

# April 22, 2023 | MINUTES

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Meeting date | time April 22, 2023 | 2:11pm CT | Meeting location Scotlandville Library and via Zoom

Meeting called by Angela White @ 2:11 pm

Type of meeting Regular Bi-Monthly Meeting

Presiding Officer Angela White

Secretary Marquetta Cheeks

Timekeeper NA

Prior Meeting Minutes Status Approved

## Participants

William Augustine  
Zanetta Augustine  
Marquetta Cheeks  
Jermaine Craft  
Tim Damon  
Franetta Cyrus Franklin  
Joyce Harrison  
Juanita Jolley  
Robert King  
Betty Kiper  
Rhea Kiper  
Paul Levy  
Tia Mills  
Huel Perkins  
Joyce Polk  
Kendra Preston  
Dedra Preston  
Karen Rowe  
Kenneth Simpson  
Sandy Smith  
Namy Sterling  
LaTasha Walker  
Ann R. White  
Angela D White

## AGENDA TOPICS

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Time allotted | 5-10 minutes | Agenda topic Meeting Minutes Approval | Presenter Angela White

**Discussion** Meeting minutes (June – December 2022) are available for review on SHPOABR.com under Membership Info menu => Meetings & Minutes => [2022 Meeting Minutes](#). Everyone is especially encouraged to review: Crime & Safety (April 2022) and Insurance & Disaster Recovery workshops (June 2022) and the draft of Covenant, Codes & Restrictions (CCRs) Revisions (August 2022).

Residents were asked to review June – December 2022 minutes prior to the meeting. Floor was open for any needed corrections/changes to the posted meeting minutes. Motion to approve minutes was made by Tia Mills and seconded by LaTasha Walker.

**Conclusion** Meeting minutes for June – December 2022 were approved by majority voice vote.

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**Time allotted** | 5-10 minutes | **Agenda topic** Adoption of Agenda | **Presenter** Angela White

**Discussion** Point of order called by Tia Mills that agenda had not been adopted. Floor was opened to review and make any needed changes to the agenda. Motion to adopt the modified agenda was made by Tia Mills and seconded by Ann White. Motion was approved by voice vote.

NOTE: Agenda handed to residents in meeting included the review of 2022 Financials and the Jan to March 2023 Financial Report. Due to the 2022 Financial report not being available, the agenda presented was modified to review the Jan to March 2023 Financial Report and 2022 Financials Review was moved to the next Bi-Monthly Meeting.

**Agenda**

<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Call to Order</li><li>• Prayer</li><li>• Old Business<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Meeting Minutes Review/Approval (June - Dec 2022) -</li><li>- 2022 Membership Report</li><li>- 2022 Activity Review</li></ul></li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• New Business<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- 2023 Meeting Calendar / Proposed Activities</li><li>- Financial &amp; Membership Updates</li><li>- Neighborhood Comments, Concerns &amp; Issues</li><li>- Community Updates</li><li>- Open Discussion</li></ul></li><li>• Closure - Next Meeting Date - June 3, 2023</li></ul>
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The motion to approve the agenda with changes was made by Tia Mills and seconded by LaTasha Walker.

**Conclusion** Agenda was approved by voice vote

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**Time allotted** | 5-10 Minutes | **Agenda topic** Membership Report | **Presenter** Angela White

**Discussion** 2022 was a very good year with 74 paid members, an increase from 52 members in 2022. Currently, we are at 28 for 2023. There are 334 households in the Neighborhood. The goal for 2023 is to increase membership by 50% which is 160 paid members. That would assure a higher level of neighborhood engagement.

**Conclusion** We will give updates about upcoming membership drives.

<b>Action Items</b>	<b>SHPOA Members</b>	<b>Due Date</b>
Work to establish membership drive and update residents.	SHPOA Financial Secretary	Next meeting
All members are asked to meet your neighbors and help increase SHPOA membership.	SHPOA Members	continual

**Discussion.** Key activities in 2022 included:

- Workshops on Crime & Safety (April) and on Insurance & Disaster Recovery (June)
- Introduced and reviewed the draft of Covenants, Codes & Restrictions revisions (August),
- Engaged SH residents in home improvement funding sources – Energy Efficiency Improvement Program and [Restoration Abatement](#).
- [Safety/Crime Incident Form](#) created on SHPOABR.com to alert Southern Heights Crime Prevention and Improvement District (SHCPID) Patrol of safety concerns and crime incidents.
- Directed SHCPID Patrol to address law violations and resident complaints that impact neighborhood - junk cars, cars parked on grass, 18-wheeler cabs & bus parked in SH.
- Created newsletter to provide residents with a summary of EBR Laws impacting SH residents.
- Worked to address condition of 79<sup>th</sup> apartments including raw sewage, blight conditions, etc.

