Call to Order/Roll Call

The meeting of the Neighborhood Advisory Commission was called to order at 5:11 p.m. A formal roll call was conducted, confirming members present as stated above.

Public Comment

There were no members of the public who wished to speak.

1. Approve Draft Summary Meeting Minutes May 22, 2019

Vice Chair Miraldi called for comments and/or corrections. Commissioner James made a correction. He was absent and did not vote for adjournment.
COMMISSIONER CROMARTY MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE MAY 22, 2019 MEETING AS AMENDED. COMMISSIONER JAMES SECONDED THE MOTION, WHICH CARRIED 5-0 WITH VICE CHAIR MIRALDI, COMMISSIONERS CROMARTY, JAMES AND NASH AND PUTMAN VOTING IN THE AFFIRMATIVE WITH NO DISSENTING VOTES.

2. **Scottsdale Office of Communications: Homelessness and Panhandling**

Kelly Corsette, Communications and Public Affairs Director, stated that the panhandling signs were placed a month ago, due to a growing number of resident calls to the City. The signs are temporary, on portable stands. Twenty signs were designed to initially target five intersection locations. Based on public feedback, the signs are hitting the mark in terms of reducing panhandling activity. The campaign included media outreach and coverage. The signs encourage residents to refrain from giving money to panhandlers and to instead support social services agencies that run programs for people in need. There has been a small negative response, including citizens who have spoken at City Council meetings stating that this is not a compassionate message. The program is slated to continue.

Because the signs are portable, they can be turned to face away from traffic or moved to locations where they are not visible. The right-of-way maintenance team checks the locations on a weekly basis. After the program launch, a citizen suggested that the back of the signs should list resources for people in need. Just this week, stickers were placed on the back of each sign to provide this information.

The initial launch included freeway locations at Loop 101 and Frank Lloyd Wright and Loop 101 and Scottsdale Road. The land in the area is owned by ADOT. The City placed the signs and subsequently ADOT requested they be removed. Based on discussions between Mayor Lane and ADOT, ADOT is now committed to working on a regional program through MAG on a standard regional sign and permitting process for cities who wish to place the signs in ADOT rights-of-way. The City has temporarily redeployed the signs to other locations. Other cities have been reaching out to Scottsdale for input on how to develop similar programs.

Commissioner James inquired as to a measure to determine whether the signs have been effective in reducing panhandling or merely moving the activity to areas that do not post such signage. Mr. Corsette said that anecdotally, staff believes they are seeing a reduction, however, rising temperatures could also be contributing to the reduction. Another measurement going forward will be the level of traffic to the related website section. Prior to the sign placement staff worked on a resources page on the topic of homelessness and panhandling.

Commissioner Cromarty commented that he likes the sign, which provides permission for residents to say no to their better instincts, while providing an outlet by including the information on the back of the sign.

In response to a question from Vice Chair Miraldi, Mr. Corsette listed the initial sign locations:

- Scottsdale Road and Indian School
Residents requested signs at Alma School and Pima and this was done. Signs were recently placed along Thompson Peak Parkway. There are currently seven sign locations. A community resource card is available for distribution.

3. **Scottsdale's Human Services: Brick by Brick Initiative**

Greg Bestgen, Human Services Director, began by playing a short video of projects by Brick by Brick. The program was inspired a couple years ago when Mr. Bestgen and Mike Lopach, Human Services Specialist, worked together to assist Father Marty to build an infirmary for those in need of medical assistance in Guaymas, Mexico. Change can be effected by a small number of people who want to make a difference. Mike Lopach, Human Services Specialist, described the process of making adobe bricks to build homes and other structures and discussed his experience in New Mexico and its adobe home building program. They formed the Adobe in Action organization in New Mexico. Its primary goal is to gather volunteers to make bricks.

Mr. Bestgen discussed Paiute Neighborhood Center on Osborn and 64th Street, as a possible location for use of the bricks. The Center was designed to be a brokerage agency concept for the City. It includes Head Start, early Head Start, WIC, Hirsch Academy and Boys and Girls Club. Last year, a $200,000 grant was obtained from First Things First to open a family resource center. One of the concerns particularly in the area of the Center, which is predominantly Hispanic, is the lack of children's interaction with their fathers. Many fathers are service workers who support resort, maintenance and construction industries in Scottsdale. Because their mothers are also often employed, older children are responsible for preparing their younger siblings for school in the morning.

Brick by Brick received a grant from Partners for Paiute to purchase a block making machine from India. Mr. Lopach provided sample compressed earth blocks for Commissioners to examine. The first run at brick production resulted in 250 completed bricks in eight hours. It is hoped that when they acquire additional space and volunteers, the production rate will raise to 80 to 100 bricks per hour. It is hoped that the bricks can be made available for capital projects. A cited study reflected a 50 percent savings in energy reduction as a result of using the blocks for construction. Mr. Bestgen stated that he has been meeting with school principals to talk about programs to involve youth volunteers.

