Friday, November 2, 2007

Dear Neighborhood Leader:

It is my great pleasure to present to you this Handbook for Neighborhood Association Leaders in the City of Independence. This Handbook represents a significant amount of effort to ensure that neighborhood leaders and recognized associations have clear, updated information on a variety of issues concerning neighborhood development.

I hope you find this Handbook not only very useful as you begin the process of creating, nurturing and sustaining a neighborhood association, but that it will be a future reference that you will refer to many times.

This handbook was developed through the efforts of the 2007 Idea Academy of the City of Independence and the Neighborhood and Housing Services Division within the Community Development Department. The idea of creating a Handbook was derived from the Great Northwest Independence Neighborhood Initiative process, which is a citizen involvement and engagement process for residents of the First Council District.

Please call upon me at any time if I may be of assistance to you, and that the City of Independence is supportive of your efforts. Together we can make a difference to benefit all of the residents of Independence.

Sincerely,

Don B. Reimal
Mayor
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Councilmember Marcie Gragg</th>
<th>Councilmember Lucy Young</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>District 1</td>
<td>At-Large</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(816) 325-7022 – office</td>
<td>(816) 325-7022 – office</td>
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<tr>
<td>(816) 461-2717 – home</td>
<td>(816) 795-8921 – home</td>
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<tr>
<td>(816) 325-7012 – fax</td>
<td>(816) 325-7012 – fax</td>
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<tr>
<td><a href="mailto:marciegragg@yahoo.com">marciegragg@yahoo.com</a></td>
<td><a href="mailto:lucy.listens@gmail.com">lucy.listens@gmail.com</a></td>
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<tr>
<th>Councilmember Will Swoffer</th>
<th>Councilmember Jim Schultz</th>
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<tr>
<td>District 2</td>
<td>At-Large</td>
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<tr>
<td>(816) 325-7022 – office</td>
<td>(816) 35-1552 – office</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(816) 257-1888 – home</td>
<td>(816) 325-7012 – fax</td>
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<td>(816) 325-7012 – fax</td>
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<tr>
<td><a href="mailto:wswoffer@indepmo.org">wswoffer@indepmo.org</a></td>
<td><a href="mailto:jschultz@indepmo.org">jschultz@indepmo.org</a></td>
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<tr>
<th>Councilmember Myron Paris</th>
<th>Councilmember Jim Page</th>
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<td>District 3</td>
<td>District 4</td>
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<tr>
<td>(816) 325-7022 - office</td>
<td>(816) 325-7022 – office</td>
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<tr>
<td>(816) 373-1143 – home</td>
<td>(816) 252-1198 – home</td>
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<tr>
<td>(816) 325-7012 - fax</td>
<td>(816) 325-7012 – fax</td>
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<tr>
<td><a href="mailto:mparis@indepmo.org">mparis@indepmo.org</a></td>
<td><a href="mailto:jpage@indepmo.org">jpage@indepmo.org</a></td>
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Great Northwest Independence Neighborhood Initiative
Overview

Over the past decade, the City of Independence has made significant improvements to the basic infrastructure in the First City Council District, which is in the northwest area of the community. These improvements include overlaying streets, adding park amenities, repairing the storm water system, moving electric utility lines underground, and replacing water and sewer lines. Additionally, the neighborhood code compliance and community-oriented policing programs have illustrated how targeted service delivery efforts can make a significant difference in a neighborhood.

The City is continuing its efforts yet this year, not only with numerous physical improvements but also by engaging area residents in developing their own strategic plan. Because the City of Independence recognizes that its priorities might or might not be the same ones that would be outlined by the residents in the area, it announced the Great Northwest Independence Neighborhood Initiative in late 2006.

The Great Northwest Independence Neighborhood Initiative or GNWINI is a specific process whereby residents of the Northwest Area of Independence created an articulated vision for future investment and improvements of their communities to ensure that these neighborhoods are great places to live, work and raise a family.

The GNWINI resulted in the Great Northwest Independence Neighborhood Strategic Plan which outlines priorities determined by the neighborhood with specific action steps including goals and objectives for implementation. These goals and objectives will also utilize available resources to ensure long term sustainability and future investment.

The “Neighborhood Resource Guide” is a product of the GNWINI process. Neighborhood residents expressed a desire to obtain important information and resources in one convenient place. The Neighborhood Services Division and the 2007 IDEA Academy team, responded by creating this document to assist residents in improving and organizing their neighborhoods.

The following figure identifies all of the neighborhood groups in the First District. Additional groups will utilize a similar planning process, and an Action Plan will be developed.
Benefits of a Neighborhood Association

Neighborhoods organize to:

- Meet the neighborhoods’ common goals
- Provide residents with the tools to help resolve issues for their neighborhoods
- Empower the neighborhoods to help control what happens in the area
- Provide the neighborhoods with an effective communication link with government officials and other groups
- Allow members an opportunity to take part in the decision making that directs the neighborhoods’ actions

A Good Neighborhood Leader:

- Shares the power – Prepares other association members to assume leadership responsibilities
- Defines and discusses the goals and objectives of the association with the membership
- Encourages members to participate in the association and committee planning process
- Gives recognition to members and committees who have contributed to the advancement of the neighborhood association
- Keeps the organization open and flexible enough to bring in new members and ideas

A Good Block Captain:

- Attends neighborhood association meetings
- Encourages his neighbors to attend neighborhood association meetings
- Supports efforts to make his community a model community
• Protects his community assets (clean streets and yards, elderly, children and community property)
• Promotes the climate of neighbors helping neighbors
• Knows who lives on his street
• Shares information with his neighbors

Tips for Resolving Organizational Conflict:

• Talk directly to each other – Direct conversation is much more effective
• Choose a good time and place to meet – Meet in a place that is neutral and a time of day that is less stressful
• Plan ahead – Decide what needs to be sold ahead of time, state clearly what the problem is and how it affects the membership
• Don’t place blame – Antagonizing each other only serves to compound the problem
• Listen – Give all the members on opportunity to express their opinions
• Talk it all through – Put all of the issues and opinions on the table, don’t ignore them because they are difficult to discuss
• Work on a joint solution – People cooperating is much more effective than one or two persons telling others what to do or to change
• Follow through – Agree to review the agreed upon solutions at certain times to make sure they are still working
Getting Started

One of the first steps an organizer should take in forming a community organization is the development of the core group (representatives of the community). In order to identify the core group the organizer must spend time:

- Talking to the people in the community
- Identifying problems in the community
- Identifying who will be affected by the issues
- Identifying WHO IS WILLING TO STEP FORWARD AND TAKE ACTION

Examples of groups that may be represented in the core groups:

- Residents/homeowners from the targeted area (remember to consider the elderly and the youth)
- Local business owners
- Civic leaders

Keep in mind that if the core group becomes too large, it may become too hard to manage and you won’t be able to accomplish as much. Set up the meeting soon after you get the commitment from the core group so that your contacts will not lose interest.

At the initial meeting of the core group, make sure everyone understands the purpose of organizing the vision of the community and their potential role in the organization. At this meeting, it is not important to be overly concerned with the structure of the organization. However, it is important that a coordinator be selected to make sure that the planning activities of the organization remain focused. The purpose of this meeting is to determine if there are enough concerned community members to begin the
hard work of putting together a collective vision and plan for the organization for the community.

Another very important item for discussion at the initial meeting is the boundaries of the targeted area. Keep in mind that you should have an area that is manageable. Once the core group decides upon the boundaries of the area, a complete list of residents and property owners should be compiled. The list should be kept current during the whole organizing and planning process so that every person has an opportunity to become involved. This list can be compiled by doing door-to-door canvassing or going to the city tax or voter registration records and identifying the property owners. Once the core group, the boundaries, and list of residents and property owners have been established, you are now ready for the core group to begin volunteering for various activities. The following examples may be used for volunteer activities:

- Community Inventory – prepare a list of information unique to your community such as property owners/residents, housing, land use, etc.
- Identification of issues and opportunities – identify issues, concerns and opportunities through surveys sent to residents or through a series of community meetings. Some of the concerns may deal with crime, land use issues, physical improvements, transportation, economic development and social functions. Opportunities may be vacant land that could be used for affordable housing, business or recreational development.
- Community Plan – develop a vision and draft a set of goals (broad statements about what the residents would like to have happen) and objectives (policies) for the future development and maintenance of the community. Also develop a set of suggested strategies on how to reach the goals.

As the organization develops, it is very important that the coordinator makes sure that the public, particularly the residents and property owners in the targeted area, are aware of the progress, activities, victories and stumbling blocks of the organization. Good communication about the organization helps to build the strength of the group and attract new members. These
are some suggested methods for communicating information about the organization.