**Conclusion** SHPOA is always seeking programs to allow residents to maintain /improve their homes. Ongoing programs are under Community Resources & Links on SHPOABR.com while periodic programs are announced via robocall and listed on SHPOABR.com on Home page and under Upcoming Events.

If you see suspicious activity/criminal behavior please call the police and go to the SHPOABR.com under Safety & Crime Prevention menu and file the [Safety/Crime Incident Form](#) so that SHCPID Patrol will be updated.

Even if you don't call the police, go to the website and fill out the [Safety/Crime Incident Form](#). Letting us know when something happens helps us to maximize the safety of the neighborhood.

<b>Action items</b>	<b>Person responsible</b>	<b>Deadline</b>
Residents are asked to actively engage to reduce crime in SH by reporting suspicious or crime incidents to police, alerting SHCPID Patrol of safety concerns, suspicious activity and crime incidents using <a href="#">SHPOA Crime Safety Reporting Form</a> . Use link above or access on SHPOABR.com => Safety & Crime Prevention menu => SH Safety/Crime Submission	SHPOA Members SH Residents	ongoing

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**Time allotted** | 5-10 minutes | **Agenda topic** 2023 Quarterly Financial Report | **Presenter** Angela White

**Discussion** The Treasurer could not attend the meeting but sent the quarterly report. Our account has been moved from Southern Teachers Parents Credit Union to Neighbors Federal Credit Union so we can utilize credit card and online payment capabilities.

**Conclusion** There were no questions on the Financials. Angela called for a motion to accept the Financials. Tasha Jones moved to accept the Financials and 2<sup>nd</sup> by Williams Augustine. There was no opposition, the motion was carried

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<b>Action items</b>	<b>Person responsible</b>	<b>Deadline</b>
2022 Financial Report will be presented at the next SHPOA meeting	Sheila V Sims. Treasurer	Next meeting

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**Time allotted** | 5 minutes | **Agenda topic** 2023 Meeting Calendar/ Proposed Activities | **Presenter** Angela White

**Discussion** This is the 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Southern Heights Property Owners Association. We'll have to celebrate with an anniversary activity. The [2023 Meeting Calendar](#) has been posted on our website under the Membership Information menu.

We will meet Bi-monthly on a Saturday at the Scotlandville Library from 2:00pm-4:00pm and also by Zoom for those who are not able to meet in person.

Meeting minutes will be posted after each meeting. Please review the minutes prior to the next meeting in order to focus on any needed changes.

**Conclusion** NA

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<b>Action items</b>	<b>Person responsible</b>	<b>Deadline</b>
Meeting minutes will be posted on the <a href="#">2023 Meeting Calendar</a> on SHPOABR.com (under Membership menu) for member and resident review.	Marquetta Cheeks, Corr. Secretary	One week prior to bi-monthly meeting
Review prior meeting minutes as a pre-read for the next bi-monthly meeting.	SHPOA Members SH Residents	Before next meeting date

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Time allotted | 5 minutes | **Agenda topic** Membership and Financial Updates |  
Presenter Angela White

**Discussion** We are improving our membership process capabilities. A budget will be developed after this meeting to reflect any activities that you are interested in and be presented in June. That budget will include the cost of a website improvements.

**Proposed Membership Improvements on SHPOABR.com**

- Secured access on the website for paid members so be sure to update your membership information & password, access your financial history and the neighborhood directory.
- Ability to access financial reports.
- Ability to pay online via credit card
- Ability to take payments via credit card at meetings and other places.
- Ability to bill residents.

Kendra Preston asked if we had a web designer and recommended her husband -- Reed Preston.

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Time allotted | 5-10 minutes | **Agenda topic** Proposed 2023 Activities | Presenter Angela White

**Discussion** First activity in 2023 was Bronze sponsorship of Krewe of Oshun Parade and a Krewe of Oshun Parade Block Party on Somerset St between Harding and 79<sup>th</sup> Avenue. Both were in February with 35-40 residents participating in the Krewe of Oshun Parade Block Party. Throws, food and beverages were provided. We acquired permission from neighbors in that block for the block party. Thanks to Mid-City Redevelopment Alliance for tables, chairs and clean-up equipment. Thanks to all who volunteered for set-up and breakdown and attended. It was great to see everyone especially post pandemic.

