Northlake Tiny House Village CAC

Monthly Meeting Minutes

Time: October 29, 2019 – 5:00 PM

Location: John Stanford International School Library

# Attendees:

* **CAC**: Jami Fecher, Mike Dunn, Sarah Jones, Ed Mast, Jordan Schwartz, Wendy Barrington
* **LIHI**: Josh Castle, Will Uhlig, Jose Ruiz, Shelby Henkel, Alexa Price
* **Northlake Village**: Alex Finn, Hana Lake, Zachary Lake, Jay Perry, Kris Ingersoll, Kirei Mei Johnson, Jenna Kuenzi, Oscar, Alycia Roberts
* **Nickelsville**: Alycia Roberts, Marvin Futrell, Peggy Hotes
* **HSD**: Adrienne Easter, Lisa Gustaveson, Diana Salazar

# Minutes

Residents read the following statement:

### CENSUS

23 ADULTS. 15 Men and 8 Women, including a pregnant woman. 5 Couples 3 families No minors 3 pets

2 move ins. 1 move out

### Daily Activities

There have been no police calls.

Someone who has been with this Village since the early days of Ballard is finally getting housing!

FUTURE MOVE OUT? The couple at camp who received a Voucher for housing three months ago still hasn’t been able to move out. They continue to be hopeful they will be able to leave soon.

One person received two bars – one for 3 days, and another for 14. The three-day bar was for missing a camp meeting. The 14-day bar was for not being in camp at least once every 3 days, and then signing out ‘inaccurately.’

The reason this is a problem is because it is part of a continuing pattern by the same person. It has gone one for months and includes many missed securities, failures to sign in and failures to be present.

Another camper received a permanent bar. It was written as a permanent bar for leaving a shift without warning.

This was appealed to the Nickelsville Central Committee. The Central Committee found that there were underlying reasons for the bar, that were also the barred persons responsibility. If the permanently barred camper comes up with a way to address these underlying reasons, the Nickelsville Central Committee may let him back in tomorrow.

We can’t go into much more detail about either of these bars without violating the people’s privacy.

It is for these sorts of cases that we offered to provide more information to a confidential CAC subcommittee.

Due to bed bug problems, and problems getting them treated with LIHI, some people haven’t been able to stay in their Tiny Houses. They have instead used the “turtle” while the problem is remedied.

The Drum Circle continues on Tuesday Nights.

Camp Meetings continue every Monday at 6 PM

Bus Tickets are being Issued Daily

FUNDRAISING: Our Fundraising has raised over $2,500 in the last month! Over 95% is going to bus tickets, cell phones, printer ink and bed bug supplies.

We would appreciate more help with fundraising.

LIHI owes us over $20,000 for reimbursement requests for the period BEFORE they tried to fire Nickelsville. They haven’t explained why they haven’t reimbursed us.

***Clarification of Visitor Policy:***

*Visitors are welcome. Because LIHI is attempting to Occupy Nickelsville’s, we can only let the LIHI Case Manager in. We will also let in LIHI repair people and LIHI bed bug chemical treatment specialists. Our staff needs to be notified at least a day or more before these visits. We will not set up appointments ‘on the fly’ at CAC meetings because there is too big of chance of a misunderstanding. HSD Staff should make appointments, because they have been supporting LIHI takeover efforts.*

*We don’t like having to keep our gates shut, but it is necessary. The gates being shut makes us secure from the most immediate threat – a LIHI Occupation.*

### FOOD

University Food Bank is bringing us food every Wednesday, and we can specify what kinds of things we want. It includes milk, which is outstanding.

The University Sunrise Rotary Club keeps sending over breakfast once a week.

We appreciate very much the food from Amazon, and the dedicated Volunteers who bring it. The delivery last Saturday was great. It included —Amazon food included meal kits, storage containers, bottled water.

### COMMUNICATION WITH LIHI

Northlake hasn’t had a Case Manager Meeting come into the Village for two months. It is false that we barred the case manager.

We did nothing that would warrant him not coming.

Besides him saying to the CAC last month he’d been yelled at, we don’t know why we don’t have a case manager. This was over a month ago now, and it wasn’t true then.

We have not been told in writing another case manager would come, or their name.

We want a case manager as soon as possible, and we would like to know who it is before they show up – that’s common courtesy.

Earlier today Kyle of LIHI and two others tried to get into the camp. They were denied entry and Kyle called us children. We distributed their paperwork to everyone in camp, which is what HSD and LIHI are giving you tonight.

### SUPPLIES AND LIHI

The supplies we request twice a month mostly show up. We seldom are told when, and since getting an explanation of why we wouldn’t get feminine hygiene products back in July there has been few explanations of why we do and don’t get things.