Commissioner Cromarty commented that the molds are reminiscent of Frank Lloyd Wright’s molds. He asked whether the bricks serve as curtain walls or are structural. Mr. Lopach stated that they are structural. Commissioner Cromarty stated that Frank Lloyd Wright had problems with large mortar seams. As such, rebar was used as an unseen component within each block. Mr. Lopach explained the difference in blocks that would be used for home construction. Space is included at the bottom to run rebar horizontally.
Commissioner James asked how neighborhoods would be involved. Mr. Bestgen noted that there used to be work with neighborhoods to produce neighborhood entrance monuments as well as wall restoration work through neighborhood enhancement programs. These types of projects would be ideal for similar partnerships. Another possibility would be an option for neighborhoods to rent the machine for training and production proposes for neighborhood projects.

Adam Yaron, Project Coordination Liaison, noted that there are limitations to the application of NAC’s resources towards replacement of walls or signs. NAC is welcome to look for opportunities to support Brick by Brick. There are opportunities to use the brick products at locations such as the Rotary Park Butterfly Garden. They can leverage resources from Operation Fix-It and sweat equity to use the blocks on City rights-of-way. The Commission may wish to brainstorm ideas for how Brick by Brick can make stronger community connections as well as gain additional sponsorship opportunities.

Commissioner James commented that it is an impressive product looking for a need as opposed to being an answer to a product need. He asked about the existence of affordable City projects. Mr. Bestgen stated that they are beginning to have such conversations. Discussion ensued about the current housing projects and tiny home communities throughout the country.

In response to a question from Commissioner James, Mr. Lopach stated that the bricks cost 25 to 30 cents to make. Commissioner James asked about the number needed to complete a small dwelling and how this compares to traditional construction costs. Mr. Lopach stated that University of Oklahoma chapter built two 1,200 to 1,500 square foot homes, one with the blocks and one as a traditional build. Approximately 4,000 to 5,000 bricks were required. Tiny homes might require 800 to 1,000 bricks. The building envelope costs were essentially the same. The engineering lead overengineered the foundation. The cost was $2,000 to $3,000 more for the compressed earth block home. The value of the increased energy efficiency of the block home will be significant over time.

Commissioner Nash asked about the potential for the organization to generate its own revenue. Mr. Lopach stated that thus far, two or three people have inquired about purchasing bricks. Mr. Bestgen added that they are not necessarily envisioning this as a moneymaking venture. The heart of the program is the volunteer piece.

4. **Staff Updates**

Mr. Yaron gave an update on the 70th Street SRP irrigation system. At the May meeting, the Commission provided an allocation of $2,900 to provide an education awareness campaign and one-time cleanup. It addressed an alley south of Thomas, west of Scottsdale Road along the 70th Street alignment. He shared before and after photos of the area. Dialogue continues with affected residents in terms of a more sustainable long-term solution. A cost estimate has been obtained for regular maintenance to be provided to the Neighborhood Watch captain. Updates will be provided as available.
A brief video was played of the Scottsdale Rotary Park Butterfly Garden. They will be moving forward through Arizona Forward Association in terms of an award.

In terms of the Spirit Awards, four submissions were received as of June 24th. Staff has met with the Mayor’s Office and Office of Communication to discuss additional outreach opportunities. On October 1, 2019, they will ramp up with extensive outreach and a large social media push. Councilwoman Littlefield will assist in promoting the program.

Commissioner Meli’s term will be expiring, as he has completed six years of service to the Commission. While he is not present, he will have more formal recognition and appreciation of service, including presentation of a Soleri Bell. Nominations are tentatively set for September 10th with interviews and appointments on September 24th. Vice Chair Miraldi will be completing her first term. The Clerk’s Office recently implemented a new online application for boards and commissions.

Regarding boards and commission items scheduled for July 1st, 2019 to City Council, there will be two changes coming into effect. This includes an ordinance to extend term limits for board and commission members to reflect that once six consecutive years of service on the same board or commission is reached, there will be a one-year break in service before a member is eligible for reappointment for one additional three-year term. Another ordinance will add a provision to the City Code similar to the absentee provision. It provides that any board or commission member having more than 25 percent annual recusal rate may be removed from the board or commission.

There will be a Commission recess for July and August. The next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, September 25th.

5. Adjournment

With no further business to discuss, being duly moved by Commissioner James and seconded by Commissioner Cromarty, the meeting adjourned at 6:23 p.m.

AYES: Chair Fabiano, Commissioners Cromarty, James, Nash and Putman
NAYS: None

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