



**Neighborhood  
Association**

*Pride In Community*

**MEETING MINUTES  
March 10, 2009**

**Officers in Attendance:** President Mike Quintana, Vice-President Louie Tafoya, Secretary Gretchen Elsner

**Members and Friends in Attendance:** Sergeant Michael Clare from APD; Charmaine Gutierrez; Georgia Michael; Ruth Marciano; Jacqueline Wenner; Jeanette Dalton; Berniece Quintana; Loretta Naranjo Lopez; Jesse Lopez

**Guests:** Lola Carrete from Big Brothers/Big Sisters; Erma Sedillo, Karen Golis, Glenda Drone, Bonnie Lee, Emily Tammina, from Precious Gifts, the proposed women's transitional housing

The meeting was called to order at 6:39 pm.

Treasurer's Report

Mike Quintana presented the Treasurer's Report. As of \_\_\_\_\_ (date) the account had a balance of \_\_\_\_\_. As of today, the account has a balance of \$765.59. Jeanette Dalton moved to approve the Treasurer's Report. Jacqueline Wenner seconded the motion.

Secretary's Report

There were not any minutes from the February 2009 meeting because we didn't have a Secretary.

Request to Albuquerque Police Department

Charmaine Gutierrez requested that the West Mesa Community Center be notified when schools are in a lockdown. Sergeant Michael Clare will find out how to get the community center on the list of entities to be notified.

Childcare

Mike Quintana raised the issue of having an on-site babysitter during our monthly meetings. Charmaine Gutierrez and Mike will discuss further.

Big Brothers/Big Sisters

Lola Carrete from Big Bros/Big Sis is seeking volunteers. They have 200 children on their waiting list; mostly boys. Many of the children are from the West Mesa and SW area. The commitment is four hours a month for at least one year. Spanish speakers and male volunteers are needed. More information is available at [www.inspireachildtodream.org](http://www.inspireachildtodream.org).

Precious Gifts

Precious Gifts is a proposed women's halfway house at 701 - 57<sup>th</sup> St. NW. They applied for a variance because they don't have enough space between their property and another halfway house. According to Erma Sedillo, Precious Gifts president, the Zoning Hearing Examiner approved the variance. Precious Gifts intends to buy the property.

Glenda Drone, resident manager, will live in the house. The plan is to have 8 women, plus Ms. Drone, in a 6-bedroom, 3-bathroom house. The residents will be recovering from substance abuse problems; some may have criminal records. The goal is to help women transition to the community.

Ms. Sedillo is retired from the NM Corrections Department. They have very strict rules, more strict than before. Precious Gifts has applied for nonprofit status, registered with Corporation Commission, and applied for a business license. People will not be hanging out. They are cognizant of children nearby. Residents will be working. They did canvass the immediate neighborhood and asked for neighbors to sign a petition. They are not affiliated with the program 524 58<sup>th</sup> St., the illegal halfway house.

Residents will be screened and interviewed for willingness to recover, and to follow the 12 step program. They will have required weekly counseling. Residents will stay at the house for a minimum of 90 days and maximum of one year. They must have medical insurance or make arrangements for insurance. Residents must have a sponsor and full time job in order to get a key to the house. The residents live by a strict schedule. They are not allowed to get rides from anybody without prior permission. They are not allowed contact with family members or significant others until preliminary issues are resolved. Someone will be at the house 24-7, a paid staff member even when Ms. Drone will be at work. Community service is required. Precious Gifts is partnering with Susan's Legacy for co-occurring disorders (substance and mental health). Ms. Drone can screen for drugs on site. Residents cannot stay at the house if they have used. They will have to leave right away.

Community members are invited to visit the house, preferably after 3 pm, when Ms. Drone will be present.

Ruth Marciano expressed her concerns that the facility would not be providing enough service to its residents. Louie Tafoya expressed concerns about the number of halfway houses in the neighborhood (now three), the proximity to children, and the history of police service calls to a previous halfway house involving some of the same individuals.

Louie Tafoya noted that the location is a crossroads for children going to and from school (West Mesa HS, John Adams MS, Lavaland ES) and the West Mesa Community Center and that the children should be kept safe. He said there were 7-8 APD service calls to this address from March 2008 to February 2009. Louie also expressed concern that a 14% success rate for the halfway house residents is not very good. It was also noted that proponents and supporters of the proposed halfway house do not reside in the neighborhood.

Ruth Marciano offered to meet with them to evaluate their program and report back to the association.

If the association would like to appeal the zoning hearing examiner's decision to grant the variance, the deadline is within 15 days.

#### Land Use

Louie Tafoya discussed the history of various properties, specifically 351 Yucca NW and 353 Yucca NW. Mike Quintana is maintaining records on all properties discussed at our monthly meetings. At 351 Yucca, there is a proposal pending for apartments.

Louie reminded us that once a property is approved by the Zoning Hearing Examiner, it's out of our hands.

Since we lacked a quorum, we discussed but did not reach a formal decision any properties. We discussed two proposed walls beyond three feet at 309 and 333 59<sup>th</sup> St. NW. Louie Tafoya spoke to the property owner at 333 59<sup>th</sup> St. NW, who had concerns about his Christmas decorations being vandalized. The association had previously agreed to take the position that walls should stay at the statutory height and that the association would not support variances.

#### President's Report & News from Our Neighbors

Mike Quintana notified everybody of our new website, [www.westmesana.org](http://www.westmesana.org), and our new email addresses, [president@westmesana.org](mailto:president@westmesana.org), [vicepresident@westmesana.org](mailto:vicepresident@westmesana.org), [secretary@westmesana.org](mailto:secretary@westmesana.org) and

[treasurer@westmesana.org](mailto:treasurer@westmesana.org). Thank you to Treasurer Michelle Beltran for establishing the website and email accounts.

*Southwest Alliance of Neighborhoods (SWAN):* The groundbreaking at Unser Crossing is scheduled for March 16. The following businesses are planned: Lowe's, CVS (a pharmacy), Staples and Defined Fitness. Neighborhood associations are asked to put together a wish list of what they would like to see in the development. Trader's Joes is a popular choice.

*Westside Coalition:* Despite our opposition, the Wal-Mart sign is going up along I-40. West Bluff Neighborhood Association and others appealed. We are waiting for the result of the appeal.

A mobile home park has been proposed in the area. Westside Coalition is planning to appeal. They do have a website.

*South Valley Coalition:* They are planning to offer classes, such as land use and how to apply for a grant.

*West Central Community Development Group:* Councilor Ken Sanchez has asked for a study, the gap analysis, regarding why impact fees are higher on the Westside than on the Eastside.

#### Meeting Time

Charmaine Gutierrez suggested that we consider starting the meeting at 6 pm rather than 6:30 pm. Louie Tafoya noted that all of the signs around the neighborhood say 6:30 pm.

#### Adjourn

At 7:55, Charmaine Gutierrez moved to adjourn, Georgia Michael seconded, all in favor.