

Thanks to all who attended and a special welcome to our "new" faces. Thanks to Sheree Smith for providing snacks. Our guest speaker was Sasha Haehn from the Dept of Neighborhood Relations. She spoke about the proposed "Neglected Buildings" ordinance.

An informative and lively discussion followed. Dick Blanton (code liaison) reports that, in general, our neighborhood looks better than it has in years. Kudos to Dick, Duane and Linda Cook, and Code Enforcement Officer Mark Henley. Several "problem" properties on 6th St, were demolished with one more slated for demo at the end of this month.

Officer Wilson was present and reported the highest number of crimes in our area were reported on Friday's between the hours of 2 and 3am, Tuesdays at 11:00am, 7-9:00pm, and Wednesdays at 7:00pm. We can use this information to change our routines and be especially alert during those times. Officer Wilson was able to re mediate an issue that had concerned several neighbors that live close to the grade school. Thank you Officer Wilson. Officer Wilson will be compiling crime data specifically on the 400 blocks of Taylor and Western Ave since the installation of the solar street lights in Oct of 2016. A City Council District 1 "crime summit" will be held April 7th 8:30am-11:30 am at Topeka High School. All are invited to attend

Treasurer Marilyn McPherson suggested the NIA should reimburse Sheree Smith for the neighborhood mailing list she had purchased for \$50.00. After discussion, Denise Petit made the motion, Claude Belshe seconded the motion. Motion was carried unanimously by a voice vote.

Tulip time at Ward Meade Botanical Garden will be from April 6-23. Volunteers are needed for 2hr shifts at the gate. If you are interested in helping (or want more info) with either "Tulips at Twilight" or the regular event call [251-6991](tel:251-6991). A "Tulip Queen" opportunity is open to girls between the ages of 14-24. For more info call Philicia McKee at [224-0446](tel:224-0446). This opportunity closes March 30, 2018

A free tree trimming opportunity for low income elderly and disabled is being coordinated by Keep America Beautiful, Inc. Contact Philicia McKee at [224-0446](tel:224-0446) before April 01 2018. Limited spots available

Annual Get Down & Dirty event sponsored by Keep America Beautiful is scheduled for April 21, 2018 from 10:00am -noon. Contact Philicia McKee at [224-0446](tel:224-0446) for more details

The annual "Curb your Clutter" event sponsored by the City of Topeka will be in April as well. Specific date is yet to be determined. The Ward Meade NIA will

have a dumpster available the following weekend(date contingent on "Curb your Clutter"date.)

Habitat for Humanity reports that they are still in the process of fundraising for the new house to be built in the 400 block of Taylor.They estimate they are 2 months away from hands on planning. WardMeade NIA has been invited to participate in that process. In the past we had an "infill housing"committee that worked with the builder. If interested in serving on an infill housing committee working with Habitat for Humanity contact Deborah Edwards [235-2483](tel:235-2483).

Its SORT and Empowerment grant time again . SORT grant is a 1.4 million dollar grant awarded(by the City of Topeka) annually to predominantly low income neighborhood improvement associations to assist with infrastructure improvements. It is a 3 yr process,with actual"work" being the last phase of the process.

Empowerment grants ( in the amounts of \$5,000-\$50,000) are awarded by the City of Topeka to NIA's for quality of life improvements to their neighborhoods(ex: solar street lights,playground equipment,playground fencing, bike racks,park signage,etc)

The City of Topeka is holding grant workshops on Feb 28 and March 14.

Attendance at the workshops is required to be able to apply for either grant. The SORT grant workshop is scheduled for Feb 28. I have reserved 3 seats If interested in attending please contact Deborah Edwards at [235-2483](tel:235-2483)

The Empowerment Grant workshop is scheduled for March 14. If interested call Deborah Edwards [235-2483](tel:235-2483)

The Topeka Rescue Mission has declared war on human trafficking through their operations Restore Hope and Freedom Now. If interested in participating in their efforts to end this deplorable practice contact [221-0942](tel:221-0942)

The current owners of the former Sumner School have retained local legal counsel. An extension has been requested and granted to local counsel. A court date has not been set.

And finally, The WardMeade NIA St. Patrick's Day Float Committee is meeting tomorrow Saturday February 24,2018 at 3:00 pm at 419 SW Taylor.All are welcome. Come join us as we plan for lots' o fun.