Suggested upcoming events:

- Jazz Festival/Ice Cream Social,
- Christmas Social,
- Walking Club,
- Cycling / Bike Ride Club
- Community Garden (previously requested by Darryl King)
- Litter / Trash Campaign to keep SH cleaner (suggested by Joyce Harrison)

Kenneth Simpson suggested engaging the City to handle grass cutting and trash removal from vacant lots. We use the city but it is a slow process. Angela suggested a trash initiative should be organized around trash pickup in and around your yard and on the street. Maybe we can have a prize for the cleanest block.

**Conclusion** Persons are needed to organize these activities to enable them to be executed.

## Action items

## Person responsible Deadline

Recruit persons to organize litter / trash removal in neighborhood	Angela White
Recruit persons to organize a SH Walking Club	Angela White
Recruit persons to organize a Cycling / Biking Club	Reed Preston
Plan a budget for a Jazz Festival / Ice Cream Social	Rhea Kiper

**Conclusion** Persons are needed to organize these activities to enable them to be executed.

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**Time allotted** | 5-10 minutes | **Agenda topic** Neighborhood Comments, Concerns, Issues | **Presenter** Angela White

**Discussion Traffic Study:** a petition for traffic study was started in 2021 to give the City permission to assess our traffic complaints (speeding, commercial vehicle traffic cut through (no truck streets), etc. Thank you to Nancy Sterling, Joyce Polk, Marlon Patin and Robert Newman who helped with gathering signatures. For a street to be included in the study at least 10 signatures from its addresses are required. Harding Blvd. is a state highway and cannot be included in an EBR traffic study. Somerset, Pembroke, Nottingham and Emile streets are short streets so we need both a significant number of signatures and an explanation of the limited addresses on these streets to be included in the study.

We still need residents from Emile St, Nottingham St and 77<sup>th</sup> Ave to sign the petition before the Traffic Study Request can be submitted. Persons who own more than one property can sign using each property address. We asked everyone at meeting to check whether they have signed the petition

**Question:** Who asked this? Will the study address bumpy streets?

**Answer:** The study will not fix street construction problems. Bumpy streets, cracks and pot holes should be reported to 311.

NOTE: The more calls we make about problems, the more support we get. We also need to follow up on the status of issues and calls made. The squeaky wheel helps everyone in the neighborhood.

**Blighted Pools:** Residents have complained about poorly maintained pools (above ground and in ground). Persons with above/below ground pools need to maintain them according to City law. Unmaintained pools are mosquito magnets. Pools must be fenced, must be maintained to have clean clear water and have mosquito deterrents. Not doing so is a violation of the law. Old, broken pools should be removed.

**Blight Property issues** – EBR Inspectors indicated in August 2022 that the red apartments at 79th Ave failed building inspection and need to be torn down. We have requested that the City condemn and tear down the apartments. Two buildings have been approved for

condemnation. Tenants living in the remaining uninhabitable buildings need to move out before their condemnation process can continue.

Additional blighted homes include the Robinson house on 77<sup>th</sup> Ave which we have requested condemnation for several years and the Thurman home on 79<sup>th</sup> Ave.

New building maintenance code goes in place on June 2023. I am not sympathetic with rental property not being maintained because they are receiving rental revenue. We will begin reporting poorly maintained rental property for resolution. We are always seeking programs to assist homeowners maintain their property.

**Law Violations:** CPID is monitoring junk car violations. Additional violations include unleashed dogs, not removing garbage cans same day as pickup, call 311 for replacement cans, dead trees which termite infestations, Pods on property greater than 30 days.

**Handling Mental Disability:** We have residents in the neighborhood who have family members with mental disabilities. If you see someone behaving erratically, whether you know or suspect they have a problem, do not approach them. Notify the police. They will meet you discreetly to discuss the situation so that EMS can come out and evaluate the person. Please go to [SHPOABR.com](http://SHPOABR.com) and fill out the [SHPOA Crime Safety Reporting Form](#) and include the police file number so that CPID will be aware of the occurrence.

**Canal Erosion:** Canal erosion on 79<sup>th</sup> Ave has been reported to DOTD and EBR City of Baton Rouge. We have filed a work order and have contacted Fred Raiford in EBR to address the issue.

**Airline Flight Patterns:** When the neighborhood was on the flight pattern the airport did home improvements for sound reduction. The flight patterns were changed diverting flight over Southern Heights. Currently, there is an increase of flights over our neighborhood. We need for someone to volunteer to look into that for us. We need to revisit this with our Councilwoman, State Senator & State Representatives for more information and plans for actions.

**FutureBR/EBR Housing Strategy:** Both groups deal with the City's plans for future land use. We need to take a strong interest in their plans for our community and what we'd like to see here. Two the red brick apartment buildings on 79<sup>th</sup> Ave have been contracted out for demolition. We need to influence the planning commission on future development of that land as well as the concrete space on Scenic Highway between 79<sup>th</sup> and 78<sup>th</sup> Avenues which are in Southern Heights. We need anyone who wants to volunteers to help work on shaping what's in our area.

