



# OFFICE OF THE CITY CLERK

DAWN M. JONES, CITY CLERK

## MEMORANDUM

**TO:** MEMBERS OF THE COMMON COUNCIL  
**FROM:** DAWN M. JONES, CITY CLERK  
**DATE:** TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 7, 2023  
**SUBJECT:** RESIDENTIAL NEIGHBORHOODS COMMITTEE ORGANIZATIONAL MEETING NOTICE

## NOTICE

The following Common Council Committee Meeting has been scheduled for **Wednesday, February 8, 2023 at 4:00 p.m.** in the **Informal Conference Room** on the **4<sup>th</sup> floor** of the **County-City Building, 227 W. Jefferson Blvd., South Bend, IN 46601.** The Committee meeting will be legally held as a hybrid meeting with the Microsoft Teams Meeting app. The **Conference Room is open to the public.** Members of the public have the option to attend the meeting in person or may access the meeting virtually by the following link: <https://tinyurl.com/RNC02082023>

**4:00-5:00 P.M.**

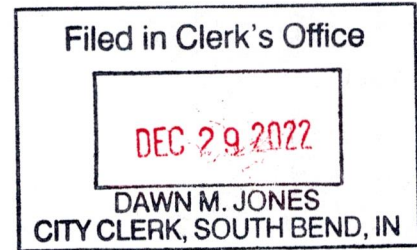
**Residential Neighborhoods**

**Karen L. White, Committee Chair**

### *Agenda*

- I. Call to Order*
- II. Roll Call*
- III. Review of the 2022 Committee Report*
- IV. Goals and Objectives for 2023*
- V. What Should be the Committee's Priorities?*
- VI. Update on the South Bend 2045 Plan*
- VII. Adjournment*

cc: Mayor James Mueller  
Committee Meeting List  
Media



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### South Bend Common Council

227 W, Jefferson Blvd. Room 441 - County-City Building, South Bend, IN 46601

**To:** South Bend Common Council & Office of the City Clerk  
**From:** Councilmember Karen L. White, Chair Residential Neighborhoods Committee  
**Date:** December 29, 2022  
**Re:** 2022 Residential Neighborhoods Committee Report

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#### 2022 Annual Report of the Residential Neighborhoods Committee

##### Introductory Summary:

Neighborhoods are the fundamental building blocks for the identity, development, and livability of a great city. They are more than simply residential areas. They also derive their value and uniqueness from the community and nonresidential uses that support them and that they support, how people experience the places within them, and the way they are physically and culturally integrated within the larger city. **(Source: Plan COS Colorado Springs)**

The Residential Neighborhoods Committee is one of the 11 standing committees of the South Bend Common Council.

##### The Committee's Duties and Responsibilities:

Oversee the various activities related to neighborhood development and enhancement.

##### Committee Members were:

Councilwoman Karen L., White, Chair  
Councilman Canneth Lee, Vice Chair  
Councilman Henry Davis, Jr. Member  
Councilwoman, Shelia Niezgodski, Member  
Amika Micou, Citizen Member

I am pleased to file the 2022 Annual Committee Report pursuant to section 2-10 (I) of the South Bend Municipal Code. The report reflects an overview of the key activities and accomplishments for 2022. The committee has much to be proud of, however much remains.

### **2022 Organizational Meeting – January 26, 2022:**

The Residential Neighborhoods Committee held its organizational meeting on January 26, 2022. Prior to creating an agenda for the meeting, all committee members were contacted regarding the meeting date, goals, areas of concern, and other related issues before the meeting. The agenda reflected below are the goals/objectives that the committee identified for 2022.

- Status Report to the Community – 2019 Neighborhoods Committee Meetings  
Due to the Pandemic, the report was delayed until 2022
- Review of the Quality-of-Life Ordinances
- Neighborhoods Educational Forums
- Not In our Community Committee
- Youth Advisory Council
- Affordable Housing
- Neighborhood development/plans for the Second, Third, Fifth, and Sixth districts (including parks, and economic development)

### **Committee Meetings and Updates from City Offices**

The Residential Neighborhoods Committee held eight (8) council committee meetings and five (5) standing committee meetings. As Committee Chair, I have attended five (5) districts' neighborhood meetings on numerous occasions either in-person or virtual. This allows the chair to meet various citizens and engage with them as well.

The Residential Neighborhoods also had 4 joint council committee meetings with Health and Public Safety and one (1) standing joint committee meeting with Health and Public Safety.

In addition, four updates were presented to the full council.

The topics were:

- Update from Mr. Caleb Bauer, Director of Community Investment, Current Housing Plans and Status
- Jim Williams, President & CEO Habitat for Humanity of St. Joseph County – Housing Opportunities
- Leah Thill, Senior Environmental Planner, MACOG, Mr. Mark Espich, Environmental Health Director, St. Joseph County Department of Health, and Chris Dressel shared with the council environmental concerns in specific areas.
- South Bend 2045 Planning Process Lawrence Greenspun, Director of Public Sector Engagement, Drucker Institute.

I am extremely pleased as to how the City, County, Health Department, Community Investment Department, the Mayor, leadership from the County, and Common Council have worked collaboratively in response to environmental challenges.

This illustrates that by working together much can be accomplished.

### **South Bend Common Council, Youth Advisory Council**

The South Bend Common Council recognized the importance of creating a structure for youth to provide input and become involved in the civic process. Similarly, city government can directly benefit from the input of the youth by encouraging and engaging in positive youth involvement.

