

## Hilltop Action Coalition

Area-Wide Meeting – January 23, 2017

### Notes/Minutes

Brendan Nelson called the meeting to order at 6:02pm.

Board members present: Brendan Nelson, Ashley Sutton, William Towey, Jo Davies, Jennifer Schaal

#### Dean Jackson (Hilltop Urban Gardens)

- Dean: (253) 642-7336 [hilltopurbangardens@gmail.com](mailto:hilltopurbangardens@gmail.com)
- HUG's focus is food sovereignty and black gardening: connecting black communities to their agrarian roots, growing food IN the community FOR the community, inviting white folk to practice "ally-ship" and solidarity.
- She teaches workshops on the differences between food sovereignty, food justice and food charity.
- The urban farm network includes 11 sites around the Hilltop area; The 3.5 acre Alaska Street Reservoir adjacent to these sites is a prime location for extending farming operations and a farmer's market (currently zoned as a park but not accessible due to fencing).
- The main HUG site on 19<sup>th</sup> has a "HUG Grub" food sharing/exchange market every Saturday from June through September: food is offered for "sale" but not for cash, rather payment can be other services of value to the community. Cash donations are accepted. .
- Saturday volunteering at HUG starts in March with a half hour lesson on the day's project at 9:30am, and then volunteer work in the garden goes until 1:00pm.
- Under construction now is a Black Lives Matter memorial that will be at the entrance to the garden on 19<sup>th</sup>.
- A conference for Black Farmers of the Pacific Northwest is coming up between mid-October and mid-November this year - to be held in Tacoma.
- HUG is hiring! ...an Urban Farm Manager.

#### Mike Yoder (Associated Ministries)

- The Hilltop Action Coalition originated from Associated Ministries; they are 48 years old and have fostered many other community service organizations as well as HAC.
- Associated Ministries has the contract with Pierce County to manage the Pierce County Coordinated Entry Program for homelessness, which is the primary homelessness program in the county. Contact number is (253) 682-3401. They will be briefing detailed information about their new approach at Bethlehem Baptist Church in East Tacoma tomorrow night, January 24<sup>th</sup> at 6:00pm.
- Associated Ministries saved 500 people from house foreclosures last year.
- Associated Ministries had 14,000 requests for assistance in 2016; 3800 met the federal definition of homelessness, which is that applicants slept the previous night in

a location unfit/unsafe for human habitation. Of the 3800, 600 were housed. Federal algorithms determine the prioritization of who gets housing first. Before housing, Associated Ministries explores every creative solution they can for the applicants to self-resolve by rejoining family, moving in with friends, etc., and 30-40% of applicants do this.

- 78% of the 2016 applicants listed their last known residence as being in Pierce County.
- Associated Ministries has a free tax service for residents who make less than \$58,000/year; this service enables many homeless residents to receive tax refunds they would not otherwise have the resources to get.
- The annual national count of homeless populations is occurring this week.
- There are 13 homeless centers in Pierce County; 11 of them are in Tacoma.
- There are virtually no resources for homeless youth; applicants must be 18 years of age to qualify for the shelter program at Beacon

#### Lt Standifer (Tacoma PD)

- Lt Standifer is responsible for the Hilltop, the Tideflats, and NE Tacoma.
- The TPD is focused on gang activity; they had many successful search warrants in 2016 and have more planned for 2017.
- Paul Post, owner of many properties on the Hilltop, is starting to work more closely with TPD Community Liaison Officers (CLOS).

#### Marki Schillinger (Dept of Corrections)

- Community Corrections Division (CCD) works with TPD, Child Protective Services (CPS), chemical dependency programs, and others.
- CCD will be back at the next HAC Area-Wide Meeting with a presentation.

Next Area-Wide Meeting: Monday, February 27th

Brendan adjourned the meeting at 7:30pm.

Submitted by Jenifer Schaal, January 23, 2017. revised 1/30/2017