



**Guests**

Harris County Judge Ed Emmett  
Kent Clingerman, Harris County Precinct 4  
Rhonda Sauter, Citizens Assistance Office, DON  
Veronica Hernandez, Citizens Assistance Office, DON  
Myra Hypolite, Department of Neighborhoods  
Karen Haller, Staff for CM David Robinson  
Gloria Alvarez, Staff for CM Robert Gallegos  
Patrick Walsh, Director, Planning & Development  
Alyce Coffey, Public Works Dept.  
Stana Juarez, Public Works Dept.  
Sheryl C. Taylor, State Representative Shawn Thierry's Office  
Sylvester Reeder, SW Houston 2000  
Cynthia Nelly, Residents Against Flooding

**Super Neighborhood Representatives (cont.)**

Philip Salerno, SNC 05  
Julie Grothes, SNC 05  
Ed Browne, SNC 10  
Christina Walsh, SNC 10  
Mark Klein, SNC 12  
Pedro Ayarzagoitia, SNC 15  
Greg Sergesketter, SNC 16  
Doug Parrish, SNC 17

**Super Neighborhood Representatives (cont.)**

Michael Huffmaster, Chairman, SNC 18  
Jane Cahill West, SNC 22  
Mike Van Dusen, SNC 22  
James Von Suskil, SNC 22  
Margaret Poissant, SNC 22  
Lyn Stern, SNC 22  
Sherry Weesner, SNC 24  
Doug Smith, SNC 25  
Sandra Rodriguez, SNC 27  
Pablo Szub, SNC 27  
Lenny Williams, SNC 30  
Kate Brusegaard, SNC 31  
Lynae Novominsky, SNC 31 (wk) and 36 (hm)  
John Nienhuser, SNC 32  
Marcy Williams, SNC 36  
Cindy Chapman, SNC 37  
Ray Washington, SNC 39-40  
Stan Sarman, SNC 43  
Kathy Blueford-Daniels, Vice-Chairwoman, SNC 55  
Bridgette Murray, SNC 57  
Jim Honey, SNC 62  
Thomas Wang, SNC 62  
Sandra Stevens, SNC 66  
Kathleen O'Reilly, SNC 66  
L.E. Chamberlain, SNC 71-72  
Tracy Stephens, SNC 71 and 76  
Tomaro Bell, SNC 83

**I. Introductions and Approval of Minutes from January 9, 2016 Meeting:**

Motion to approve the Minutes from the January 9, 2016, meeting made by Marcy Williams meeting, seconded by John Nienhuser, **carried** unanimously.

**II. Recognition of 2017 Officers**

Chairman: Michael Huffmaster, Vice-Chair: Kathy Blueford-Daniels.

**III. Harris County Judge Ed Emmett's Presentation**

Judge Emmett began his remarks by stating that counties have no ordinance-making ability; only cities do. The City of Houston long ago annexed highways putting all of Harris County in the city's ETJ (extra-territorial jurisdiction). The county's primary source of revenue to pay for infrastructure is property tax. The Harris County Toll Road Authority uses tolls to build and maintain toll roads that cost \$2M a day to build what we have and expanded as needed. One such need is to double the bridge over the ship channel to move freight out of the port. The county toll roads will never be paid off. Judge Emmett stated that top issues for his administration include the following:

- (1) Mental Health: The Harris County Jail is the largest mental health facility in town and that needs to change.
- (2) Astrodome: Judge Emmett said that Senator John Whitmire and Representative Paul Bettencourt were about to introduce a bill to require an election before any more money could be spent on plans to repurpose the Astrodome. The idea to develop a hotel there was in place before he took office. The people planning to transform the Astrodome into a hotel had no experience and no money so that plan did not come to fruition. Since then the Astrodome has been declared unfit for human occupation. The rodeo needs a new arena but until the future of the Astrodome is settled, the county cannot go to the voters with a bond initiative for a new rodeo arena. A complicating factor is the county's contractual obligation to maintain NRG Stadium in good condition compared to other stadiums that are five years older and younger. The county doesn't have sufficient funds to maintain NRG Stadium at that level of condition. Cynthia Neely and others applied to the state to designate the Astrodome as a state landmark. Harris County did not object to the designation, and the Astrodome is now a Texas Antiquities Landmark.

There is now a \$105M proposal to repurpose the Astrodome by raising the floor which is now below ground, to ground level and creating parking underneath

(3) Questions and Answers

Removing Vehicles from Bayous. The judge was asked about the project to extract vehicles from the bayous. He said that \$200k had been allocated for that purpose and spent. He said that is a good project, but he's not sure when it will be resumed.

Flooding and Drainage. Judge Emmett was asked if the city's investment in drainage is helping or hurting by taking more water to the bayous faster. He responded that some feared drainage improvements made in the Medical Center would cause flooding in the McGregor Park area, but that area has not flooded while Meyerland has flooded. He said the city and the county need to work together to address flooding and drainage. He said that he and Stephen Costello have identified a state funds, i.e., approximately \$300M that the city can borrow from the Texas Water Development Board, and lend to the Harris County Flood Control District to carry out projects on three bayous, Brays, Hunting, and Greens, and then seek reimbursement from the federal government.

Judge Emmet was asked about TxDOT's project on Highway 288 which is causing flooding in and around the highway; i.e., can Harris County tell the TxDOT not to exacerbate area flooding? He responded that the county cannot tell the State of Texas of what to do. He acknowledged however, that the recent flooding on Highway 288 has new and is being studied.

