

Topeka Youth Commission Meeting Minutes
Monday, April 22, 2019
Greater Topeka Partnership Board Room
6pm-8pm

Commissioners in Attendance: Eva Noble, Isabel Hernandez, Kristen Hines, Makenna Orton, Jacob Gernon, Bryce Liedtke, Lillian Holmberg, Thorne Osborne, Forrest Brungardt, Karla Navarrete, Irene Caracioni, Christian Robinson, Aden Shute, Aditi Malay, and Nicole Bloomquist

Commissioners Absent: Perla Soto, Joseph Phillips, Ashten Corber, LiliAnna Lucio, Oscar Retana, Cally Anderson, Cleo Foster, and Vanessa Riaz

Advisors: Carolyn Ward and Lindsay Lebhan

Guests: Jensen Simons (GTP), Glenda DuBoise, Glenda Washington, Greg Schwerdt, Thomas Underwood, Angel Zimmerman, BriJoRae Pusch-Zuniga and Ty Pusch-Zuniga

Agenda Item	Discussion	Action/Follow Up
I. Welcome & Introductions		Bryce Liedtke called the meeting to order at 6:02pm.
II. Approval of Minutes	Bryce Liedtke asked if there were any corrections to the minutes of the March 25, 2019 meeting. No corrections were offered.	Nicole Bloomquist moved to approve the minutes as submitted. The motion was seconded by Jacob Gernon. The body votes. All approved. The motion carried approving the March 25, 2019 meeting minutes.
III. Ice Breaker	Nicole Bloomquist led the group in a round of "Two Truths and a Lie"	
IV. Panel discussion Thomas Underwood PhD, Executive Director of North Topeka Arts District	Glenda DuBoise directs the commission to watch a video about Topeka and Momentum 2022 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Glenda DuBoise explains that Heartland Visioning helped start the conversation on how to improve/revitalize Topeka and helped lead to Momentum 2022 	For more information or to get involved in NOTO, contact: nototopekakansas@gmail.com

(NOTO)
Greg Schwerdt,
Riverfront Authority
Glenda DuBoise,
Community
Engagement
Coordinator,
Heartland Visioning

- Mayor Michelle De La Isla, Keith Warta, and County Commissioner Kevin Cook were involved in implementation of this idea
- Survey results from Momentum 2022 given to citizens of Topeka showed areas that could be improved are:
 - Develop Homegrown Talent
 - Led to creation of East Topeka Learning Center, Talent Pipeline, etc.
 - Create vibrant and attractive places
 - Optimize tools and programs to improve quality of place, etc
 - Grow a Diverse Economy
 - Create entrepreneurial opportunities, etc
 - Promote Positive image
 - Both for residents and outside talent
 - Collaborate for a strong community
 - Inclusivity, ex: youth
 - Encourage healthy, safe, engaged community, ex: team up to clean up

- East Topeka Council created to help East Topeka voices be heard

We Need You!

- Get involved and go to **topekavolunteers.org**
- Stay informed with **topeka365.com**
- Speak positively about Topeka

Bryce asks the guest speakers to introduce themselves

Jensen Simons with Greater Topeka Partnership

Greg Schwerdt, Riverfront Authority

- Riverfront development initiative, improvements to upstream weer water intake area (making it safer), putting in amenities, develop downstream weer with amenities for kayaking, ziplining, or other activities
- River can connect downtown and NOTO
- Mentions the Mayor's great support of the riverfront's development.

For more information or to get involved in Riverfront, contact: ges@sdgarch.com or call (785) 273-7540

She was selected to attend a development workshop, and she chose to focus on the riverfront for this. She brought back a report of their ideas on how the river can be developed. There's also an opportunity for a grant for public art along the riverfront. He is thankful for the Mayor's support

Tom Underwood, Executive Director of NOTO

- Working on developing old parking lot into Redbud Park
- Started a capital campaign to raise money for park, but also other needs in NOTO (art galleries, public art, lighting enhancements, etc)
- Collaborates with city, county, other companies to help foster cooperation and compliment each other
- Don't want the river to be seen as a barrier, but an asset

Glenda DuBoise, Community Engagement Coordinator, Heartland Visioning and also serves as liaison between Heartland Visioning and Riverfront Authority

Bryce opens up the discussion:

Carolyn Ward asks what the timeline is for riverfront development

- Greg says they want to get people down there to activate the river, but the weir needs to be safe first. The weir project came in over budget, which slowed project
- Last week the City council voted to give additional funding for their project to get the weir project moving
- Plan to go to Washington DC to talk to engineers about the downstream weir
- NYU will publish a report on how feasible it is for Topeka to support a large ball park for a professional team
- The project is moving forward, but they are going to be taking a step back to ask what people would like to see on the river
- The Riverfront Authority is creating their own advisory commission and they would like diverse members
- Glenda adds they are trying to get a draft plan of what the river will look like by the 3rd quarter of this year