- A community newsletter
- Local media (newspapers, television and radio)
- Bulletins, pamphlets, posters, and flyers placed in strategic locations
- Phone calls
- Community meetings and events

**How to Begin**

Although it would be nice if people formed groups just on the basis of wanting to better their neighborhood, it often doesn’t work that way. Most of us respond to issues; and it is sometimes hard to attract anyone to an initial meeting that has no issue or major concern. The important thing is to turn issues into a positive plan of action.

Once you have an issue that people can rally around, it is time to start talking about it. Get a few interested neighbors together for a meeting in someone’s home. Here is a tentative agenda…

- Discuss each person’s idea of the problems, and needs of the neighborhood
- Determine the boundaries of your neighborhood
- Choose a temporary chairperson
- Plan meeting to announce the group to everyone in the neighborhood

It is helpful to have this first planning meeting in order to “get a handle
on” the group’s direction. Quite often a group will start out with a large meeting that has no direction, no chair person, and no agenda other than a discussion of the issue. The resulting confusion from such a meeting can be frustrating to the initiators, alienating to potential members, and wasteful of a lot of good energy.

**Leader’s Checklist**

(Basic Organizational Structure)

COMMUNITIES ORGANIZE TO GAIN CONTROL AND POWER. Residents of communities seek for control because they want more participation in the processes that govern their communities and lives. They want the political process to be more responsive to their needs. Residents are learning that community organizing allows them to take an aggressive rather than passive approach to dealing with issues in their communities. They also have recognized that community organizing helps to teach them when to apply pressure, where to apply pressure, how to apply pressure and who to apply pressure to in resolving issues for their communities. More important, communities are learning that by dealing with issues together, they can fight back and win.

**The Responsibilities of a Board of Directors**

- Establish and protect the mission of the organization
- Determine priority goals and delegate responsibility to carry them out
- Be accountable both to the organization’s consumer population and to the broader community
- Represent the organization to the public
- Establish procedures for accountability within the organization
- Hire a chief executive officer and evaluate her/his performance regularly
- Evaluate program services regularly
- Manage the assets of the organization
- Establish personnel policies
- Review bylaws and tax exemption papers periodically
- Administer all contacts and insurance policies entered into by the organization
- Approve an annual budget and regularly review financial statements
- Manage fundraising activities
- Review the annual audit and approve organization’s response to audit

Note: This document is meant as a general guideline for organization and should be revised to fit the purpose and size of the community organization it is applied to.

Originally Prepared by:

The Institute for Nonprofit Development, a program division of the Council of Community Semites of New York State, Inc.

Roles & Responsibilities of Board and Staff

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Board</th>
<th>Staff</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Make financial decisions on policies relating to personnel, finance, public relations and services.</td>
<td>Carry out work authorized by policy making body.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Expertise in a variety of technical and leadership areas needed by organization.</td>
<td>Educated and experienced in professional skills needed by organization.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expected to know history, purpose, program, policies and practices of organization.</td>
<td>Responsible for understanding job to which he/she is assigned.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prepared by general experiences and interest in organization work to represent the community.</td>
<td>Responsible for learning about community, organization and clientele being served.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expected to know duties delegated to staff.</td>
<td>Make day to day decisions required to do the work of the organization.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Available to staff for consultation of</td>
<td>Consult with professionals in order to</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>matters of common concern.</td>
<td>make wise decisions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interpret informally the work of organization in day to day contracts, and formally when requested.</td>
<td>Act as bridge between board and organization, and as a bridge between cultures in a culturally diverse organization.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Insure financial support for organization work.</td>
<td>Direct work of other staff members assigned to him/her, define duties, give support.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluate work of organization with assistance of staff.</td>
<td>Help board make good decisions based on complete information.</td>
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### The Officers As A Work Group
The Executive Committee

**Duties and Responsibilities:**

- Plan work program of board
- Coordinate annual planning and budget process, select items for board consideration
- Facilitate decision making process of board at the policy-making level
- Provide a committee structure to work on issues and give board members opportunity for development
- Maintain flow of work between board and its committees, schedule major policy consideration over a long time period to allow for information flow, alternative development, education, discussion and testing of option
- Take action in name of the board by telephone conference call between board meetings when a quick decision is needed to respond to crisis or opportunity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>President (one or more)</th>
<th>Vice-President (one or more)</th>
<th>Secretary (one or more)</th>
<th>Treasurer</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>President</strong></td>
<td><strong>Vice-President</strong></td>
<td><strong>Secretary</strong></td>
<td><strong>Treasurer</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Preside at meetings</td>
<td>• Act in place of president</td>
<td>• Keep record of Board</td>
<td>• Keep custody of organizational funds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Maintain overview of business of agency</td>
<td>• Perform specific jobs as assigned by board</td>
<td>• Keep minutes of Board</td>
<td>• Keep books of accounts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Insure all</td>
<td></td>
<td>• Handle</td>
<td>• Report to</td>
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</table>
policies of board are followed
- Represent organization
- Appoint all committees
- Serve as ex-officio member of committees

correspondence
- Give all notices as required

board regularly
- Arrange for audit of books
- Sit on Finance and Budget Committees

The Importance of Committees

1. Do the bulk of the work of the organization, thereby relieving overburdened officers

2. Increase the involvement of board members because they have a chance to work in areas where they are especially suited

3. Provide a training ground for future leaders of the organization

4. Capitalize on the experience, training and contacts of a wide representation of the membership

5. Enhances the opportunities for members to participate meaningfully in the organization

6. Increase the visibility and outreach of the agency by including non-board members in committee membership
7. Provide a means for communication and information to flow from the community, clients, line staff, through the committees to the board

8. Provide opportunities for board members to get to know line staff

9. Give members the chance to freely and fully discuss issues in an informal setting

10. Serve as excellent problem solving and decision making groups because of their small size and informality

DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE COMMITTEE CHAIRPERSON

A Checklist
1. Build a team of your committee by bringing people along with you, working with team
2. Interpret the purpose and program of your organization to the committee
3. Understand and interpret your community to the organization and committee members
4. Be knowledgeable about services of other organizations
5. Use skills in human relations and knowledge of your committee members to help each attain the peak of performance
6. Accept and understand your committee’s goals and objectives as they come to you from the board planning process
7. Guide your committee in long and short range planning
8. In the budget process, have your committee estimate costs of objectives and identify any income
9. Monitor implementation of committee objectives
10. When appropriate, decide with committee to take part in implementing objectives
11. Delegate responsibilities to committee members
12. Recognize conflicts and disagreements and use problem-solving skills to deal with them

**Committees**
<table>
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<tr>
<th>Type of Committee Size</th>
<th>Charge</th>
<th>Make-Up</th>
<th>Chairperson’s Qualification</th>
<th>Relationship to Board Chair</th>
</tr>
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</table>
| **Standing** 5-9 Members | • Continuous responsibility  
• Reaches collective decision  
• Relieves the officers of many administrative burdens | • Those who are interested in the subject matter of the committee actively  
• Those with special skills  
• Representatives of board make-up | • Should be senior to most members  
• Doesn’t hold strong opinions in committee’s area of interest  
• Should be autocratic enough to control the agenda and permissive enough to allow consensus decisions on nearly unanimous reports | • He/she is ex-officio member  
• Access to all meetings and records |
| **Special** 10-30 people | • Consideration of special, difficult problem, often complex and controversial  
• Must come up with compromise that is acceptable to majority of committee members and board as a whole  
• Must distribute committee report widely | • Broadly representative of the whole board  
• All viewpoints of those involved in problem or controversy | • Should have considerable seniority  
• Strong leader with good command of parliamentary procedure  
• Must guide committee to nearly unanimous decision  
• Must be able to define issues, propose solutions and summarize group decisions | • Chair is ex-officio but should allow maximum freedom to committee  
• Appear at meetings seldom, if ever  
• Give clear charge to committee as to what is expected and by when |
1. Leaders seem to be so completely wrapped up in their jobs that they can’t spare the time to worry about the jobs they might get or about other people who seem to be getting ahead faster than they
2. Most leaders have hides as thick rhinoceros as far as their own personal pride is concerned, but they are extremely sensitive to pride of others
3. Most leaders instinctively listen more than they talk, and talk only when they have something worthwhile and appropriate to say
4. When leaders listen they automatically sift out of the words they hear the central points of what the speaker has on his/her mind
5. Having faith in the ability of their work to speak for itself, they are not afraid of their jobs or of anyone who threatens their jobs
6. Most leaders are not naturally inclined to invest, or become authors, or create new systems, or demonstrate their own personal talents or accomplishments publicly. Neither do they spend much time selling themselves.
7. Leaders can recognize and evaluate the ability of others, encourage its development and employ it to the best advantage of all concerned
8. Leaders win the confidence and respect of those who willingly accept them as references, judges and counselors
9. All leaders control their temper to a market degree-do not give away to uncontrolled enthusiasm or despair-but move from day to day on an even keel
10. Leaders do not permit themselves to be bogged down with unimportant details. They are naturally inclined to brush aside details, with an eye for the key log in a jam
11. Most leaders have a highly-developed intuition. While respectful of facts and logic, they are able to read between the lines and anticipate the answer to a problem before it is available
12. Most leaders have the faculty of gaining confidence without becoming intimate with individuals
13. Most leaders are incapable of intense hatred, grudges or bitter quarrels, and are not conscious of enemies
14. All leaders suggest rather than order
The Basics on Neighborhood Meetings

The First Large Meeting:

Once you have a core group together, start planning your first large meeting. Here are some tips:

- Arrange for the use of a church basement, school, or community center within your area. If you have a choice, choose a room that is a bit too small for the crowd you are expecting. A group of 50 can get lost in a room meant for 200; whereas, that same group in a room meant for 40 will feel a greater sense of unity and closeness (although it might get a bit stuffy). All of this moving around and rearranging may seem silly, but the experience of neighborhood organizers has shown that it does make a difference.

