



The meeting was called to order by the association president Mike Adjemian at 6:05 PM. Our first speaker was Mark Weber, Neighborhood Services Coordinator. He told us that he oversees the Commerce and Human Development Departments; Business and Finance Departments; Housing Programs, including rehabilitation of houses and building affordable housing neighborhoods. He manages a Retirement Volunteer Program which connects retirees with opportunities to volunteer. One of their responsibilities is mentoring young people who are in the criminal justice system. Another program is the RSVP program which welcomes people to the VA hospital. Retired volunteers also are trained to be foster grandparents.

People who are recruited for the projects he oversees must have had experience working with an entity like AmeriCorps or Vista. Young people are sought, and even though they can step into the job market it is difficult to fill positions. He also oversees Military Affairs and Sustainability.

He has been with the Neighborhood Service Counsel for eleven years. In 2006 he was recruited to begin the program whose primary task is to register, start, and support neighborhood associations. The city needed to ensure that neighborhoods were aware of proposals that impacted their immediate neighborhoods. However, there was no way to communicate beyond immediate neighbors. The solution was the formation of neighborhood associations which could spread the word in the neighborhood and have meetings which would facilitate an exchange of ideas and plans.

The city arranged for guest speakers and workshops to inform communities about funds allotted to them for community development. City Council designated funds for projects, but the communities needed to decide how to use these funds. Today City Council has set aside money for larger projects under the Neighborhood Improvement Program. Any project that will improve city property can be considered, such as: traffic calming, street lighting, playgrounds, park fencing, and exercise equipment. We must share the wealth with other neighborhoods. One project under consideration is lighting for Ponder Park. Our city representatives will use community input to decide how the funds are used.

El Paso City Council sponsors a Leadership Academy which lasts twenty weeks. Every city department which provides services to the public presents an overview of their services. The attendees will learn what each department's responsibilities are and what the city spends for each of the services provided. The early leadership training morphed into advanced leadership training when the Dale Carnegie Institute was brought here to train the attendees.

Mark Weber told us that our Cielo Vista Neighborhood Association is twelve years old and is one of the oldest and most effective in the city. At the close of his talk Mark was given an engraved glass plaque and a CVNA shirt.

Cassandra Brown began her report by congratulating Mike Adjemian for the excellent job he did representing El Paso at a Denver meeting. She gave us a detailed hand-out concerning ongoing or completed projects in the city.



She expects all Certificates of Obligation (COO) to be completed by 2020. Every dollar has already been allocated, but there are many streets which need attention and could not be covered by the present COO. We must address the fact that there are still 6000 street repairs that are needed but cannot be covered by the latest COO as those funds are spent or dedicated.

An increase of \$3 to \$4 in our water bill has been proposed as a way to complete the needed street repairs. The city projects that 50 to 60 streets a year will need to be repaired. A fee attached to the water bill will ensure that every El Paso resident will help finance repairs to the roads that every resident uses. The proposed fee would be dedicated in its entirety to roads. Our city needs to communicate exactly how funds raised are disbursed. For example, how is the water bill environmental services fee used? We have postponed improvements for so long that the cost will be higher than expected. Some funds are diverted from their original allocation.

We have many problems with water. There is no way to manage all of the water resulting in ponding, destructive run off, and flooding. Postponing required improvements leads to increased costs. Our city was poorly planned; now we must rectify that and be certain future projects are well planned and thought out. A master plan for development may call for 40% open space. Some will protest and want less open space, others want more. Land usage will be debated. The city must enforce smart development.

Eileen Lozano from The Fountains explained that it is designed to be a life style mall. There will be sixty-three restaurants, including Chicos. They have a Music on the Lawn series at 7:30 PM through the end of August that welcomes children and dogs and presents local talent. They will have movies on the lawn in September. Plans include vendors at all events, Yoga on the Lawn, holiday music Nov. 25th through Dec. 25th, high school bands playing, and Art a la Cart. The Fountains management is addressing the lack of sidewalks and accidents; reminds us that there is a lot of garage parking space; is trying to get a Cheesecake Factory; has information on its website; and is working on the traffic problem.

Cesar Blanco explained that the Texas Legislature convenes every other year but in the interim the state business is addressed. Our elected officials are working on cyber security, Hurricane Harvey destruction and lessons learned, finance, identity theft, utilities, elections, water, government and corporate espionage, and cyber security. The Speaker of the House wants to find ways to thwart cyber hacking.

Hurricane Harvey had a major impact on parts of the state with 120 deaths, 32,000 citizens displaced, and recovery is estimated to cost 190 billion dollars. The state has been searching for ways to mitigate the damage caused by hurricanes but so far there are no solutions.

Guns in schools is a big issue. Some suggested solutions are strengthening campuses to make entry more difficult, promoting awareness of the safe storage of guns, developing protocols for behavior during an active shooter incident, and having more trained and armed people in the schools. This raises the question of how police responders can tell the difference between an active shooter and an armed teacher. The governor will receive suggestions when the legislature reconvenes.



CIELO VISTA NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION

Meeting Minutes – July 12, 2018

Every year we select a school that is at or below the poverty level and donate back packs for the entire student body. This year Hawkins was selected.

Some concerns voiced include: imports from China exceed exports; Mexico's elections could have an effect in Texas; tariff increases will impact all of us; many people fear opening their door because of immigration problems; we are overtaxed because many people avoid being counted in the census; we are partnering with St. Paul's food bank; we are part of Burges Boosters and need fund raising ideas; need help at food booth during home games; we need to watch for vandalism and report any observed to the police; and, we need two teams for the Crime Stoppers bowling tournament to raise money.