

# Super Neighborhood Alliance Minutes of Virtual General Meeting Held 13 December 2021



## Guests

Letitia Plummer, CM At-Large 4  
Steven James, Staff for CM Dist D  
DiDi Chavis, Staff for CM Dist K  
Gareth Morgans, Staff for CM At-Large 2  
Julia Ossemi-Seied, Staff for CM At-Large 5  
Patrick Coleman, Staff for CM At-Large 4  
Jack Valinski, DoN  
Rhonda Sauter, DoN  
Teresa Geisheker, P&D  
Betsy Varghese, HPW  
Nikki Cooper, BARC  
John Fleming, HHD

Christina Walsh, Staff for State HD 148  
Kyle Maronie, HC-PHS  
Maria Bolanos, Staff for HCC Pct 2  
Bradley Mushinski, Staff for HCC Pct 4  
Stan Sarman, LHRA  
Ashley Johnson, LINK Houston  
Gilbert Garcia  
Rosalyn Francis  
Jazmin Suarez  
Gloria Suarez, Achilles  
Bessie Mansfield  
Linda Greer

## Super Neighborhood Representatives

Philip Salerno, SNC 05  
Ricky Miller, SNC 05  
LaTisha Grant, SNC 06  
Mark Klein, SNC 12  
Leigh Kilgore, SNC 14  
Pedro Ayazagoitia, SNC 15  
Jeff Baker, SNC 17  
Stacie Fairchild, SNC 22  
Mike VanDusen, SNC 22  
Kay Warhol, SNC 24  
Barbara Quattro, SNC 25  
Doug Smith, SNC 25  
Terry Cominsky, SNC 31  
Cheryl O'Brien, SNC 32

Sylvia Rivas, SNC 36  
Naomi Ostfeld, SNC 36  
Cindy Chapman, SNC 37  
Stephen Polnaszek, SNC 38  
Mike Ballare, SNC 41  
Deb Bonario-Martin, SNC 45  
Juan Antonio Sorto, SNC 49, 50  
Eric Thomas, SNC 55  
Bridgette Murray, SNC 57  
Kay Walton, SNC 62  
Roy Lira, SNC 63  
Kathleen O'Reilly, SNC 66  
Tomaro Bell, SNC 83  
Scott Cubbler, SNC 84

## Meeting convened at 6:48pm due to technical difficulties.

- I. **Achilles International Houston, Gloria Suarez** – Juan Sorto introduced Ms. Suarez by giving background information on the volunteer organizations and events he and Ms. Suarez had participated in. In 2015, Ms. Suarez underwent spinal surgery, which left her paralyzed below the waist. At that time, she and Juan learned of Achilles International, an international organization that supports people with disabilities becoming athletically active.

The Houston chapter opened in 2013, and Ms. Suarez joined Achilles International Houston in 2018 and became director in 2020. Achilles is a non-profit organization helping people with disabilities stay active through athletic programs. The Houston chapter has about 40 athletes with disabilities ranging from amputees, blindness, hearing loss, stroke, and veterans. These athletes are assisted by volunteers who can run, walk, and cycle.

Achilles use the running, walking, and wheeling events and training classes to inspire persons with disabilities to achievements they might not otherwise pursue. A children's program is starting, and Achilles is looking for someone to run the program.

The largest event of the year is the upcoming Houston Chevron Marathon, and Ms. Suarez and Juan invites everyone to come out and cheer on the Achilles participants on January 15 for the 5K race and January 16 for the marathon.

Stacie Fairchild asked if the open position for the children's programs is a paid position. Gloria responded that it is a part-time paid position.

Juan Sorto mentioned he only knew of two locations where wheelchair athletes trained, and asked if there were other training sites. Gloria responded that finding suitable locations was a challenge because many facilities are not ADA compliant. She mentioned HC precinct 2 completed the upgraded James Driver Inclusive Park in east Harris County

- II. **Minutes of the November 8 General Meeting** – A motion to accept the minutes with one amendment was made by Tomaro Bell; Doug Smith seconded. The minutes were approved by vote.
- III. **Update on COVID-19 Testing and Vaccine Distribution** – John Fleming, with the Houston Health Department, said that with the holiday season the city is asking everyone to get vaccinated. Anyone 5 years or older has access to vaccines, and encourages parents to get their children vaccinated.

Mr. Fleming mentioned Houston is one of the first cities to test waste water for the presence of COVID-19 virus, and presented a slide showing how the waste water graph leads other graphs like positivity and hospitalization rates. He said the Omicron variant is now being detected, but that Delta is still the predominate strain.

Mr. Fleming showed that 73% eligible persons have received their 1<sup>st</sup> dose and 62% are fully vaccinated. He also mentioned that we should start to see recommendations regarding boosters.

- IV. **Super Neighborhood Alliance Executive Elections** – Tomaro Bell announced that the nominating committee, comprised of Tomaro, Jane West, and Scott Cubbler, would propose Cindy Chapman for president, Roy Lira for vice president, and Stacie Fairchild for secretary. She reminded attendees that the vote would be taken at the January meeting, and that each super neighborhood present in the meeting will get a single vote.
- V. **Open Comments** – Tomaro Bell announced that Gilbert Garcia, with Garcia Hamilton & Associates, would be funding the Alliance's social gathering at Star Pizza on Saturday, December 18. She asked for the super neighborhood leaders present to announce their desire to attend. Mr. Garcia was present in the meeting and recognized for his support of the SNA.

Nikki Cooper, with BARC, announced they will be proposing changes to Chapter 6 of the municipal code that would require owners to microchip their pets. The other change would require pet stores to sell dogs and cats sourced only from a humane organization or animal shelter.

Stacie Fairchild asked if currently chipped animals would need to get an additional chip. Nikki responded the existing chip satisfies the requirement.

Pedro Ayarzagoitia mentioned the city will begin work on a bikeway connecting the Heights trail to Memorial Park.

Deb Bonario-Martin announced that SN 45 is starting numerous improvement projects in the super neighborhood.

**VI. Adjournment**

The meeting adjourned at 7:59pm.