- Prepare a colorful flyer that states the time, place, date, and purpose of the meeting. Get the flyers made at the quick-copy printer. If there is such a place in the neighborhood, ask if they will donate the printing. If not, the core group can bear this first cost (after all, it’s a worthy cause).

NOTE: Schedule the meeting during the early evening and make arrangements to transport seniors.

- The core group should personally distribute flyers throughout the neighborhood. Be prepared to do a lot of talking. Check with the principal of the elementary school in your area about sending flyers home with children. Don’t forget to include your merchants, ministers and others who work in your neighborhood.
• At this first meeting, it will help if special attention is given to the setup of chairs, etc. Since it is possible that many people will need to get acquainted, make it easy for them by arranging the chairs so that people have to look at each other. Post a map of the neighborhood with the areas of concern clearly marked (maps are available from the City Planning Office for a small fee). Have coffee or other light refreshments available and allow time for mingling. Use a flip chart or other paper taped to wall to write down peoples ideas.

• Follow a prepared agenda and give everyone a chance to speak. If there are several issues, vote to prioritize them. Obviously, some of the problems can be solved immediately while others will require months and maybe years of effort. It is best to have a steady stream of small projects to make the group feel successful as well as one or two big issues.

• End the meeting by giving committee assignments to develop the projects identified. If the tone of the meeting has been sincere and enthusiastic, you will have ample volunteers. Follow up by drafting goals, projects to achieve the goals, and committees and timetable to work on the projects. Plan to present your draft in a later meeting for review by the group.

By-Laws

By-laws are simply general rules governing a group. They should include the name and purpose of the group, description of members, terms of officers, dues, meetings, and a provision for amendments. See addendum for sample By-Laws for neighborhood associations.

Incorporation
Incorporation as a non-profit organization helps define a group and contributes to its credibility as a viable, working body of interesting people. It also protects the liability of group members. There are costs associated with incorporation. This information can be located on the Missouri Secretary of State website. [www.sos.mo.gov](http://www.sos.mo.gov) You may also obtain the required paperwork by accessing this website.

**Tax Exempt Status**

The tax exempt status, 501(c)3 is often confused with incorporation. A group usually must be incorporated at the state level before it can apply for tax exemption from the federal government, Internal Revenue Service. This status allows contributors to deduct their contribution from their income tax. An application may be obtained from your local IRS office. The application process may take up to six months to complete.

**Legal Assistance**

The ideal way to obtain legal assistance is to locate a attorney who lives within your area and hopefully is also a part of the group. They may be willing to donate some or all of their time when assisting the group. If this is not possible, contact a local lawyer group about providing some assistance either free or at discount rates.

**Volunteers**

The most successful groups are thoughtful of their volunteers, with recognition, an occasional social gathering, and many words of thanks to let everyone know that they are needed and appreciated. Failing to let people know you appreciate their help is the surest way to lose their interest.

On this same subject, try not to let one or two persons shoulder all of the responsibility for the group. For someone who knows the issues, is eager, and has a lot of free time, the temptation to “do it all” is overwhelming.
When that happens, you cease to be a group and become a couple of overworked people who call themselves a group. Spread the work around and you’ll reap the benefits of an involved, interested group of people.

Meetings

Many a group has lost valuable momentum because of poor meetings. With a little thought and some attention to detail, your meetings can be effective.

First of all, why are you meeting? It isn’t always necessary to call a full group meeting to make minor decisions; for that, you should use your executive committee. Most groups meet once a month unless something important requires an additional meeting. Plan your agenda before the meeting and post it in the meeting room. A sample agenda might read like this:

I. Minutes of Previous Meeting
II. Correspondence
III. Committee Report
IV. New Projects
V. Announcements
VI. Adjournment

If you have a regular meeting scheduled but don’t really have anything to discuss, and then create something. Invite a guest speaker, take a neighborhood tour or have a potluck. It is good for groups to make contact on a regular basis, and it sometimes necessary to reaffirm your “groupness”.

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Arrange the meeting room in such a way that it encourages people to talk. Set chairs in a semi or full circle so that everyone can be seen. Avoid the “classroom meeting” where everyone sits in stiff little rows facing the speaker. Do away with tables unless you need them to hold drawings or literature; they can form barriers to communication. An exception would be sitting everyone around a large table; especially if you need to write.

If the group is comfortable using Robert’s Rules of Order, by all means use it. If a group is not comfortable or feels inhibited by Robert’s Rules of Order, a special effort should be made to ensure that a vote truly represents the will of the group. Keep meetings orderly and democratic. Allow plenty of debate on important issues, but don’t be afraid to set time limits.

Finally, try to end each meeting with some concrete action. Have a list of things to be done and try to involve as many members as possible to do them.

**Money**

Although fund raising, private foundation grants, etc. are certainly useful when large amounts of money are needed, the kind of money referred to here is that contributed by members themselves. Every group needs to have seed money for activities such as mailings, flyers, social gatherings or a newsletter.

One way of getting money is to assess each member. Another way is to simply pass the hat to all regular meetings. Even ten people giving a dollar each at ten meetings can generate a substantial sum. The treasurer should
keep an account of every penny that is spent. If no one in the group has accounting skills, ask a high school or trade school accounting/bookkeeping instructor to help out, or assign a student to work with your group. It is best to set up a system for accounting at the beginning. Arguments about where the money went can be very destructive. Open an account in the group’s name at a bank in the neighborhood. Arrange it so that two signatures are needed to make withdrawals.
(The Name of Your Neighborhood)
Association Meeting
Day and Date
Time
Where and address

(A question that would encourage people to come to your meeting. For example, Do you want more parks in your neighborhood?)

(A follow up question that will also encourage people to come to your meeting. For example, What are the Bend Metro Parks and Recreation District’s plans for your neighborhood?)

If you live, own property, or have a business in the area below, don't miss out on this meeting:

➢ East of (your West boundary)
➢ North of (your South boundary)
➢ West of (your East boundary)
➢ South of (your North boundary)

GUEST SPEAKER: Join (who will be speaking and brief description of what will be presented)

Questions? Contact (who do people call and phone number(s))

We need representation from all areas of our neighborhood… Please join us!
Date meeting is to be held
Time the meeting is scheduled. Example 6:00 PM - 8:00 PM
Place.
Address and/or directions

Sample AGENDA for Neighborhood Association Meetings

Meeting Purpose:
Describe why the meeting is being held? For example, General Membership Officer's Election. Or, Introduction of the Parks and Recreation District Neighborhood Parks Plan.

If you are holding a committee meeting or officer's meeting you will want to list who is expected to be at your meeting here. If it is a general membership meeting, make sure your greeter(s) sign people in and use the sample attendance form.

Facilitator:
Who will be conducting the meeting? This will usually be your Neighborhood Association President. Be sure to include the facilitator's name and e-mail address or phone number.

Working Tools:
You may omit this category if you do not plan on having handouts to give to members.
Example:
Officer's ballot
Bylaw Committee's recommended bylaws

Time: Discussion Topic and who will be presiding over this topic:

For Example:

6:00-6:15 Introduction of Recommended Bylaws
Office of Neighborhood Association Coordinator

6:15-7:45 Discussion of Bylaws
Jane Doe, Bylaw Committee Chair

7:45-8:00 Conclusions and Discussion of Agenda items for next meeting
Jane Doe, Bylaw Committee Chair

Next meeting:
Date
Time
Place

Topic: Example: General membership meeting. Discuss the Bylaw Committee's Recommendation for the Bylaws. Working Tools: Completed Committee Bylaws
Thank you for attending our neighborhood meeting. We appreciate knowing how well we have met your needs and expectations, and thank you for your candid evaluation. Please let us know what you thought about our meeting by checking the appropriate boxes in the categories below. We encourage you to write specific comments provided at the bottom of the page.

