

Date: March 24, 2004

To: Neighborhood Council Leaders

From: Greg Nelson, General Manager, Dept. of Neighborhood Empowerment

Subject: NEXT CONGRESS PLANNING MEETING ON MARCH 31. COOL IDEA #1. NEIGHBORHOOD CAFÉ TRANSCRIPTS AVAILABLE.

NEXT CONGRESS PLANNING MEETING ON MARCH 31

I understand that there was some confusion regarding the changing of the next meeting for the Neighborhood Council leaders who have been volunteering to help shape the next Congress of Neighborhoods on June 25. On March 18, we sent an e-mail message to all those who attended any of the meeting and said that the group that it didn't want to meet on March 24, but rather to schedule the meeting for March 31, 7 p.m., at our Little Tokyo office, 305 East First Street. Notes of the previous meeting were attached. That was followed with a letter. Sorry for the confusion. We can resend the materials if you wish. I'll notify you when it is posted on the website.

COOL IDEA #1. JUNK ROBERT'S RULES OF ORDER

We've begun receiving suggestions for cool things that Neighborhood Councils can do to help promote greater public participation in city government, a core goal contained in the City Charter. We've also begun receiving cool ideas for ways that Neighborhood Councils can improve their neighborhoods.

We'll send them out as we get them.

It turns out that idea #1 is actually the one that was tossed out in the last newsletter as a possible example:

Unfortunately, some people didn't read past the first five words and felt that the suggestion was that Neighborhood Councils have no rules at all. But, in fact, the idea was that Neighborhood Councils may want to do as the City does, and use Robert's as the foundation for building its own rules. The reason being that a strict adherence to Robert's may be good for the conducting of business, but may not be the best way to conduct a meeting at which you want to encourage public participation. There are several Neighborhood Councils that have experienced problems when only one person knows Robert's Rules of Order, the bylaws require strict adherence to it, and therefore that person with book in hand can control the entire meeting. Part of the suggestion includes amending the rules to permit, for instance, the ability of stakeholders to cast "straw" (advisory) votes on certain issues before the board votes. In this way, stakeholders would have a more active role in the meeting.

NEIGHBORHOOD CAFÉ TRANSCRIPTS AVAILABLE

Using a cadre of talented students we've starting transcribing the Neighborhood Café shows. [Seven](#) have been completed, and our happy merry worker students are busy on the other ones. Click on Training>Neighborhood Café.

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