Judge Emmett was asked how he thinks the city and the county can and should address the detention deficit caused by long standing development practices? In other words, how can existing policies be changed to improve the flood and drainage situation? Judge Emmett responded that Russ Poppe, the new head of the Harris County Flood Control District is really the person to respond that these questions. However, he, thinks that one size does not fit all, and that development policies may need to be tailored watersheds/ For example, the City of Houston recently upgraded Clay Road, but did not add enough detention.

Mental Health and Homelessness: Judge Emmett was asked to state his perspective on addressing the apparent increase in the population of homeless people in our area and the intersection of mental health issues and homelessness. He responded that virtually every family has been touched by mental health issues. He said that over 8,000 people have been arrested more than five times in the past two years. “Frequent flyers” such as these often suffer from mental health issues; they and the county could possibly benefit from a diversion program for addressing their needs in a less costly way than possible through the jail. Harris County has only 225 mental health beds; far too few for a county of this size.

State Government. Judge Emmett was asked why, as a fellow republican, he hasn’t worked within his own party and spoken out about the amount of power concentrated in the office of the lieutenant governor. He responded that he and the lieutenant governor are from different branches of the republican party, and emphasized the need for citizens to participate in the election process; not just the general election but also the primary elections. He said in Texas the primaries are often where elections are decided.

**IV. New Business:**

**A. City of Houston and other advisory committee appointments.**

<b>Advisory Committee</b>	<b>Primary Representative</b>	<b>Alternate Representative</b>
Complete Communities	Kathy Blueford-Daniels	Tomaro Bell
Chapter 42 - Platting Standards	Michael Huffmaster	Jane Cahill West
Walkable Places	Jane Cahill West	Michael Huffmaster
AARP Age Friendly Community	Ivory Mayhorn	Jane Cahill West
Plan Downtown	Jane Cahill West	Michael Huffmaster
Housing Initiative	Ivory Mayhorn	Tomaro Bell
Houston Coalition for Complete Streets	Michael Huffmaster	Steve Ashy

Jane West moved and Stan Sarman seconded motion to approved recommendations for SNA representatives to various City of Houston and other advisory committees as shown in the table above; the motion was approved unanimously.

**B. Create a City Finance and Budget Oversight Committee to be chaired by Tomaro Bell.**

Kathy Blueford-Daniels moved and Stan Sarman seconded motion to create a City Finance and Budget Oversight Committee to be chaired by Tomaro Bell; the motion was approved unanimously.

**C. Discussion of Survey and Preparation of SNA’s 2017 Annual Report.**

Discussion of the history of how previous mayors have handled Super Neighborhood Action Plan (SNAP). Rhonda Sauter stated that the Turner administration has yet to determine how it will handle SNAPs. No action taken.

**V. Old Business and Committee Reports**

**A. Liveability (Transportation and Parks; Steve Ashy)**

**No report.**

## **B. Infrastructure (Flooding and Drainage, Mark Klein)**

Chairman Huffmaster reported that Mark Klein has agreed to chair this committee.

### **1. Report and consideration of revisions to Flooding and Drainage Top Ten List**

Mark Klein moved and Tomaro Bell seconded motion to approve the Flooding and Drainage Priority List for 2017 attached hereto. Discussion followed.

Greg Sergesketter moved to defer consideration of the priority list for one month. Sherry Weesner seconded the motion. Discussion followed.

Tomaro Bell moved and Kathy Blueford-Daniels seconded motion to call the vote on the motion to defer which was approved by a majority vote.

Chairman Huffmaster called for the vote on the motion to defer consideration of the Flooding and Drainage Priority List for 2017 made by Greg Sergesketter and seconded by Sherry Weesner. The motion failed.

Discussion ensued on the main motion to approve the Flooding and Drainage Priority List for 2017 attached hereto; the motion was approved by majority vote..

### **2. Report and consideration of Petition to End Houston Flooding**

Ed Brown presented the Petition to End Houston Flooding. Mark Klein moved and John Nienhuser seconded motion for the SNA to sign the petition. Discussion followed. Following requests from the floor for changes to the officials to whom the petition is addressed, Chairman Huffmaster tabled the issue.

## **C. Growth and Economic Development (Ivory Mayhorn)**

No report.

## **D. Health and Public Safety (Tomaro Bell)**

No report.

## **E. Transitions and Regulatory Affairs (Jane West)**

Jane West reported that the Houston Bicycle Master Plan had been presented to City Council's Transportation Technology and Infrastructure Committee in the morning and was expected to be brought forward for a vote by City Council within the month.

## **V. Announcements and Open Comments**

Lynae Novominsky asked anyone wanting additional information about the Petition to End Houston Flooding to contact her. Ms. Novominsky may be contacted at [Lnovominsky@JFSHouston.org](mailto:Lnovominsky@JFSHouston.org).

Tomaro Bell announced that each of the SNA's standing committees as well as committees for Housing the Homeless and City Finances and Budget Oversight are seeking members and encouraged all meeting attendees to use the sign-up sheets available on the table next to the door to volunteer to serve on a committee. The sign-up sheets were signed as follows:

Livability (Parks and Transportation): Philip Salerno, Bridgette Murray, Christina Walsh, Jim Von Suskil, and Kate Brusegaard.

Infrastructure (Flooding and Drainage): Meg Poissant, Cindy Chapman, Jim Honey.

Housing the Homeless: Thomas Wang.

City Finances and Budget Oversight: Thomas Wang.

## **VI. Adjournment: 8:15 p.m.**

Motion to adjourn made by Sherry Weesner and seconded by Kathy Blueford-Daniels was unanimously approved at 8:15 p.m.