**Program**

- Excellent
- Satisfactory
- Unsatisfactory
- Not Applicable

- Length
- Packet materials
- Audio/Visual
- Content

Comments________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________

**Meeting Discussions**

- Satisfactory
- Unsatisfactory
- Not Applicable

- Was information conveyed effectively?
- Was participation encouraged?
- How was the response to questions?
- Did the meeting follow the agenda?

**Volunteering**

____ Yes! Please contact me! I am interested in helping our Neighborhood Association. I am interested in the following….

____ Telephone Tree  ____ Fliers & Notices  ____ E-mail Services
____ Programs  ____ Contacting Businesses  ____ Committees
____ Making cookies for meetings  ____ Working on a Project  ____ Hosting Coffee
____ Other

My special skills and interests are ___________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________

**Overall Program Quality**

What did you like most about this meeting?

________________________________________________________________________________
How can our meetings be improved?

For Emergencies DIAL 9-1-1

Independence Police Department
223 N. Memorial Drive
Independence MO 64050.3013

For general information call
816.325.7300 24-hours a day
816.325.7270 fax

Independence Police Department Contact Information

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Contact</th>
<th>Phone</th>
<th>Fax</th>
<th>E-Mail</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chief of Police</td>
<td>325.7271</td>
<td>325.7809</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administrative Assistant</td>
<td>325.7271</td>
<td>325.7809</td>
<td><a href="mailto:Srector@indepmo.org">Srector@indepmo.org</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shari Rector</td>
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<tr>
<td>Uniform Patrol Unit</td>
<td>325.7280</td>
<td>325.7270</td>
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<tr>
<td>Detective Unit</td>
<td>325.7330</td>
<td>325.7354</td>
<td><a href="mailto:apetree@indepmo.org">apetree@indepmo.org</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drug Enforcement Unit</td>
<td>325.NARC</td>
<td>325.7316</td>
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<tr>
<td>Canine Unit</td>
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<td><a href="mailto:thanenkratt@indepmo.org">thanenkratt@indepmo.org</a></td>
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<td>21101A E 23rd</td>
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<td>Independence MO 64057</td>
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<tr>
<td>D.A.R.E. Unit</td>
<td>521.2736</td>
<td>325.7316</td>
<td><a href="mailto:drapp@indepmo.org">drapp@indepmo.org</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neighborhood Watch Office</td>
<td>257.7824</td>
<td>325.7316</td>
<td><a href="mailto:nwatch@indepmo.org">nwatch@indepmo.org</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Traffic Safety Unit</td>
<td>325.7290</td>
<td>325.7270</td>
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<tr>
<td>Detention Unit (Jail)</td>
<td>325.7246</td>
<td>325.7270</td>
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<tr>
<td>Police Records Unit</td>
<td>325.7300</td>
<td>325.7270</td>
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<tr>
<td>Public Information - Media Relations Office</td>
<td>325.7258</td>
<td>325.7316</td>
<td><a href="mailto:tgentry@indepmo.org">tgentry@indepmo.org</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crime Prevention Unit</td>
<td>257.7824</td>
<td>325.7316</td>
<td><a href="mailto:jedwards@indepmo.org">jedwards@indepmo.org</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Independence Center Sub Station</td>
<td>325.7876</td>
<td>325.7873</td>
<td><a href="mailto:dfowler@indepmo.org">dfowler@indepmo.org</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>2150 Independence Center Independence MO 64057</td>
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<tr>
<td>Volunteer's In Policing (VIPs)</td>
<td>325-7644</td>
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<td><a href="mailto:jedwards@indepmo.org">jedwards@indepmo.org</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Grants Administrator</td>
<td>325.7315</td>
<td>325.7316</td>
<td><a href="mailto:dleap@indepmo.org">dleap@indepmo.org</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional Standards Internal Affairs Unit</td>
<td>325.7820</td>
<td>325.7316</td>
<td><a href="mailto:qbrown@indepmo.org">qbrown@indepmo.org</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weed &amp; Seed Area Office - Englewood</td>
<td>325.7646</td>
<td>325.7316</td>
<td><a href="mailto:bvaughan@indepmo.org">bvaughan@indepmo.org</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Training Unit</td>
<td>325.7259</td>
<td>325.7316</td>
<td><a href="mailto:rcooper@indepmo.org">rcooper@indepmo.org</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Property &amp; Evidence Unit</td>
<td>325.7302</td>
<td>325.7270</td>
<td><a href="mailto:mcavanah@indepmo.org">mcavanah@indepmo.org</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Crime Scene Unit</td>
<td>325.7328</td>
<td>325.7316</td>
<td><a href="mailto:mcavanah@indepmo.org">mcavanah@indepmo.org</a></td>
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<td>Forensic Lab</td>
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**Neighborhood Watch**

The Independence Police Department recognizes that community participation in crime prevention programs is essential to improving the quality of life in the City of Independence. One of the most effective ways to promote citizen interaction with police is the sharing of information. At its heart, The Neighborhood Watch Program encourages this partnership between the police and community. It is a program of neighbors watching out for other neighbors, particularly during times when criminal activity would likely occur. Also, as a part of Neighborhood Watch, citizen groups determine specific needs or problems and then share this information with local police. The police then act on this information and report back to the group on their progress.

**Crime Free Multi-Housing**

Crime Free Multi-Housing Program was designed to help tenants, owners, and the managers of rental property keep drugs and other illegal activity off their property. This program is free, honest and direct. It is solution oriented. It is designed to be easy, yet very effective in reducing the incident of crime in rental property. The program utilized a unique three-part approach which ensures the crime prevention goal, while maintaining an approach which is very tenant-friendly. Phase One involves an eight hour seminar presented by the Police. Phase Two will certify that the rental property has met the security requirements for the tenants' safety. In Phase Three, a tenant crime prevention meeting will be conducted for full certification, and the managers will be granted the use of large metal signs for display on the property. The management will also be granted the use of program logo in all advertisements. Call Officer Gary Starks at (816) 325-7875 for a complete listing of future training dates.

Landlords are encouraged to require a criminal background check as well as a credit check before renting and before lease renewal. Perspective tenants who have lived in Independence in the past can go to the Police station and obtain a printout on themselves for a nominal fee. If they are from outside Independence, the following services can be contracted for a nominal fee:
Community Emergency Response Training

Emergency preparedness is the responsibility of all citizens of any community. At home, at work or school, while recreating, emergencies and disasters can happen at any time of day, at any location. The normal emergency response agencies will be overwhelmed with people needing their help. We would like to offer a course of training to help the ordinary citizen be prepared to cope with the first two to eight hours in a disaster. The Community Emergency Response Team course (C.E.R.T.) is being presented by our Fire Department to interested citizens and groups who would like to be better prepared in the time of disaster.

If available, emergency services personnel are the best equipped to handle emergencies and you should use them. However, following a catastrophic disaster, you and the community may be on your own for a period of time because of the size of the area affected, lost communications, and impassable roads, CERT training is designed to prepare you to help yourself, your family, and your neighbors in the event of a catastrophic disaster. Because emergency services personnel will not be able to help everyone immediately you can make a difference by using the training to save lives and protect property. This training covers basic skills that are important to know in a disaster when emergency services are not available. You will want to help. With training and practice and by working as a team, you will be able to do the greatest good for the greatest number after a disaster while protecting yourself from becoming a victim. The CERT training is organized into six weekly sessions of three hours each. The training consists of six modules, disaster preparedness, disaster fire suppression, disaster medical (2 modules), light search and rescue, and disaster psychology/team organization. After completion of the six modules, there is a disaster simulation where the participants will have the opportunity to put into practice some of the techniques taught in the course. A minimal charge of $15 per person covers the cost of this course. Call (816) 325-7167 to sign up for the class. A group of 20 persons are needed to simulate a disaster.
Citizens' Police Academy

The Citizens' Police Academy is a group of citizens who are interested in learning more about how the police department operates and the policing challenges our city faces. Participants in each session commit to meeting for three hours one night per week, for ten weeks, to learn about each aspect of the department.

The purpose of the Independence Citizens' Police Academy is to develop positive relations between the police and community through education. The goals are to create a growing nucleus of responsible, well-informed citizens who have the potential of influencing public opinions about police practices and services. Citizens will gain an appreciation of the programs and challenges facing law enforcement and have an opportunity to offer comments and ideas regarding solutions.

Instructors are officers and personnel from the department who speak on their areas of expertise, as well as specialized guest speakers.

Participants must be at least juniors in high school or older. They do not have to be Independence residents, but an interest in the City or an interest in law enforcement is helpful. Participants are chosen at the discretion of the Academy Coordinator.

