIDE TASK FORCE MEETING
THURSDAY, JANUARY 21, 2016
REGULAR MEETING 7:00 P.M. – 8:30 P.M.
FRIENDSHIP HOUSE
3123 8TH AVENUE SOUTH, BILLINGS, MONTANA**

AGENDA

Meeting Called to Order

Introduction and welcome of all guests
Minutes of the last meeting
Visit with local City Council members, Law Enforcement (Your questions.)

Presentations (on programs and issues in Our Neighborhood)

Connections (Outreach to the Community) – (20 minutes)
Friendship House New Youth Programs – (10 minutes)

Neighborhood Concerns

Treasurer's Report

Committee Reports

Correspondence

New Business

Review and Update of Task Force Goals

Old Business

Adjournment

**For Code Enforcement issues, call Tanya Punt at 657- 8288.
For Graffiti Removal, call John at 371-6901.
For Info on the Task Force, call Matt Lundgren, Chair, at 259-5569, Pastor
Dale Metzger, Vice Chair, at 2483978, Jim Ronquillo, Treasurer, at 252-5353
or Mary Westwood, Secretary, at 259-3756.**

Minutes of the Regular Meeting of
THE SOUTH SIDE NEIGHBORHOOD TASK FORCE

December 17, 2015

Friendship House, 3123 8th Avenue South, Billings, Montana

Present: Danny Ball, Fran Ball, Christi Beals, City Council Member Brent Cromley, Linda Deavila, Lisa Donnot, Dale Fincel, Julie Kehoe, Matt Lennick, The Reverend Matt Lundgren, Pastor Dale Metzger, Kallie Parsons, Jim Ronquillo, Paula Schilke, Denise Smith, Angela Tschacher, Mary Westwood, City Council Member Mike Yakawich, and Michele Zahn. (sic?)

The meeting was called to order by Chair Michele Zahn at 7:04 p.m. Introductions of all present were made and all attendees were welcomed. Treats were provided by Fran Ball and Friendship House.

Matt Lundgren moved for approval of the November minutes as amended and Dale Fincel seconded the motion. The minutes were approved as amended.

Officer Matt Lennick of the Billings Police Department gave a report on the work he and the other Downtown officer do to patrol Downtown, the North Side and the South Side. Members apprised him of problems around Guadalupe Church where some homeless people seem to be camping. He said he has talked with Matt Lowe and Father Jose about these issues. What he and Tony, the other Downtown officer do is work off a drinking, loitering and trespass list they have. The first time someone is caught trespassing, they are warned. The next time they are arrested. Where some problems have arisen is in the City Parks. Because they are areas open to the public, a person must trespass in them for 30 days before they can be arrested. Some people just leave for one day and then their time starts all over again. Camping is prohibited in the parks.

The area the officers patrol runs from 32nd Street to 19th Streets North and South and from Saint Vincent's Hospital to South Park. Lennick said one of the main problems is the availability of cheap liquor and, so far, the police have had no luck convincing South Side convenience store owners not to sell to impaired persons. He did suggest that citizen complaints to the Department of Revenue might result in a short suspension of the license to sell liquor, but he thought voluntary compliance was best. Lennick also urged people to share their ideas with him as he said he and his cohort really believe in community policing.

City Council Member Mike Yakawich said there has been a change in tagging with more gang-related graffiti popping up. Lundgren asked if the City could pass an ordinance not to sell spray paint to anyone under 18. The Council Members made note of that idea. Other members asked if Code Enforcement could be

reminded to visit the task forces at least once a year. Others voiced their support of the police bike patrol but wanted to hold them more accountable for their service to the South Side. City Council Member Brent Cromley concurred in this idea.

Kallie Parsons, the Volunteer Coordinator for the Billing Police Crime Prevention Center, talked about what happens at that facility. People there take reports on non-emergency police business. At this moment, that is about 9,000 reports a year. More volunteers are need in addition to the 65 that are active now. The Center is open from 9-5 Monday through Friday. The group discussed ideas for recruitment. The Center uses two marked vehicles and all volunteers are responsible for obtaining valid and accurate information.

