



## Minutes

**October 30, 2024**

**6:00 p.m.**

A meeting of the Safe Neighborhoods and Crime Reduction Committee of the Southside Economic Development District was held on October 30, 2024, at 6 p.m. at the Emily P. Robinson Community Center on Jackson Street.

Present were Roosevelt Wright, Jr., chairperson; T.J. Stevenson; and Karl Dhaliwal. Absent was Mrs. Anna Reed.

Several visitors attended, including Rev. Cliff Thomas of the NAACP and Rev. Ambrose Douzart.

There was a quorum.

The invocation was given by Rev. Douzart.

Mr. Wright, the chairperson, provided an overview of the ten mini-grants approved by the SEDD as a first step in mobilizing civic groups within the district to promote safe neighborhoods and foster neighborhood pride. These groups were awarded \$2,000 mini-grants (\$1,000 in advance) to initiate the proposals they presented. The purpose of today's meeting was to receive progress reports, address any problems, and collect receipts for the funds distributed.

The following mini-grant reports were presented by representatives:

**The FDK Foundation, Rick Saulsberry:**

Mr. Saulsberry reported encountering difficulties in making presentations at schools as initially planned. He managed to give a 45-minute presentation at a local school but will need superintendent approval to proceed further. He provided a written summary but did not submit receipts for funds spent.

**Just Run the Play, Dejenerio Davis:**

Mr. Davis was not present but sent in the five videos he had contracted to produce, completing his agreement. The committee viewed one of the videos and was impressed with the quality and focus on crime reduction.

**Creative Recovery, Pearl Wise:**

Mrs. Wise sent a detailed written report on the progress of Creative Recovery. An average of 14 recovery participants attend the Monday night sessions, with a maximum attendance of 42 at one session. There has been difficulty in attracting South Monroe residents, with fewer than five of the average 14 participants coming from the Southside. Efforts are being increased to reach more Southside residents, most of whom are reluctant to seek recovery assistance.

**BK Mentoring, Sammy Crawford:**

Mr. Crawford reported working with youth in the Parkview Complex, where he faces trust issues with residents. However, boxing has been a successful activity for engaging the youth. Groups of up to 20 youth have been taken to locations outside Parkview, such as the AA Museum and other venues, providing opportunities for mentorship and encouragement away from delinquent activities.

**City Wide Gardening, Darion Belton:**

No representative was present, nor was a report provided.

Ruth's Place Resource Center, Erika Louis:

Mrs. Louis reported that her organization has partnered with Grace Place Ministries to offer essential job skills training and referral services. They have met twice with Grace Ministries, which sees participation of up to 150 individuals. However, Ruth's Place has yet to initiate independent activities.

**CONA, Inc., Mondarian Douglas:**

Mrs. Douglas did not attend but sent a message stating that she had no substantive report at this time, though she expects to have activities to report within 30 days.

**City Wide Cleanup, Terrance Carroll:**

Mr. Carroll was not present due to a scheduling conflict, and no report or receipts were provided.

**Life Changers of Northeast Louisiana, Damian Coleman:**

Mr. Coleman was not present and did not submit a report.

Upon a motion by Mrs. Stevenson, seconded by Mr. Dhaliwal, the committee unanimously agreed to recommend that the three groups which have expended the first half of their mini-grants and submitted their receipts and reports be approved to receive the next increment of their mini-grants (\$500.00).

After one hour and four minutes of deliberation, the meeting adjourned.

- 1.
2. **Presentations:** Mini-Grant recipients will report on the progress of their grant efforts and report problems, successes, and documentation.
3. **ACTION:** The committee will consider recommending additional mini-grant support for recipients who are successfully using the grants.
4. **CITIZEN PARTICIPATION**
5. **ADJOURN**