Therefore, in 2003, the South Bend Common Council passed an ordinance that created the Youth Council. The Youth Council was highly active for a number of years and positively impacted our city. In fact, a number of students are working in various professional areas within our city such as law, television, education, and non-profit organizations.

We welcomed the opportunity to partner with the Neighborhood Resources Center (NRC) and the City of South Bend. On August 26, 2019, the Common Council unanimously passed an ordinance amending chapter 2, article 1 of the South Bend Municipal Code by the inclusion of a new division entitled Youth Advisory Council. Sections of the ordinance supported NRC and the Common Council's commitment to work collaboratively to ensure we are rebuilding the base of our local democracy through civic leadership education for our youth.

Unfortunately, we revised our project timeline due to the COVID-19 virus. Several events had been planned, for example, the policy-making process of an ordinance, a bus tour of the city's neighborhoods, and a community service project just to name a few.

In 2021 the Youth Advisor reconvened with **eleven (11) students** from the area high schools sworn in on **Monday, December 13, 2021**. Four of the students graduated from high school in the spring 2021 and all are attending college. The Council amended the ordinances in **July of 2022** to include students who attend other high schools, besides South Bend Community School, and who live in the city as eligible to apply to be on the Youth Council Advisory. The calendar of events/activities is attached.

The recruitment for 2022 students began with an open house on **Wednesday, October 12, 2022**, where parents, students, and others were extended an invitation to attend an informational event to learn more about the Youth Advisory Council. The responses were incredibly positive, resulting in onsite visits at the local high schools in October and the early part of November. It's amazing how students and parents welcome the opportunity to become a member of the Youth Advisory Council. Twenty-one students were selected and sworn in on **Monday, December 12, 2022**, as members of the 2022 Youth Advisory Council. This is the highest number of students since the inception of the Youth Advisory Council.

### **Not in our Community Initiative**

Not in Our Community Initiative had made tremendous strides in addressing synthetic drugs in our community and their overall impact. Unfortunately, the pandemic disrupted our efforts. It was also apparent that a number of businesses have resumed unfavorable practices in our community.

The Committee was reconvened on March 13, 2022, and monthly meetings were scheduled for the third Thursday of each month. Extensive outreach was focused on various businesses in our community. Similarly, personal letters were mailed, and in-person contacts also were conducted.

Communication focused on the importance of meeting and working together to rid our city of these illegal and potentially lethal substances.

One of the outcomes of the monthly meetings resulted in a strategic plan of action in reference to how the community would move forth. On Wednesday, July 13, 2022, a press conference was held along with site visits by committee members, law enforcement, the health department, other agencies, and several businesses.

A follow-up in-person meeting (closed to the media) was held on July 21, 2022, and all business owners were invited, a small number of them responded.

### **Quality of Life Ordinances Review**

For many years, the Council has referred to other ordinances that were passed, as Quality of life Ordinances. These ordinances were passed with enforcement provisions to ensure our residents and businesses comply with the law. However, over the years it become apparent that without effective enforcement provisions we had to rely on voluntary compliance.

In addition, the Quality-of-Life Ordinances varied in how they are described and their purposes.

For example:

1. This is one definition. Unlike crimes of violence against an individual or group, these are laws for violations that can negatively impact, among other things, the appearance of our neighborhoods, quality of life in our neighborhoods, and property values, especially.
2. Another definition, "the purpose of Quality-of-Life (QOL) Ordinance is to promote the health, safety, and general welfare of the Municipality by helping to create a clean environment for the residents."

March 18, 2022, the committee held a meeting to begin discussing the Quality-of-Life Ordinances. The Committee Chair meets with the former and current Directors of Community Investment, Chief Head of Neighborhoods, and staff members to begin discussions regarding the "Quality-of- Life" Ordinances review process, and goals/objectives.

In response to the number of citizens' concerns and feedback from committee members, it was agreed upon that the Illegal Dumping Ordinance would be reviewed first. The questions that we will need to address and gather data on whether they are effective, how they are properly staffed and funded, and whether they should be amended.

In 2023, the process, evaluation measures, and review of best practices will be commenced. In addition, the current processes and procedures will also be reviewed.

### **Recommendations**

1. **Community Engagement** – There is a need to create processes that will provide the opportunity for citizens to take part in the conversation, learn, and work with others, not just provide input. They are an extension of our efforts and should take part as collaborative problem solvers. Civic engagement creates and maintains a community that is educated, aware, motivated, engaged,

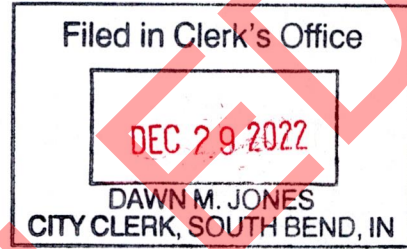
and fulfilled. One of the 2022 goals for the committee was not accomplished in terms of creating community education forms for our citizens. This will be a top priority for 2023.

2. As portions of Chapter 2 have been revised, the need to update the standing committee's roles and responsibilities should be reviewed. The word "oversee" is referred to in another of the standing committee's descriptions. What does it mean? and how is it interpreted?
3. The Residential Neighborhoods Committee should collaborate with various offices within Community Investment that directly impact our neighborhoods. This will enhance communication and transparency.

Respectfully Submitted,



Karen L. White  
At Large Council Member  
Residential Neighborhoods Committee, Chairperson



CANCELLED