Christi Beals, the Chief Development Officer for the Yellowstone Boys' and Girls' Ranch (YBGR), talked about the organizations facilities and programs. They work with some 110 kids at two locations who are with them about 18 months. The young people run from ages 4 to 18. In addition they work with about 900 in Billings through their school-based services program in some 30 schools. The idea is to keep kids in their communities. Most of the children they work with have serious emotional problems and YBGR does case management of the resources available to them and offers home support services. Over 350 people work for YBGR. They have been using Garfield School as a base here in Billings. Right now under their interim CEO, Kevin Miller, the organization is working on a strategic plan to see what will become of the South Side facility. Beals said the greenhouse they had brought in did not work out well for them and they would probably not do commercial gardening again.

Several members who had been to a Zoning Commission meeting at the Crane Building on the corner of First Avenue South and South 30th Street talked about Coldwell Banker's effort to change the zoning from Controlled Industrial to Central Business District so no parking would be required of St. Vincent de Paul if they purchased the building. Because of heavy opposition from the neighbors and the neighborhood, the zoning change request was withdrawn. St. Vincent had planned to move their offices to the structure and use it as a warming spot for transients. Jim Ronquillo moved that the Task Force send a letter opposing any zone change at this time until the Task Force and the public are fully informed about what thriving business will be occupying the structure. Fincel seconded the motion and it was approved unanimously.

A representative from Riverstone Health said Jennifer Staton of their facility will be doing a class on Healthy Lifesyle on Tuesdays from 5:30 to 6:30 p.m. Beginning January 26, 2016. Only people who do not have diabetes are admitted. Anyone interested, please call 651-6443.

The Home Center will be having an Open House on Tuesday, January 19th from 1-3 p.m. on rental education at the Billings Public Library Community Room. All are welcome to attend.

Zahn said Phillips 66 celebrated the 25th anniversary of their beautification project and discussed their influence on the City College process education program.

The Task Force got correspondence thanking them for their contribution to the Senior Center and informing them that The Magic City Blues Festival will not be returning to South Park, but will hold all their activities on Montana Avenue.

The group discussed applying for CDBG funds and settled on asking for funds to build the second bathroom in South Park near the new Spray Pad. Lundgren and Mary Westwood will work on this matter.

Denise Smith of the Montana Rescue Mission said the Voucher Room is open there for people needing assistance Thursday and Saturday from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. The same spot is used as a community center on Wednesdays, Fridays and Sundays.

The meeting adjourned at 8:35 p.m.

The next Regular Meeting of the Task Force will be held on THURSDAY JANUARY 21, 2016, at 7 P.M. at the Friendship House, 3123 8th Avenue South, Billings, Montana. Treats will be provided for all. So ask your friends and neighbors to join the South Side Neighborhood Task Force for some holiday cheer at our next meeting and help make Our Neighborhood the best part of Billings.

Respectfully Submitted,

Mary Westwood
Secretary

Come Celebrate Community 2016!

“Standing on the Shoulders!”



- MLK Jr. Service Day: 8a.m. to Noon at Friendship House on January 16th
- Dinner Saturday, January 16th at the Billings Food Bank beginning at 6:00 p.m.
- Interfaith Service: 3p.m. Grace United Methodist
- MLK Jr. March, Monday, January 18th from Courthouse Lawn to the NOVA Center beginning at 6:15-6:30 p.m.
- MLK Jr. Celebration Program, Monday, January 18th at the NOVA Center beginning at 7:00 p.m. **“A Musical!”**

Our programming begins with Service Day at Friendship House Jan. 16th. That evening, we will have a wonderful dinner and entertainment at the Food Bank Conference Room providing amazing dinner and entertainment for a donation of \$25. On Sunday, Jan. 17th there will be an Interfaith Program. Sunday January 17 at 3:00 PM-- Grace United Methodist Church--1935 Avenue B. On Monday, Jan. 18th MSU-B will celebrate the Bell Ringing with a special program at the MSU-Billings student activity center at 9:45a.m. On Monday night we will begin with a walk from the Courthouse Lawn at 6:15 p.m. to the main program at the NOVA Center at 2317 MT Ave. Beginning at 7:00 p.m., there will be musical entertainment & speakers.

A can and/or nonperishable food will be taken at any event for the Pryor, MT Senior Center. All Are Welcome!
All activities are open to the public.