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Greg Schwerdt explains a woman with expertise in riverfront development will come to Topeka for 2 days in June to help give ideas to help form the “masterplan” <p>Nikky asks how can youth get involved in each organization</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Glenda provided 2 handouts and says while the meeting time may not be ideal, commissioners are welcome to attend. She also encouraged participation in activities /events that they hold ● For example, the RA clean up day is April 28 (info found on flyer). It’s very important to show up and support orgs ● River Action Team could be something youth can go to meetings for and get involved in ● Also Aug 20 Cap Paddle Event ● Another flyer- Project Forward, sponsored by Momentum 2022 ● Also in May - Team Up to Clean Up. They’ll be forming a group and when we’re contacted youth can feel free to join <p>Greg Schwerdt says he wants your thoughts, ideas, and participation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Oklahoma City’s river is an example of how our river can become an asset with many events and activities and development <p>Jacob Gernon asked Thomas Underwood what are some problems you’ve seen with the revitalization of NOTO and how did you get past it?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Underwood explains that the area used to be dilapidated, so in creating an art district it appealed for its cheap land ● Small businesses took a chance on this district, and some have come and gone ● Challenges: it’s not finished. Does not want to be geographically defined or limited to the “two blocks” of NOTO ● Also: funding/resources is difficult because historically, the area has not been tended to well <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Need to improve infrastructure ● Also: perceptions of NOTO, like it’s unsafe, etc. So trying to continue cleaning up the area, making sure it’s well maintained ● Greg Schwerdt adds that it’s important not to define areas geographically or operate in a vacuum. Need to bridge gaps. 	
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Connection through downtown to NOTO is important, looking at moving main corridor off of KS Ave. to Van Buren to have a more clear shot through downtown to NOTO. Connecting dynamic core (WHICH IS?)

Makenna Orton asks how can youth get involved in NOTO?

- Underwood says youth involvement can be seen as many facets. Clean ups yes, but also other ways. The things that attract people to NOTO are all different, so you can't be all things but how do you serve such a variety of demographics?
- Spend your money in NOTO. All small business there that depend on people showing up and supporting as consumers

Eva Noble asks how these events are being advertised to younger generation bc she hasn't heard of it before?

- Glenda says info is on GTP enews. People can be added to this mailing list. Also check Facebook events and topeka365.com
- Lillian asks if there's an online flyer that people can post? Follow-up with Jensen.
- Underwood says they need to improve these methods of being engaging interested people. He asks for ideas from the TYC
- Lindsay says the TYC could also create our own e-news
- Jensen says there are FaceBook events for events we can share
- Ty asked what incentives they have for volunteers?
 - Underwood says we have considered hotdog feeds.
 - Jensen says we can give volunteer hours

Thorne suggests the clean-up efforts use the hashtag #trashtag

- Underwood says the boat docks and things they've created can become dumps for trash, but it's trying to be combated with clean up days

Carolyn brings up the topic the flood in 1951 - previous to that, there was river access.

<https://www.cjonline.com/news/2016-07-12/1951-flood-topeka-saw-severe-flooding-65-years-ago-week>

- Underwood says we have large levies that can be in the way, trains

	<p>that were on bridges and bridges collapsed- train cars now at bottom of river</p> <p>Glenda brings up Diversity on Boards Training at 3:30pm, and Zimmerman is having civic boards training on Wed, April 24 from 3-4:30pm at Zimmerman and Zimmerman Law Firm. Then there will be another one in June, and a nonprofit fair for boards in September.</p> <p>Angel Zimmerman asks how students can get involved in showing art in NOTO?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Underwood says people will come out and want to be street vendors, and this is possible if you get a city permit, liability insurance, booth permission. Really not a bad process. Can set up on sidewalk or private property. Musicians can play there, put a hat down, no charge ● Glenda asks about youth artists, apprenticeships, etc ● Underwood says galleries will partner with youth, but you have to go to the gallery <p>Kristen asks how we can give you our thoughts?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Panel members provided their contact information and encouraged the commissioners to share ideas <p>BREAK @7:08</p>	
<p>V. 2019 TYC Goals</p>	<p>Commissioners broke into small groups to brainstorm goals for 2019.</p> <p>Group Goals:</p> <p>Group 1: Kristen Hines, Irene Caracioni, Aden Schute</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Mental health awareness day ● Increase enrollment in TCALC ● Funrun <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Ex Mud Run, color run ● Sand volleyball tournament HS fundraiser ● TYC recognition in HS ● 1000 followers on social media 	

- Getting on 5 board
- Designing a website
- Taking a stance on a county commission resolution
- Mulch Madness

Group 2: Lilian Holmberg, Aditi Malay, Karla Navarrete,

- Host youth-oriented bus tour of Topeka
- Volunteering activities as a whole group
- Holding at least 3 events
- Better advertisement of who we are
 - Websites, schools, etc.
- Do more together
 - More group activities with the TYC
- Mentorship?
- Take a stance/have a resolution
- Get a 1000 followers on social media
 - Get youth on boards
 - Improve perspective of Topeka
 - Big outreach event
 - Youth focused problem solving
 - Mental health, etc.