We are glad that 22 ceramic heaters were delivered to Northlake, and wish we knew why it took a month to get them.

We asked for a repair person to come out from LIHI and repair 4 things. It took them over two weeks to arrange this visit. We cooperated and hope that now that they have seen what the problems are, that they will fix them.

They have said they are ordering parts.

### BED BUGS

We wanted to treat the bed bugs internally, and asked LIHI for those supplies on August 16th. At first Mr. Castle said yes, but then on September 6th he said no.

We got donors to give us a lot of supplies for treatments that we needed, and got a lot done ourselves.

Mr. Castle kept trying to go around our simple method of asking and answering supply and maintenance questions. Finally, we managed to get a visit scheduled with the LIHI Chemical Exterminator.

We will keep cooperating with LIHI on bed bug treatments, but Mr. Castle has to communicate through email to [staff@nickelsville.works](mailto:staff@nickelsville.works). We must insist on that so there are no misunderstandings.

The chemical exterminator for LIHI has now come out several times. There is one Tiny House whose occupant doesn’t understand what he needs to do. We are trying to work with him.

We wish that LIHI would tell us in writing how to prepare for bed bugs, and how to prevent bed bugs. The person, for example, who keeps preparing wrong has a friend who comes and helps him. If his friend saw written instructions on how the preparation worked, he could then help the resident better.

We also keep asking for materials that would prevent the bed bugs to start with, and LIHI doesn’t give them to us – they include diacanateous earth and bed bug traps. We would also like to know, in writing, what chemicals are being used. We’ve been asking for written information since February.

### LIHI RESPONSE TO HSD PERFORMANCE IMPROVEMENT INSTRUCTIONS

Neither LIHI nor HSD gave us a copy of LIHI Executive Director Sharon Lee’s September 6th letter. We recently saw it. She simply doesn’t know what she’s talking about, and we have reported many times on the different ways she’s mistaken.

### HSD COMMUNICATIONS

LIHI Staff came by on the 5th and 6th of September and tried to get in and tried to argue with people about HMIS forms.

We will do what our written agreements said we’d do with HMIS if LIHI or HSD asks our staff person to resume this – but neither LIHI or HSD have. We can’t be blamed if they are trying to get things that we haven’t agreed to.

We said in writing repeatedly we wouldn’t meet with LIHI and that we would meet with HSD off site, as a group.

We will still meet with HSD off site, as a group, with witnesses. They just have to schedule it with our staff. We voted on this again last night.

Our staff person will also talk to either HSD or LIHI staff about how to share information that we used to provide, before LIHI tried to fire us. On September 13th Northlake Camp Leaders and other campers signed a Grievance against HSD for the false statements in the HSD Performance Review of LIHI. They said the Case Manager Grievance of ours has been resolved. It has not been resolved. We still don’t have a Case Manager, and that isn’t a resolution.

That was over 40 days ago now, and there still has been no substantive responsive. The Seattle Customer Services Bureau said that they would refer it to HSD. HSD said that we needed to complain to LIHI about HSD. That was over a month ago, and nothing else has been done. We still don’t have a case manager.

We filed this Grievance like HSD Contract Specialist Shaun Neal said we had to: with the Seattle Customer Services Bureau.

Then HSD told us that we would have to file a grievance about HSD staff with LIHI.

We want to repeat that our Grievance against HSD is our Grievance against HSD. It is our grievance.

We are not being treated like human beings by HSD or LIHI.

We will not be divided and conquered.

### NORTHLAKE RESIDENTS VISIT CITY HALL

For the last two months Northlake Residents have gone to City Hall repeatedly. We have asked the Mayor in writing, and testified to the City Council, that LIHI should be found in violation of their Services Agreement at Northlake and fired.

We would then like a Religious Encampment Sponsor – and we know that Gift of Grace Lutheran Church would be willing – to take over the camp sponsorship.

We think this is much better than spending over a million dollars closing two camps, like the HSD Draft Budget recommends, and like Adriene Easter will announce again tonight.

We support the amendment to the Mayors Budget that has been offered to the City Council which has a proviso preventing HSD from spending money to shut us down. We support adding funding for 20 tiny house villages to the budget, as some on the Council are proposing. We support – with amendments protecting neighbors and Village residents from unethical managers and contractors – like HSD and LIHI – the proposed new City Sanctioned Encampment Ordinance.

Nickelodeons from other sites and many friends also testified at two City Council meetings since the September Northlake CAC Meeting.

They too have asked that at Northlake LIHI be removed and Nickelsville allowed to operate the camp with a religious encampment sponsor.

We also met with Councilperson Pacheo. He explained he will be leaving office in a month but was very sympathetic.