At the completion of the academy, graduates will be able to participate in the ride along program.

If you are interested in becoming a participant in the next Citizens' Police Academy, contact Sgt. Don Fowler at (816) 325-7876.

Volunteers in Police Services (VIPS)
VIPS is a low profile program established to enable community members to actively participate in a crime reduction effort within their own neighborhoods. It consists of a core group of citizen volunteers who have been trained in observing and reporting criminal activity directly to the police department.

If you are interested in the VIPS Program call the Community Services Division at (816) 325-7876.

INDEPENDENCE FIRE DEPARTMENT PHONE LIST

IF YOU HAVE AN EMERGENCY………………………DIAL 911

Administration 325-7123  (Fire Dept. Non Emergency Line)

Emergency Preparedness 325-7167
Home Fire Safety Checklist

Smoke Detectors

- Do you have a smoke detector?
- Do you test your smoke detector each month?
- Have you replaced the smoke detector battery this year?

Electrical Hazards

- Do you allow only electricians to install or extend your wiring?
- When you buy electrical equipment, e.g., extension cords, appliances, TV sets and all other devices, do you always look for the UL label of Underwriters' Laboratories, Inc.?
- Are there enough electrical outlets in every room to avoid the need for multiple attachment plugs and long extension cords?
- Are there proper heat controls on your electrical appliances used for cooking?
- Do you have special circuits on your heavy duty electrical appliances used for cooking?
- Do you use only 15 amp fuses for your household lighting circuits?
- Are all extension cords used in the open, e.g., not ran under rugs, over hooks or through partitions or door openings?

Housekeeping Hazards

- Do you keep your basement, closets and attics cleared of old rags, papers, mattresses, broken furniture and other combustible odds and ends?
• If you use an oil mop, do you keep it in a well ventilated place where it will not
  catch fire by spontaneous heating?
• After using oily polishing rags, do you destroy them or place them in covered
  metal cans?
• Are lids on opened paints and solvent containers always tightly closed?
• You never use gasoline and bezine for any purpose in the home?
• Is gasoline always kept in a safety can with a self closing lid?
• Are leaves and debris promptly removed on surrounding property?
• Every fireplace is protected with a metal fire screen?

**Matches & Careless Smoking Hazards**

• Matches are always stored out of the reach of children?
• Matches are kept away from heaters, stoves and sources of heat?
• Matches and cigarettes are always out before they are thrown away?
• If applicable, every room in the home has plenty of large, fire proof ash trays?
• "No Smoking in Bed" is a firm rule for everyone in the home?

**Heating & Cooking Hazards**

• Heating equipment has either a UL or American Gas Association label?
• Do you have your heating systems inspected and serviced each session?
• Are walls, ceilings and partitions near heating and cooking equipment either
  adequately separated from these sources of heat or protected by noncombustible
  insulation?
• Are wood floors under stoves and heaters protected by insulation or ventilated air
  spaces?
• Is your stove, including oven and broiler, kept clean of grease?
• Are curtains near stoves and heating equipment arranged so as not to blow over
  them?
• Are all heaters set level, and placed out of the way of traffic?
• Do you always turn off portable oil or gas heaters when you go to bed?
• Since gas and oil heaters use up oxygen as they burn, do you always keep a
  door or window slightly open in any room where such a heater is being used?
• Do you always refill the fuel tank of your oil heaters and oil stove outside, and in
  the daylight?
• Do you see that any portable heater is placed well away from curtains, bedding,
  furniture and other combustible materials?
• Are the gas connections for portable heaters or other gas appliances made of
  metal?
• Is the inside basement door at the end of the stairs properly fitted and kept
  closed at night?
• Has everyone in the family been warned never to use kerosene or other flammable liquids to start a fire in the stove, fireplace, or furnace?
• Is every fireplace equipped with a sturdy metal fire screen?

Yard & Garage Hazards

• Do you keep your yard cleared of leaves, debris, and combustible rubbish?
• If any adjacent property is vacant, have dry leaves, weeds and rubbish been cleared?
• If you keep gasoline for use in a power mower or outdoor motor, is it in a strong metal safety type can with self closing caps on the openings?
• If your garage is attached to the house, does a tight fitting door that is kept closed, separate it?

Special For Parents

• Do you keep matches out of the reach of children?
• Do you leave a responsible person with your child when you go out, even for a little while?
• When you employ babysitters, do you instruct them carefully on what to do in case of fire?
• IMPORTANT: A child learns by example and by instruction. Concerning fire safety, do you always set a good example?

In Case Of Fire

• Do you know to call nine-one-one (911) in case of a fire?
• Do you know how to turn on an alarm?
• Have you worked out a plan of escape from every room in your house, especially from the bedrooms?
• Have you practiced an escape plan by holding fire drills in your home?

Every NO to a question indicates a fire hazard, and should be corrected.
Public Education

The Fire Prevention Bureau is responsible for presenting Fire Safety programs for all citizens of Independence. We have programs for everyone from 3 years to 103 years of age.

The concept of Fire Safety education is designed to increase knowledge, and to develop and change attitudes of men, women, and children toward fire.

Juvenile programs which are presented at Fire Station #1 (24 Highway and Spring), consist of station tour, truck or pumper demonstration, video and fire safety talk. Programs that are presented at schools, churches and other locations throughout the city consist of all the aforementioned, with the exception of the tour. When a group visits another station, the program consists of a station tour pumper. Demo material covered is graded to the age of the group.

Summer programs are designed to stress safety, the building and the use of campfires, and to reinforce the idea of good fires versus bad fires. Smokey the Bear is
used a great deal in the summer programs. Also included is a discussion and review of camping safety, which helps compare the use of good fires and how fires can become bad fires. The EDITH program, Exit Drills in the Home, is reviewed. Preparing a home evacuation plan and practicing fire drills with the entire family is urged. In addition, the children are encouraged to practice fire drills at their grandparents homes.

**Adult** programs are adapted for specific occupations or groups of people being addressed. The number of adults who participate, continue to increase.

Presentations in the work setting are directed toward the occupation. Warehouses, group homes (staff/residents), medical offices, restaurants, and other city departments are examples of the variety of workplaces accommodated.

The Fire Prevention Bureau has presented programs to local nursing home staffs for several years. This program includes fire safety in the nursing home, a fire extinguisher demonstration, and hands-on experience. The demonstration also explains extinguishing a bed fire and includes a practice session.

The Senior Citizen program includes high-rise fire drills, which are followed by question-and-answer sessions. Several senior social groups have also been recipients of Fire Safety for Seniors talks. In addition, a video on fire safety is presented and specific fire hazards, pertinent to senior citizens, are discussed.

The Fire Prevention Bureau has an assortment of video tapes, handout material relevant to every age.

**Community Emergency Response Team Program (CERT)**

The Emergency Preparedness Division Provides a Community and Family Preparedness Program with the support of State Emergency Management Agency (SEMA).

Preparedness is everyone’s job. Not just government agencies but all sectors of society - service providers, business, civic and volunteer groups, industry associations, as well as every individual citizen - should plan ahead for disaster. During the first few hours or days following a disaster, essential services may not be available. People must be ready to act on their own.

Community Emergency Response Training gives both theoretical and practical experiences that will prepare you, your family and your neighbors to better cope with a disastrous situation. Neighbors helping each other can make a big difference.

Experience is proven that the first three days after a disaster are critical. That is also the time when emergency services may be unavailable. By teaching the basics of emergency preparedness, disaster medicine and light search and rescue, the Independence Fire Department hopes to empower individuals to feel confident enough to take control of an emergency and do what is best for their
families and immediate neighborhood.

The CERT training is organized into six weekly sessions of three hours each.

All instructors are highly trained and experienced individuals, dedicated to providing a level of training that will prepare CERT members to help themselves, their families and neighbors in times of disaster.

Following is a brief description of the CERT classes and some skills that will be taught:

- **MODULE ONE**
  - **Disaster Preparedness:**
    Introduction to types of disasters and the role of CERTs in a disaster.

- **MODULE TWO**
  - **Disaster Fire Suppression:**
    Basic fire suppression strategy, fire fighting resources and fire fighting techniques.

- **MODULE THREE**
  - **Disaster Medical Operations:**
    Treatment techniques for life threatening conditions, principles of triage, establishing treatment areas, and more.

- **MODULE FOUR**
  - **Light Search and Rescue Operations:**
    Search and rescue priorities, size-up strategies, and rescuer safety.

- **MODULE FIVE**
  - **Disaster Psychology and Team Organization:**
    The post-disaster emotional environment, the CERT organization and decision making.

For more information please contact the Emergency Preparedness Division at 816.325.7167.