**Covenants, Codes and Restrictions (CCRs):** You can review a draft of the proposed revisions on the website under Governing Documents. Please fill out the comments or suggestion form on the proposed CCRs draft. The CCRs re enforceable and can supercede city law. Submit your comments, additions or concerns so the Policy and Procedures Committee can finalize the CCRs and we can proceed to vote on the document for adoption.

**Litter:** Recommended by Mrs. Joyce Harrison that we resolve the litter issue in the neighborhood.

**Southern Heights Crime Prevention and Improvement District (SHCPID):** Neighbors have raised concerns on the lack of transparency and communications between the SHCPID and



SH residents. SHPOA has worked to address this and issues discovered in SHCPID governance and operations since 2021. Background on the SHCPID was outlined and the specific issues and actions taken by SHPOA to address neighborhood complaints are outlined in the slides below.

## SHCPID Discussion Slides

### Southern Heights CPID

- Background
  - Created via legislative bill RS 33:9097.21
  - Approved via election in 2015
  - Began operations in January 2017 (start of 1<sup>st</sup> fiscal year)
- Quasi-government agency (political district)
  - Separate Board from SHPOA (HOA)
  - Southern Heights residents are its public body
  - Residents billed \$100 per parcel in property taxes



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### Southern Heights CPID

- Operational Compliance Requirements
  - Legislation establishing district (RS 33:9097.21)
    - Governed by seven (7) Commissioners appointed as follows:
      - Assessor (1), LA State Rep (1), LA State Senator (1), Metro Council (1), SHPOA (3)
    - Commissioners must own and reside in subdivision
    - Responsible for notifying Appointees of Commissioner term expiration and request Commissioner replacement or reappointment
    - Responsible for conducting Commissioner Oaths / Notifications
    - Responsible for electing its Officers

SHCPID	
Has NOT Complied	Complied
⊗	
⊗	
⊗ ⊗ ⊗	
⊗	
	⊗



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### Southern Heights CPID

- Operational Compliance Requirements
  - Legislation establishing district (RS 33:9097.21)
    - Responsible for purchasing items & supplies instrumental in achieving purpose of district
    - Provide for patrols
    - Fund SH capital improvement projects

SHCPID	
Has NOT Complied	Complied
⊗	
	⊗
⊗	⊗



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### Southern Heights CPID

- Operational Compliance Requirements (cont'd)
  - Local Gov't Budget Act (RS 39:1308, RS 39:1310-1311)
    - Review proposed budget for public comments no less than 15 days prior to start of new fiscal year
    - Must amend their budgets whenever revenues and expenditures rise or fall 5% after the budget has been adopted in a public meeting.

SHCPID	
Has NOT Complied	Complied
⊗	
unknown	



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### Southern Heights CPID

- Operational Compliance Requirements (cont'd)
  - LA Open Meeting Law (RS 42:13 - RS 42:20)
    - Written public notice must be given (1) at the beginning of each calendar year and;
    - (2) no later than twenty-four (24) hours, exclusive of Saturdays, Sundays, and legal holidays, before any regular, special, or re-scheduled meeting.
    - Meeting notice must be placed at the place of the meeting, at the official office of the body, or published in the official journal of the public body no less than twenty-four hours (exclusive of Saturdays, Sundays, and legal holidays) before the scheduled time of the meeting.
    - When a website is available, it shall post notice of its meetings via the internet on the website for no less than twenty-four hours, exclusive of Saturdays, Sundays, and legal holidays, immediately preceding the meeting.

SHCPID	
Has NOT Complied	Complied
⊗	
⊗	⊗
⊗	
⊗	



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### Southern Heights CPID

- Operational Compliance Requirements (cont'd)
  - LA Open Meeting Law (RS 42:13 - RS 42:20)
    - All notices must include the date, time, and place of the meeting(s). Additionally, the required written public notice for any individual meeting requires that an agenda be attached.
    - A meeting is also a convening of a public official to receive information regarding a matter that the public body has supervision, control, jurisdiction, or advisory power over.
    - Public bodies must provide an opportunity for public comment prior to action on the agenda item upon which a vote is to be taken.
    - According to Title 43 of the Louisiana Revised Statutes the various political subdivisions of the state are required to publish the minutes of their proceedings in the official journal of the body

SHCPID	
Has NOT Complied	Complied
	⊗
⊗	
⊗	
⊗	
⊗	⊗



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## SHPOA Resolution Efforts w/SHCPID