Group 3: Eva Noble, Throne Osborne, Forrest Brungardt, Christian Robinson

- Increase in art and live music in Topeka
- 1,000 followers on social media
- Youth representation on boards
 - Riverfront board, East Topeka board, Momentum 2022
- Food
 - Competitions
 - Festivals
- Volunteer as a group
- Make the Discovery Center more teen-oriented
- Youth space
- Polling at schools and other youth

	<p>Commissioners were given 3 colored stickers and asked to place a sticker next to their top 3 goals. Results were compiled as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Polling (4) ● Art, live music, food (10) ● Events (10) ● Serve on 5 boards (4) ● 1,000 followers on social media (2) ● Crafting and advocating for resolution(s) (3) ● Volunteer as a group (3) ● Mental health awareness day (5) ● Mentorship (4) ● Improve perception of Topeka (1) 	
<p>VI. 2019 Committee Goals</p>	<p>The goals were categorized by committee and each committee broke into groups to discuss their priorities for 2019. The committees reported out:</p> <p>Community Involvement (presented by Eva Noble)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Mtg scheduled for 4pm on May 5 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Bryce needs to be there, don't need Lindsay or Carolyn ● Discussed boards around town, like CapFed <p>Local Gov (presented by Forrest Brungardt)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● May 30th at PT's, around 3 ● Talked about East Topeka Council ● Utilizing TopCity Council ● CW asks the group to consider how they will how are you going to research a public policy issue to bring to the TYC and take a stance <p>Outreach (presented by Thorne Osborne)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● City wide battle of the bands <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Can communicate it through band teachers, school officials, flyers ○ Venue: Jayhawk Theater, local clubs (but do they exist 	<p>Each committee needs to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● set up a time to meet before our May 13 meeting ● Provide a committee report at the May 13 meeting ● Each Committee chair needs to set up a Trello board for their committee ● Each Committee chair needs to set up a GroupMe for their committee

	<p>probably not)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Polling- through social media, share via email with TYC then send it out to more people we know <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ What do we want to know CW asks? It will be event specific Thorne answers ● Mtg: on a friday but Oscar isn't here so we will figure it out later 	
VII. Announcements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The next TYC meeting is Monday, May 13, 2019 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ We will be expecting committee reports ● Bryce Liedtke: Look for a Trello invite, for overall TYC and your individual committee ● Bryce Liedtke: Eric Gropitch with Washburn University will be hosting another orientation in late May/early June. Look on GroupMe for a poll asking when the best time. ● Jacob Gernon: fundraising is open, so people can now write checks to Greater Topeka Partnership Foundation with a memo to the Topeka Youth Commission ● Bryce Liedtke: Please respond to calendar invites. If you click maybe, please give a solid yes or no at least 48 hours before the event. ● Jacob Gernon: Treasurer's Report: We have no money currently ● Bryce Liedtke: email from Melissa Masoner that there is a leadership event called Ryla through the Rotary in June 2-6 (?). Info will be sent out from Bryce Liedtke. ● Carolyn Ward: lots of calendar invites. Be as engaged as you want, but prioritize monthly mtgs and committee mtgs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Download the Trello app and respond to an email invitation for the youth commission trello and your committee trello ● Fundraise for the TYC <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Checks should be made out to the Greater Topeka Partnership Foundation with a memo for the <i>Topeka Youth Commission</i>
VIII. Public Comment	<p>Melody Burns addresses the commission to discuss Americorps.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● It allows you to take a gap year, earn money, and volunteer and help pay for secondary education. If you volunteer for this organization, you will work for them for a year in different interest topics. After a year's worth of service, you get money that can go toward your education. This is basically a domestic peace corps. Go to https://www.nationalservice.gov/programs/amicorps for more 	<p>For more information, go to https://www.nationalservice.gov/programs/amicorps or contact Melody Burns at 785-670-1962 or melody.burns@washburn.edu</p>

	<p>information. Their board is one that you can serve on.</p> <p>Jensen Simons with the GTP in communications does e-news, media releases, and is secretary on the Riverfront Authority. She discusses the program “History Repeats Itself”, which is wanting to do an online video series with heavy youth involvement. Youth would talk about/interview older generations on issues such as race relations or other difficult topics.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bri and Ty say they are video producers and photographers. They will help facilitate these videos to foster intergenerational and diverse representation through this project. As youth, they don’t want us to be interviewed, they want us to be the interviewers. Sometimes when we don’t listen to the older gens, we repeat our mistakes because we have tuned them out. You can see how, as much as we’ve progressed, you can see history repeating itself in the present day. Race relations is the central topic, but this project aims to go to the root of the issues. • If you have other ideas as to how to spread the word besides photo/video, let them know (marches, etc.) To contact them, their information was sent out on GroupMe by Jacob Gernon • Carolyn mentions that they should contact Donna Ray Pierson at the TSCPL as a good resource. 	<p>For more information or to get involved in this video project, contact Jensen Simons at Jensen.simons@topekpartnership.com or call 785-215-8597 or contact BriJoRae Pusch-Zuniga at brijorae@gmail.com or call 785-422-6002</p>
IX. Adjourn	The meeting was adjourned at 8:21pm	Nicole Bloomquist made a motion to adjourn. Bryce Liedtke seconded. The motion carries.

Submitted by Makenna Orton