



# City of Milwaukee

200 E. Wells Street  
Milwaukee, Wisconsin  
53202

## Meeting Minutes ANTI-GRAFFITI POLICY COMMITTEE

**ALD. TONY ZIELINSKI, CHAIR**

**Ald. Robert Donovan, Vice-Chair**

**Ald. Terry Witkowski, Michael Miller, and Angelique Pettigrew**

**Staff Assistant, Linda Elmer, 286-2232**

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**Monday, September 28, 2009**

**10:30 AM**

**Room 301-B, City Hall**

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*Meeting convened: 10:47 A.M.*

**Present** 4 - Donovan, Zielinski, Miller and Pettigrew

**Excused** 1 - Witkowski

### **1. Review and approval of the minutes of the July 27, 2009 meeting**

*Ald. Donovan moved for approval. There were no objections.*

*Roll call taken at 10:49 A.M.*

**Present** 5 - Donovan, Witkowski, Zielinski, Miller and Pettigrew

### **2. Department of Neighborhood Services Update**

*Tom Mishefske reviewed the charts the department provided earlier (Exhibit 1). He noted that complaints to the city related to graffiti to date this year have surpassed last year's total complaints. He also said that the department is seeing a lot of smaller graffiti, which is faster and easier to mark, rather than large, complex graffiti. Mr. Mishefske believes that a number of the more prominent taggers are lying low due to an ongoing police department investigation. The department has been challenged in responding to all the complaints and has moved follow-up on these complaints to the nuisance control section which has more staff in the field and are able to review the complaints in a more timely manner as well as being more proactive in reporting of graffiti.*

*Some of the business improvement districts (BIDs) that received grant dollars will not be using all their money, so the matching city funds will go to the department's abatement funds for graffiti removal. The contract with the city notes that unspent money must return to the city to be used for city-wide graffiti removal. There are also BIDs that will be running out of graffiti money prior to the end of the year. The Department has approximately \$750 per month budgeted to spend on graffiti removal. The east side has been the hardest-hit in the city, with the majority of these being small tags on street signs, street lights and street furniture. If the department responds to an area, it will also canvas the area for other tags that need to be*

*removed. There are also other areas of the city which continue to be targets for taggers. Ms. Sharon Blando said that approximately 10% of the graffiti is related to street gangs.*

*Ald. Zielinski would like to have the agenda at the next meeting include the Keep America Beautiful grant and education efforts related to that planned for January.*

**3. Police Department Update**

*No-one from the Police Department was present.*

**4. Municipal Court Update**

*Ms. Kristine Hinrichs appeared for the department and said that the court will probably hear 35 cases this year related to graffiti, which is consistent with a couple of years ago. She had provided a table prior to the meeting for all members (Exhibit 2)*

**5. Department of Public Works Update**

*Paul Novotny noted that the department has two bridge and iron painters that go out daily. Graffiti abatement efforts have suffered due to lack of staff and with the Dept. of Neighborhood Services changing their way of reporting graffiti, that has resulted in more work for this department. The department is going to investigate having workers who are assigned to light duty remove the graffiti tags.*

**6. Department of City Development Update**

*No-one was present from the department.*

**7. Milwaukee Christian Center Update**

*No-one was present from the Christian Center.*

**8. Report from Community Block Grant Administration Related to Community Outreach Efforts**

*Steve Mahan and Jose Perez are present from the Community Block Grant Administration and Art Dahlberg present from the Dept. of Neighborhood Services.*

*Mr. Mahan noted that HUD restructuring has allowed the city to allocate its federal funds for code enforcement activities, which allows salary funding to be taken out of a special-purpose account. Doing this will allow the Dept. of Neighborhood Services (DNS) to aggressively attack graffiti in the 2010 budget and the department will have the most funds available for graffiti-removal for the past 10 years. The Dept. of Neighborhood Services is also researching having a number of vendors doing graffiti removal, rather than solely the Milwaukee Christian Center.*

**9. Update from business improvement districts related to their graffiti levels and graffiti removal efforts**

*Ivan Gamboa, BID #38, and Sarah Patterson, from True Skool, spoke about the mural on S. Cesar Chavez Drive. True Skool students did the mural, as well as a*

*trash pick-up and declared this area a graffiti-free area. The area business owners provided refreshments, paint and t-shirts for the project. Mr. Gomboa is very pleased with how the project went. True Skool had an "adopt a highway" program with a number of BIDs and removed 40 incidents of illegal graffiti and received support from the local businesses. They also do weekly sweeps and clean-ups and have seen a marked decrease in graffiti. True Skool hopes the mural will be finished by next week and to adopt other areas and BIDs. Mr. Gamboa preferred the mural to a permission wall as the mural had some standards as to what the neighborhood wanted the final project to look like.*

*David Rotter, King Drive and Mitchell Streets BIDs, said that the BID may need to do more sweeps to remove the small graffiti in a more timely manner because if it is not removed, it just leads to more graffiti. He has also noted that the large graffiti tags have decreased in number, but the small tags have increased.*

*Maria Sandoval, Safe and Sound, noted that Safe and Sound has removed over 600 incidents of graffiti so far. They also do graffiti surveys and have education efforts with the public. She would like to appear before the committee on a standing basis and will speak to the Chair after the meeting about this request.*

**10. Set next meeting date and agenda**

*Nov. 16th at 10:30 A.M.*

*Meeting adjourned: 11:30 A.M.  
Linda M. Elmer  
Staff Assistant*