**Code Compliance**

The City of Independence has developed municipal codes intended to protect the life, health, safety, and welfare of its residents. The Property Maintenance Code, Dangerous Building Code, and Health Code set the standards by which development must conform.

It is the mission of the Code Compliance Division of the Health Department to work in partnership with the people of Independence to promote and maintain a safe and desirable living and working environment. We help maintain or improve the quality of our community in three ways:
1. We **administer** a fair and unbiased enforcement program to correct violations of municipal codes and land use requirements. The codes we enforce are:

- Property Maintenance Code - minimum standards for safe and sanitary property
- Dangerous Building Code - conditions of an existing structure that constitute a clear and present danger to the public
- Landlord/Tenant Code - requirements for landlords/tenants

2. We **work** with residents, neighborhood associations, public service agencies and other City of Independence Departments to:

- Empower community self-help programs.
- Develop public outreach programs.
- Establish community priorities for the enforcement program.

3. We **participate** in special programs targeted toward specific problems in Independence communities. These programs include:

- Neighborhood Action Centers
- Rental Licensing Program
- Crime-Free Multi-Housing Program

**Enforcement Methods**

In most cases, the person responsible for a code violation is given an opportunity to voluntarily comply with the law and correct the situation.

Once the deadline in the Compliance Order has passed, the owner or responsible person is subject to one or both of the remedies listed below. (In addition to any fines that result, fees including administrative costs will be charged for any abatement action.)

**Administrative Citation** - This remedy is designed to address minor violations. The fines range from $150 to $500 and generally increase with each offense.

**Abatement** - This remedy is used where the City needs to take action to abate a nuisance. In a typical case, the Code Compliance Division will hire a private contractor to either demolish or board and secure a structure, or to clean a property of junk and debris.
To initiate a property maintenance complaint, contact the code compliance office or go online, www.independencemo.org, and submit a compliant through the health department page.

Also available online: information on property maintenance violations, landlord tenant information and complaint form.

Directory

Larry Jones, Health Department Director 816-325-7986  
Aimee Wells, Animal Services Manager  816-325-7211  
Andrew Warlen, Code Compliance Manager  816-325-7765  
Lynn Denton, Food & Environmental Manager  816-325-7197  
Cindy Horne, Health Promotion Manager  816-325-7187  

Administrative Offices  
515 S. Liberty  
Independence, MO 64050  
816-325-7182  
816-325-7098 (fax)  

Animal Control  
875 Vista Drive  
816-325-7205  

Code Compliance  
515 S. Liberty  
816-325-7193  

Food & Environmental  
515 S. Liberty  
816-325-7194  

Health Promotion  
515 S. Liberty  
816-325-7185  

**Why do you need a Neighborhood Watch**

It is obvious that the police cannot be everywhere and see everything. The police need you to be their eyes and ears when they are not around. You need to call the police when you see a crime take place or suspicious
activity in your neighborhood. You above all people will know what suspicious activity in your neighborhood is because you know who belongs in your neighborhood. Most of the crime that takes place in a neighborhood the police cannot make an arrest without you being a witness to the crime and for the victim to make a formal complaint of the crime. Our laws in the United States were never designed for the police to enforce laws without your help. You are the one who empowers the police to make arrests. The police are there to help you police your neighborhood, not do to it alone. It takes everyone to get involved. It takes a neighborhood to get involved.

**How do you Develop a Neighborhood Watch**

Start by talking to your neighbors about Neighborhood Watch and ask them if they are interested in keeping crime out of the neighborhood. When you have several neighbors who have made a commitment to get involved it is time to have a meeting with the neighborhood. Contact the Independence Police Community Services Unit at 816-325-7643 or 816-325-7876 and make an appointment for a Police Officer to come out to your neighborhood and attend your meeting. Usually Monday through Thursday are the best days to have a neighborhood meeting with 7pm being the best time. Next, pass out a flyer to each of your neighbors telling them why you are having the meeting, and when and where the meeting will occur. Meetings can be held in your home, in your driveway, your yard, a near-by park, a community church or school. You can have more attendance from the neighborhood if you keep the meeting in the neighborhood. You may want to state in your flyer to bring a lawn chair with them. You can make up your own flyer or you can obtain generic flyers from the Community Services Unit. When the officer attends your meeting he will explain to your neighbors the importance of a neighborhood watch and help you to get started. Problems in the neighborhood will be discussed at this meeting along with solutions to those problems. Normally a block captain and a co-captain are chosen by neighbors at this meeting for each block in attendance.

**Neighborhood Watch Guidelines**

Block watches are evaluated January 1\textsuperscript{st} and July 1\textsuperscript{st} to determine their level of participation.
Level One: Neighborhood conducts a yearly block party

Recognition: Monthly newsletter from the police department

Level Two: Develops a map of addresses and phone numbers for the block, and distributes this map to each participant in the block watch. Organizes a get-together of the block at least once every six months. One of those meetings must be a block party. Attends at least one of the City Wide Block Captains meetings once every four months. Any resident of the block may represent the group at this meeting. Passes out crime prevention’s newsletter to the neighborhood monthly (optional but recommended)

Recognition: A Crime Watch sign on the block and monthly newsletter.

Level Three: Completes all the requirements of level two and in addition: Turns in an updated Block Map each January of all the homes on the block. Have all addresses displayed on their homes in accordance to City Ordinance. One person on the block is a Citizen’s Police Academy graduate.

Recognition: Crime Watch signs on the block. Monthly newsletter. Receive an award at the annual awards ceremony.

Block watch signs are free but they must be earned.

☐ National Night Out – The first Tuesday in August is set aside nationally for neighbors to get together and show their support for the fight against crime. Turn on your porch lights and have a neighborhood get-together

Use your imagination and have fun as a neighborhood!

Neighborhood Newsletters
Create a newsletter for the neighborhood and pass it out each month. Newsletters serve several purposes. They let neighbors know each month that the block watch is still operating and reminds people of their commitment to the neighborhood. It also keeps neighbors informed of the happenings in the neighborhood. Happenings could be anything from crime, suspicious activity, congratulations to a neighbor or information on a sickness or death in a neighbors’ family.

Everyone likes to be informed and your newsletter will be read by the neighbors. The newsletter can be anything from one type written page to several pages with advertising in it paid by local business or neighbors who have a business. A simple business card copied makes good advertising for a neighbor and the small fee charged could fund the cost of the newsletter printing or may pay for the food at the next neighborhood cook-out. Call each neighbor and ask them for news to add to the newsletter each month. Newsletter samples can be obtained from the neighborhood watch office for you to look at or from other neighborhood watches. Ask other neighbors to take a turn putting out the newsletter and passing it on.
Neighborhood events, such as block parties, provide neighbors a unique opportunity that can be found nowhere else. At such an event members of a community are given a chance to gather and create a network of friends rather than mere acquaintances. A block party can be anything your neighborhood would like it to be. Getting to know your neighbors and building relationships is an important part of any Neighborhood Watch. You can block off the street, have it in a neighbors driveway or someone’s front yard. You can hire a band or a DJ for your music if you desire. To block off the street call 325-7602 for a permit and barricades will be provided for you by the city. The city requires that your request be in writing, be received at least two weeks prior to the event and include… the date and times the street will be closed, the name of the street being barricaded and where the barricades will be placed. To have music outside you can also obtain a permit from the city. Involve children in these regular neighborhood block parties and you will create memories for decades to come. Some ideas for block parties are…