- Jan 2021
  - Notified all Commissioners via email with letter detailing resident's transparency/communications issues plus details on Budget & Open Law violations.\*
- June 2021
  - SHPOA Officers met with Jesse Gasper, SHCPID President\*
    - Discussed legal non compliances in letter and issues w/Commissioner appointments & SHCPID adopted Bylaws)
    - Emailed twice to schedule SHCPID-resident meeting (no meeting was scheduled)
    - Stated that residents should access the Legislative Auditor Report to see the budget.
    - Stated the SHPOA meeting was invalid and could not be discussed/implemented with SHCPID (Aug 2021)
- Failed to comply with legal requirements in 2021-2022\*



\*Issues not resolved

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## SHPOA Resolution Efforts w/SHCPID

- Jan 2023
  - Notified all Commissioners via email requesting meeting of SHPOA & SHCPID\*
- Feb 2023
  - Sent follow-up emails (2) on SHPOA & SHCPID meeting\*
  - Jesse Gasper, Board President indicated if an SHPOA Officer has an issue, they can call him directly\*
- Discussed situation with LA Legislative Auditor Legal Counsel who recommended pursuing Board changes\*
- March 26, 2023
  - Terminated the SHPOA Commissioners (Gasper, Johnson, Augustine) effective immediately; Notified remaining Board members of change\*
- March 27, 2023
  - Requested new appointments for other SHCPID Board with recommended appointees\*



\*Issues not resolved

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## SHPOA Resolution Efforts w/SHCPID

- April 2023
  - Met with Sheri Morris for further legal guidance
  - Received call from Tax Assessor (Wilson)\*
    - Indicated that Jesse Gasper requested meeting, admitted violations and asked to be reappointed to SHCPID Board using Brandon DeCuir as his reference
  - Discussed Board Commissions with Sec of State Commissions Legal Counsel\*
    - Board recommissions not handled per SHCPID legislative bill
    - No written authorization transferring State Rep appoint to SHCPID Board
  - Provided bios for recommended appointees
  - Followed up on appointment request w/Wilson, Barrow, Carpenter, Banks without adequate response
    - Appointees asked for the list of the current board, stated need to meet with Jesse Gasper, and/or did not realize they had an appointment
  - Filed formal complaint with LA Legislative Auditor



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**Conclusion** SHPOA Officers will continue to pursue this issue to resolution. Member suggested that residents put pressure on the Commissioner Appointees to appoint new Commissioners.

### Action items

### Person responsible Deadline

Action items	Person responsible	Deadline
Contact the SHCPID Commissioner Appointees and indicate that you want the currently assigned Commissioner replaced. Persons to be contacted include:	SH Residents	ASAP

- Brian Wilson, EBR Tax Assessor (225) 824-1772  
[bwilson@ebrpa.org](mailto:bwilson@ebrpa.org)
- State Senator Regina Barrow (225) 359-9400  
[barrowr@legis.la.gov](mailto:barrowr@legis.la.gov)
- State Representative Barbara Carpenter (225) 771-5674  
[carpenterb@legis.la.gov](mailto:carpenterb@legis.la.gov)
- Councilwoman Chauna Banks (225) 389-4699  
[cbanks@brgov.com](mailto:cbanks@brgov.com)

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Time allotted | 5-10 minutes | **Agenda topic** Community Updates | **Presenter** Angela White

**Discussion**

April 25<sup>th</sup> Funeral services for our neighbors Carroll Cayette and Gladys Hildreth were announced.

April 29<sup>th</sup> Federation Donation Day @ Habitat/Restore on Airline Hwy location. Neighbors are encouraged to drop off donations to support reduced cost building material sales that fund Habitat for Humanity.

May 6<sup>th</sup> Technology Summit for Girls is upcoming for girls in middle and high school. There is a number to call to register to participate.

**Businesses / Activities in Scotlandville**

- Scotland Saturdays with vendors and entertainment at Scotlandville Plaza
- Neighbors were informed about businesses in Scotlandville area including Lighthouse Pizza), Southern Cofe (coffee, tea smoothies, lunch, limited fresh vegetables), Farmers Market on Wed at ExxonMobile YMCA

**Conclusion** NA

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Time allotted | 5 | **Agenda topic** Open Discussion | **Presenter** Angela White

**Discussion**

Ann White reminded everyone to pay dues.

Officers also introduced themselves. Everyone attending the meeting introduced themselves and indicated where they lived.

**Conclusion** NA

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Time allotted | 3:37pm | **Agenda topic** Adjournment | **Presenter** Angela White

**Conclusion** Meeting ended at 3:37 pm without formal adjournment.