



**AFRICAN AMERICAN RESOURCE ADVISORY COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES
Wednesday, February 1, 2012**

COMMISSION MEMBERS PRESENT:

Dr. Chiquita Eugene, Chair
Sherry Cherry
Wayne Cook
Clifford Gillard

Daryl Horton
Nelson Linder, Co-Chair
Greg Smith

STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT:

Jason Alexander
Joe Barnes
Sherryl DeCampo

Melodye Foust
Shannon Jones
Dusty McCormick

CALL TO ORDER—5:30 P.M.

The meeting was called to order at 5:35pm by Commissioner Eugene.

1. CITIZEN COMMUNICATION

Mr. Kenneth Cotton addressed the Commission on the lack of plans for commuter rail to serve the population of East Austin, Manor and Elgin. Mr. Cotton stated that this was a request for fairness and equity in determining the location of future rail lines.

Ms. Regina Thomas addressed the Commission to state that she has been a resident of East Austin since 1979 and currently maintains her artist studio there as well. She is interested in being a part of the community and helping it grow.

Mr. Gavian Barajas addressed the Commission to state that he is interested in bringing good things to East Austin.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM THE JANUARY 11, 2012 REGULAR MEETING.

The minutes stand as presented.

3. OLD BUSINESS:

a. Report from Working Group on photographs requested by artist for African American Cultural & Heritage Facility

Commissioner Eugene provided a report from the Working Group stating that the list was not complete, but would be complete by the March meeting. Carrie Brown, Art in Public Places staff, will be at the March meeting to present the final selection.

b. Reports from Commissioners on attending other Boards' and Commissions' meetings

Commissioner Linder has been a member of the Charter Revision Committee which will be finalizing their recommendations to Council at a meeting at City Hall on February 2, 2012 at 6:30pm.

4. NEW BUSINESS:

- a. Presentation on East End Relay Festival to coincide with Texas Relays (DJ Jones, Reggie Thomas, Ronnie Walker, Gavian Barajas, and Marlon Tane)**

Without objection this item was pulled from the agenda.

- b. Presentation on work with African American health and mental health issues (Rev. Joseph Collins)**

Rev. Collins has been working to get ministers more involved with African American mental health and health-related issues. He presented data showing that African Americans are leading in 10 of the 15 top categories in causes of death. The data also showed a lack of qualified African American physicians, lower quality of care and hesitation to seek treatment for mental health issues. Rev. Collins also stated that it would help to have mental health centers in the community, especially in the "hot spots".

- c. Presentation by HHSD on their efforts to mitigate health-related issues at the intersection of E. 12th Street & Chicon (Shannon Jones, Health & Human Services Dept)**

Mr. Jones stated that there has been a large difference in the rates of death for African Americans as compared to Whites and Hispanics, showing that the percentages have historically been much higher for African Americans. He then showed new statistics that reveal the efforts made by the Health & Human Services Dept are reducing those rates of death for African Americans. Mr. Jones stated that a clinic in this neighborhood would be helpful as people with mental illness would not travel to get treatment when they are most in need. He also stated that it would be helpful to work with area business owners to help them learn how to cope with the mentally ill.

A Working Group was formed to develop some recommendations to City Council on providing assistance in dealing with mental health issues of African Americans. This group will consist of Commissioners Linder, Cherry and Cook. They will report back to the Commission in March.

- d. Set agenda items for future meetings, including non-substantive housekeeping matters (such as meeting dates, potential topics, and information and research requests for staff)**

The March agenda will include reports from the Working Group for selection of photographs for the African American Cultural Heritage Facility and the Working Group formed to develop recommendations on assistance in dealing with mental health issues, and a report from HHSD on their programs for the homeless and the demographics they serve.

5. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 7:25pm.