- **Pot Luck** - Everyone brings two or three items of food
- **Bar-B-Que** - Everyone brings their own meat or you can take up a collection for the meat
- **Dessert Bar** - Everyone brings their favorite home-made dessert and shares the recipe
- **Chili Supper** - Everyone brings some chili and you put it all in a large pot
- **Ice Cream Social** - Home-made or store bought
- **Mexican, Italian, Chinese or Hawaiian Dinner** – Everyone brings a dish for the chosen event - decorate for the occasion
- **Have a neighborhood dance**
- **Neighborhood Garage Sale**
- **New Neighbor Welcome Party** – When a new neighbor moves into the area, have a party with the neighbor as the guest of honor
- **Christmas Caroling** – Get together and carol in adjacent neighborhoods
- **Illuminators** – at Christmas time take sacks, sand and candles and light up your street. Contact the Independence Neighborhood Council at 816-833-4225 for information on purchasing these items.
- **Halloween** – Block of the street and have a party for the children
- **Fourth of July**
- **Easter Egg Hunt**
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<tr>
<th><strong>Directory of Community Resources</strong></th>
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| **Bi County United Way of Cass & Jackson County**  
4727 Logan Rd  
816-795-5289  
Emergency assistance, daycare, free tax preparation, referrals for other services. |
| **Child Abuse Prevention Association**  
503 E. 23rd St.  
816-252-8388  
Family counseling, parenting classes and guidance for those at risk of child abuse. |
| **Community Services League**  
300 W. Maple  
816-254-4100  
Provides emergency assistance for rent or utilities, employment resources, food pantry, clothes closet. |
| **Comprehensive Mental Health Services, Inc.**  
10901 Winner Road  
816-254-3652  
Education, prevention and treatment services for mental illness and drug addiction. |
| **Crossroads Shelter**  
14704 E Truman Rd  
816-461-1093  
Emergency shelter for homeless persons and/or families. Counseling and assistance in obtaining available housing. |
| **Developing Potential, Inc.**  
120 W Walnut  
816-252-0086  
Philanthropic resource for people and charitable organizations in eastern Jackson County. |
| **MO Division of Family Services**  
201 Partridge  
816-325-5800  
Applications for state assistance in TANF, Food Stamps, Medicaid, nursing care, blind programs. |
| **Drumm Farm**  
3210 Lee’s Summit Rd  
816-373-3434  
Provides an environment of success for disadvantaged youth. A center for residential services, educational opportunities, and foster home program. |
| **Full Employment Council**  
15301 E 23 St.  
816-325-5890  
Administers job training program including assessment, training, help with placement. |
| **Head Start**  
1511 S Kings Highway  
816-521-2760  
Child development program for low income 2-5 year old children of Independence School District. |
| **Heart of America Family Services**  
12401 E 43, Suite 107  
816-373-7577  
Assistance to allow families to reach self-sufficiency. |
| **Hope House**  
PO Box 520409  
816-461-4188  
Provides safe refuge and supportive services to victims of domestic violence and their children. |
| **Independence First Time Home Buyers Program**  
111 E Maple  
816-325-7414  
Down payment assistance for first time buyers who income qualify and are buying a home in Independence. |
| **Independence Housing Authority**  
210 N Pleasant  
816-836-9200  
Administers programs to provide low rent public housing and housing vouchers (Section 8) |
| **Independence Human Relations Commission**  
111 E Maple  
816-325-7388  
Receives housing and discrimination complaints and recommends referral to county or state commissions. |
| **Jackson County Human Relations and Citizens Complaints**  
| 415 E 12 St  
| 881-3670  
| Receive and investigate citizens complaints against officials, agencies, and departments. |
| **Salvation Army**  
| 14701 E Truman Rd  
| 816-252-3200  
| Emergency assistance for rent or utilities, food pantry, summer daycare program. |
| **Truman Heritage Habitat for Humanity**  
| 800 W Maple  
| 816-461-6551  
| Construction of new homes with volunteer labor and grants or donated materials for income qualifying homebuyers. |
| **Mother’s Refuge**  
| 353-8070  
| Housing and medical needs for homeless, pregnant teens. |
| **Sunshine Center**  
| 607 W Lexington  
| 816-833-2088  
| Daycare services for children with disabilities. |
| **United Services**  
| 3675 Noland Rd  
| 816-833-4333  
| Utility, rent, clothing and food assistance. |
| **NW Communities Development Corporation**  
| 554B S Ash  
| 816-252-5094  
| Provides senior lunch program, home repairs, housing development in NW Independence. |
| **Truman Heartland Foundation**  
| 300 N Osage  
| 816-816-8189  
| Philanthropic resource for the people and charitable organizations in eastern Jackson County. |
Eastern Jackson County Resource Directory

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Disaster Assistance</th>
<th>Education</th>
<th>Emergency Assistance: Food, Rent, Utilities, Clothing</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Red Cross</td>
<td>Adult Education 816-833-3433 816-836-2011</td>
<td>Community Services League 816-254-4100</td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Government Assistance</th>
<th>Health Care</th>
<th>Salvation Army 816-252-3200</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Family Services</td>
<td>Jackson County Health Department 816-881-4424</td>
<td>United Services 816-833-4333</td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Social Security</th>
<th>Truman Medical Center 816-373-4415</th>
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<th>MO Job Services</th>
<th>Health Source of Oak</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Grove – Outreach Clinics 816-690-3522</td>
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<tr>
<th>Job Opportunities</th>
<th>Legal Services</th>
<th>Hotlines: Answered 24 Hours per Day, 7 days a Week</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Missouri Job Service</td>
<td>Legal Aid of Western MO 816-474-6750</td>
<td>Adult Abuse 800-392-0210</td>
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<tr>
<th>Shelters</th>
<th>Mental Health Services</th>
<th>Cancer Hotline 800-ACS-2345</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Crossroads Shelter</td>
<td>Comprehensive Mental 816-254-3652</td>
<td>Child Abuse 800-392-3738</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Heart of America Family 816-373-7577</td>
<td>Domestic Violence 995-1000</td>
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<th>Support Agencies</th>
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<th>Emergencies 911</th>
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<td>Homeless Hotline 816-474-4599</td>
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<td>Poison Control 816-234-3434</td>
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<td>Rape Hotline 816-531-0233</td>
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<td>Runaway Hotline 800-231-6946</td>
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<td>Suicide 816-471-3939</td>
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<tr>
<th>Hope House</th>
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816-461-1093
816-461-3773
Troubled Youth
816-741-8700
United Way Info-Line
816-421-4980

City of Independence Contact Numbers

Animal Control...................... 816-325-7205
City Prosecutor..................... 816-325-7222
Assistant City Prosecutor........ 816-325-7217
Code Enforcement................. 816-325-7193
D.A.R.E................................ 816-325-7250
Community Services Unit........... 816-325-7876
    Canine Unit...................... 816-325-7872
    Crime Free Multi-Housing... 816-325-7875
    HUD Officers.................... 816-325-7876
Crime Prevention.................... 816-325-7643
Crime Watch Office.................. 816-325-7643
    Director of Crime Watch
        Jan Jordan....................... 816-325-7643
Drug Enforcement Unit............. 816-325-7278
Drug Hotline.......................... 816-325-NARC
    Emergency.......................... 911
Fire Truck to Block Meeting........ 816-325-7136
Greater KC Crime Hotline.......... 816-474-TIPS
Home Security Check................. 816-325-7875
Internal Affairs Unit.............. 816-325-7266
Investigation Unit................... 816-325-7333
Invite an Officer to a Block Party... 816-325-7280
Licensing............................. 816-325-7081
Municipal Court Clerk Admin....... 816-325-7643
Police Chief.......................... 816-325-7261
Police Information Desk............ 816-325-7300
Police Operations Division........ 816-325-7263
Police Non-Emergency Line......... 816-836-3600
Police Services Division........... 816-325-7262
Pothole Hotline....................... 816-325-7624
Presiding Judge...................... 816-325-7229
Staff Services Unit.................. 816-325-7277
    Street Barricades
Homeowners Association vs. Neighborhood Association

Neighborhoods Organize to:

- Meet the neighborhoods common goals
- Provide residents with the tools to help resolve issues for their neighborhoods
- Empower the neighborhoods to help control what happens in the area
- Provide the neighborhoods with an effective communication link with government officials and other groups
- Allow members an opportunity to take part in the decision making that directs the neighborhoods’ actions

Homeowners organize to:

- Meet the common interests regarding development
- Provide residents with the authority to enforce restrictions, covenants and conditions for the purpose of maintaining common development
- Empower the homeowners to help direct the developmental phases of the community
- Provide the homeowners with an effective regulatory power that can levy taxes
• Allow members an opportunity to take part in the physical development of their community without Constitutional pressures

*The by laws presented below are only a SAMPLE. These by laws were obtained from: www.ci.desoto.tx.us/index.asp?NID=608. Please substitute your city and state where necessary.
Article I. Name and Purpose

Section 1.01: NAME. The NAME of this organization shall be the (Neighborhood Association), hereafter referred to as THE ASSOCIATION. It shall be a nonprofit organization incorporated under the laws of the State of Texas.  
(This Article must be included in your bylaws. If you do not plan to incorporate your Association, you may delete the second sentence.)

Section 1.02: PURPOSE: The Bylaws shall govern the Corporation and its members and facilitate the fulfillment of the purposes provided in the Articles of Incorporation.  
(You may add or delete any purpose that does or does not apply to your Association. Remember to keep the purpose statement in compliance with IRS rulings, as spelled out in the enclosed IRS Publication 557.)

Article II. MEMBERSHIP.

SECTION 2.01: ELIGIBILITY FOR MEMBERSHIP. Any current resident of, or owner of property in, the (Neighborhood) Addition, bounded by (list boundaries), DeSoto, Texas, is eligible for Membership in the Association upon [full payment of the annual dues, and] completion of an Application for Membership form.  
(Some Associations state that all residents within their particular boundaries are automatically members. This can prove difficult, however, to obtain 2/3 or other majority votes and adds to the expense of information distribution.)