At Othello we asked that the residents who have put up with the disaster of the last 7 months be allocated, by the City of Seattle, a 10,000 sq. ft piece of land near Othello to move to for at least 2 years. A religious sponsor has been identified for both Northlake and Othello. We’ve given up trying to live and work with LIHI. It’s clear they want to flood Othello with swept campers who will require a low barrier camp. It’s clear HSD plans to shut Northlake down. That’s not what we agreed to or deserve.

HSD has said they won’t work with a religious encampment sponsor at Northlake. That’s fine. The city has worked with Nickelsville, SHARE, and Religious Encampment Operators many times in the past to allow Religious Encampments. The FAS Department of the City can do this. They’ve done it before.

### DEATHS OF HOMELESS PEOPLE SINCE THE LAST CAC MEETING

Zack began this portion of the report by observing this is “why we’re all here.”

Women in Black stood on October 23rd for another death of a homeless person outside in King County. It is now up to 94 homeless people that we know of that have died either outside or by violence in King County. 94 Homeless People have died outside or by violence in King County this year already. Homeless people are dying outside faster this year than even last year, which was a record.

* Sarah offered to help ensure children who should be in school could be there
* Adrienne Easter of HSD shared final report of performance improvement plan.
* Decision not to move forward with contract in 2020 for Northlake
* City staff will be visiting the village on Monday, Nov 4 at 1:30 pm to discuss with village
* Marvin (Nickelsville) says this [that the village will be closed] was not the report that HSD gave (i.e., HSD didn’t say the village will be closed last time). What has changed?
* Adrienne says nothing has changed, HSD was not allowed into village, and everyone was told at the meeting that shutting down the village was one possible outcome
* Adrienne clarified that all food, utilities, hygiene, etc. will continue through Dec 31, 2019
* HSD will work with village residents on alternative housing or shelter options
* Sarah asked what will happen on Dec 31 if there are people still there. Adrienne responded that people will be told what will happen shortly.
* Will people be sent to shelters separately? Will they be separated from their things?
  + Adrienne responded that HSD will be working with the individuals to find the best place for them (shelter, etc.). Things won’t be taken away.
* Will shelter options be just through LIHI
  + Adrienne responded that no, all shelter options are available. HSD will be working through a LIHI case manager to coordinate.
* Resident is concerned that he won’t be able to afford housing
  + Adrienne responded that HSD has options
* Adrienne clarified that Dec 31 is the end of the contract year, that is what is driving the dates
* Actual tiny houses are property of LIHI. They will decide what happens to them.
* Adrienne maintains that LIHI and HSD were not allowed to access the village.
  + Will Uhlig, LIHI case manager, states that the last time he tried to access the village was in early August. Says he was approached with hostility and chose not to return for reasons of personal safety.
  + [Second LIHI person] says she has attempted to work with the village, but was required to work from a garbage can. Says only two residents have been working with her, secretly via text message for fear of reprisal from other residents
* Marvin rejects narrative that blames villagers for the failures of LIHI and HSD
* Adrienne says HSD doesn’t blame people in the program. What is called out in the final performance plan is the Nickelsville staff and leadership that has not allowed access to the program. HSD has not been able to access the program they funded.
* [SLP] LIHI will be giving out email and phone numbers, will be working with residents to find alternative shelter.
* Not performing at 40% exit rate (annually) to permanent housing [… ]. Whatever is needed (paying off eviction, first month rent, ID’s, etc.) can be provided. Jose has a lot of experience with Section 8, getting people’s housing vouchers reinstated. LIHI asks that residents put aside the “LIHI” face, these individuals are
  + Other villages are at 30%, Northlake is at 11%
* [Northlake resident] says case managers have been avoiding him, he has confronted a number of them. [SLP]
* Marvin says LIHI can make appointments by asking Nickelsville for a date and time. [SLP] says she was shouted at the last two times she’s been there, but she’s not taking it personally.
* Adrienne clarifies that LIHI is not required to or expected to work through Nickelsville to access the village.
* HSD confirms that LIHI funding to operate the village continues through Dec 31. Josh from LIHI says they will continue to deliver supplies, and that all requested supplies on submitted lists were delivered
* Peggy says Josh refused to deliver supplies. Josh says that is not correct.
* Peggy says of course villagers don’t want to let in LIHI, look at what happened at Othello. Bumrushed. Leave the supplies at the gate.
* Alex says state considers him an able bodied adult, but he doesn’t qualify for anything else, will likely have to return to Tent City 3. Doesn’t want to.
* [resident] concerned about next steps, having a place to live close enough to her job.
* [resident] says Northlake was the best place he has stayed in homeless shelters over the last 15 years. Staff, environment.
* [resident] says when she first arrived, she was very anxious and scared. But slowly emerged from her tiny house and made friends and met a lot of beautiful souls.