Section 2.02: HONORARY MEMBERSHIP. Any person may acquire Honorary membership in the Association, upon full payment of the Association dues, by a majority vote of the Membership at a regularly scheduled meeting. Honorary Membership entitles the person to a mailed copy of each newsletter and free participation in neighborhood events for one year from the date of membership. Honorary Membership does not, however, include voting rights.  
(This is Optional. Sometimes, previous residents of a neighborhood want to keep up with their ties to the neighborhood, or active Realtors want copies of the newsletters, etc. as a sales tool.)

Section 2.03: ANNUAL DUES. The amount required for annual dues shall be $ each year, unless changed by a majority vote of the members in attendance at an annual meeting of the full membership. Full payment of the annual dues will entitle the Resident or Property Owner to full membership privileges for one year from the date of payment.
Dues may, on occasion, be paid by donation of comparable products or services to the Association, by prior approval of the Officers of the Association. 
(This is Optional. Associations often charge a small fee for membership in order to pay for printing costs, dissemination of information, neighborhood directories, or special projects. Dues usually range from $5 - $40/year, with $15-$30 being the most common. Low-income neighborhoods may consider soliciting local business support and membership in their Association.)

Section 2.04: VOTING RIGHTS. The full payment of the annual dues will entitle each person over age eighteen in the Member’s household (excluding Honorary Members) to one vote apiece in all Association elections.

Section 2.05: TERMINATION OF MEMBERSHIP. Membership in the Association is automatically terminated whenever the Member is in default of payment of the annual Association Dues. A member may also be removed by a majority vote of the membership.

Section 2.06: RESIGNATION. Any Member may resign by filing a written resignation with the Secretary of the Association. Such resignation shall not relieve the resigning Member of the obligation to pay any dues, assessments, or other charges theretofore accrued and unpaid. Upon resignation, however, the resigning Member will be refunded any unaccrued dues on a pro-rated basis. And/Or, when the Member moves from the neighborhood.

ARTICLE III. OFFICERS.

Section 3.01: OFFICERS. The Association shall have the following officers:

1) President,
2) Vice-President,
3) Treasurer, and
4) Secretary.

Section 3.02: ELECTION OF OFFICERS. The Officers shall be elected by majority vote at the annual meeting of the full membership.

Section 3.03: TERM OF OFFICE. The Officers shall serve a one-year term, with no limitations on future terms.
(Some Associations organize with a General Membership and a Board of Directors (comprised of a Chair, Vice-Chair, Treasurer & Secretary). In this case, the Board of Directors is usually given more decision-making powers than this proposed organizational structure. You may also want to provide for Assistant Officers, especially the Treasurer and Secretary, in the event these officers are temporarily unable to attend to their duties. The term of office shall commence upon election and continue until successors are elected at the annual meeting.)
Section 3.04: DUTIES. The duties of the Officers are as follows:

1) The **PRESIDENT** shall be the principal executive officer of the Association and shall preside over all meetings, represent the Association on public occasions, and make such committee appointments from the membership as shall be deemed advisable for the effective conduct of the work of the Association.

2) The **VICE-PRESIDENT** shall assist the President as the President requests, and represent the Association on appropriate occasions. The Vice-President shall also, in the absence or disability of the President, perform the duties and exercise the powers of the President of the Association.

3) The **TREASURER** shall collect, safeguard, disburse and make periodic reports of all funds collected in the name of the Association.

4) The **SECRETARY** shall keep attendance records and record the proceedings of all meetings, maintain adequate records of the Association activities, and conduct such official correspondence as shall be required.

5) The duties of the officers shall not be limited as enumerated above, but they may discharge in addition such duties as are assigned by the Association Membership.

6) Unless so authorized, no officer shall have any power or authority to bind the Association by any contract or engagement, to pledge its credit, or to render if liable pecuniarily for any purpose or in any amount.

Section 3.05: VACANCIES AND REMOVAL FROM OFFICE. Any Officer may be removed by a majority vote of the members of the Association (excluding the Officer to be removed). Upon the death, removal, resignation, or incapacity of an Officer of the Association, a majority of the Association shall elect a successor.

Section 3.06: MANAGEMENT. The Association shall be managed by the Officers so elected, with powers consistent with the Articles of Incorporation and these Bylaws of the Association.

*(If not incorporated, substitute the word Organization for the word Incorporation.)*

ARTICLE IV. MEETINGS OF MEMBERS.

Section 4.01: PLACE OF MEETINGS. Meetings of the Members shall be held at the principal business office of the Association or at any other place the President or a majority of the Members may from time to time select.

Section 4.02: REGULAR MEETINGS. Regular meetings of the Association shall be held quarterly, at a time and place designated by the President.

*(Decide how often you want to meet. Remember, there will be times when you might get too busy to meet as often as you like.)*
Section 4.03: ANNUAL MEETING. An annual meeting of the Members shall be held in the month of _______ of each year, if possible. At such meeting, the Members shall elect the Officers of the Association, receive reports on the affairs of the Association, and transact any other business which is within the power of the Members. If an annual meeting has not been called and held within six months after the time designated for it, any Member may call the annual meeting.

*Decide what month (or season of the year) would be best for your major annual meeting.*

Section 4.04: SPECIAL MEETINGS. Special meetings of the Members may be called by the President, by a majority of the Officers of the Association, or by five percent (5%) or more of the Members entitled to vote.

Section 4.05: NOTICE OF MEETINGS. A written or printed notice of each meeting, stating the place, day, and hour of the meeting, shall be given by the Secretary of the Association, or by the person authorized to call the meeting, to each Member of record entitled to vote at the meeting. This notice shall be given at least seven (7) days before the date named for the meeting, with the exception of Regular Monthly Meetings for which, once a firm date, time and place have been publicized to all the members, no further notice shall be required.

*(You may want to specify the method of delivery of the notices (i.e., by mail or physical delivery).)*

Section 4.06: QUORUM. The Members present at any properly announced meeting shall constitute a quorum at such meeting.

*(This section is important if you want to accomplish anything, because it is difficult to get a majority of members to be present at any given meeting... you might want to specify a percentage (such as 10%) of members who must be present to ensure a quorum. Decide how often you want to meet. Remember, there will be times when you might get too busy to meet as often as you would like. Decide what month (or season of the year) would be best for your major annual meeting.)*

**ARTICLE V. VOTING.**

Section 5.01: VOTING. All issues shall be decided by a majority vote of members present at the meetings.

Section 5.02: VOTING BY MAIL. Where Officers are to be elected by Members, or any changes in the Bylaws are to be voted on, or any other election is to be made whereby a count of the votes of all members may be desired, such election may be conducted by mail or by distribution ballot in such manner as the officers of the Association shall determine advisable.

**ARTICLE VI. COMMITTEES.**

Section 6.01: AUTHORIZATION TO ESTABLISH COMMITTEES. The Association may establish committees as deemed necessary to pursue its stated objectives. Members of Committees shall be appointed by the President.

*(Read information in manual regarding forming committees.)*
ARTICLE VII. FINANCES.

Section 7.01: EXPENDITURES. Expenditures of funds amounting to over One Hundred Dollars ($100) in any month must be approved by majority vote of the Membership present at any properly-announced meeting of the Membership.

Printing of the Neighborhood Newsletter, Neighborhood Informational Notices and the Neighborhood Directory are exempted by this rule. The figure you choose to insert here will depend on the amount of your budget and your anticipated monthly expenditures.

Section 7.02: FINANCIAL REPORTS. Quarterly and Annual Financial Reports shall be prepared by the Treasurer and presented to the Members at the quarterly and annual meetings.

(Financial reports should be given at every scheduled meeting, especially if you charge dues. People need to know that their contributions are being well spent.)

ARTICLE VII. AMENDMENTS.

Section 8.01: PROCEDURE. These Bylaws may be amended by a two-thirds majority vote of those present at any regular meeting of the Members of the Association, provided seven days written notice of the proposed amendment and of the meeting is given.

(You may want to specify a two-thirds majority vote of the entire membership, rather than of those present at a meeting.)

ARTICLE IX. ACCEPTANCE OF BYLAWS

Section 9.01: VOTING. Acceptance of these Bylaws shall be by a two-thirds majority vote of those present at any regular meeting of the Members of the Association, provided written copies of the Bylaws and written notice of the meeting is given to all Members at least seven days prior to the meeting.

ARTICLE X. NON-COMPLIANCE WITH BYLAWS.

Section 10.01: NON-COMPLIANCE PENALTIES. Noncompliance with the Bylaws of the Association may result in termination of membership for the offender, upon a two-thirds majority vote by the membership of the Association. Under no circumstance will noncompliance with any section of these Bylaws constitute the forfeiture of the rights of the Association to exist or the rights of the Association to enforce the Bylaws of the Association.

Again, you may want to specify two-thirds of the entire membership, instead of just those present.