

THE LADYBIRD RESIDENT COUNCIL

1320 Art Dilly Drive
Austin, TX 78702

MINUTES OF THE MEETING

of

The Ladybird Resident Council

Held on June 26, 2025

STEERING COMMITTEE PRESENT:

Sharon Stewart
Willie Fletcher
Janet Roberts
Ludy Zambrano

ALSO ATTENDED:

Dylan Lowery
Aly Tharp
Nirali Thakkar
Elijah (surname not recorded)

Membership Attendance Recorded.

ITEM 1. City of Austin Quality of Life on Aging Study.

Nirali Thakkar and Elijah with Cortez Consulting present on the City of Austin's Quality of Life on Aging Study. Austin's older adult population is growing rapidly, and the city has initiated a study to determine how to better support aging residents. The study will help to improve city policy and budget decisions related to aging, influencing change for caregivers and older adults. There is also a focus on prioritizing older adults who have not historically participated in city studies including Black/African American, Hispanic/Latino, and LGBTQ+ groups.

Project Roles:

- City of Austin Equity Office: Funding and Oversight
- University of Indianapolis, Center for Aging and Community: Research Lead
- Cortez Consulting (local firm): Outreach and Community Engagement Lead

Phase 1 Engagement Summary:

- 9 focus groups
- 250+ older adults and caregivers engaged.
- Engagement activities included yoga, games, and shared meals.
- Focus on low-income and underrepresented groups, i.e. Black/African American, Hispanic/Latino, LGBTQ+ seniors.

Upcoming RBJ Involvement:

- Photovoice Activity: Small resident group will meet weekly for 4 weeks to capture community experiences through photography.
- New Survey Tool: Shorter, more focused version of the Age Friendly Austin survey, redesigned to reflect findings from Phase 1.
- Cortez Consulting staff will be regularly on-site at RBJ to build trust and support engagement.

Resident Comments and Questions:

- Concern raised about affordability standards when living on fixed income.

ITEM 2. UT RBJ Health Needs Assessment

RBJ partnered with UT School of Nursing and faculty Dr. Whitney Thurman to create a health and wellness survey to track resident needs over time and use results to tailor on-site services. The survey was conducted from December 2024 – April 2025. RBJ staff shared preliminary results of the survey, and a discussion ensued.

Preliminary Findings:

- Health & Services:
 - 100% had health coverage, but 34% had visited ER in the past 3 months.
 - 24% reported living with a mental health condition.
 - 39% reported food insecurity.
- Social Issues:
 - 34% reported loneliness
 - 50%+ expressed distrust in their community
 - 41% have experienced homelessness/housing instability.

Resident Comments and Concerns:

- Residents fear for safety due to the behaviors of some residents and their guests, and specify their concerns about some residents not being able to manage independent living.
- Ongoing distrust and fear contribute to isolation.
- Security gaps, hallways without cameras, and incidents involving trespassers cited as triggers for anxiety.
- Residents expressed frustration that "loneliness" underrepresents their fear and stress.

Next Steps:

- Make available full assessment results.
- Use findings to advocate for funding: more social workers, mental health professionals, culturally competent care.
- Improve social programs, language access, and partnerships with APD.

ITEM 3. Further Discussion on Security and Management Concerns

Key Issues Raised:

- Ongoing trespassing, drug activity, prostitution, vandalism.
- Unclear or ineffective management response to security reports.
- Propping of doors, poor lighting, insufficient surveillance.
- Residents feel burdened with reporting issues and policing others.
- Growing concern about vetting and screening of new residents.
- Pet waste/pet owners not following animal policies.
- Allegations of organized criminal behavior in the building.

Requests:

- More security staff and camera coverage.
- Real-time enforcement of building policies.
- Policy transparency from property management.
- More visible accountability from DMA and enforcement of lease terms.

ITEM 4. APD Crime Prevention Assessment

RBJ staff have partnered with APD to address ongoing security issues at The Ladybird. The partnership began with the Community Connect Meeting hosted by APD in April 2025. As a follow up, RBJ staff invited APD District Representatives to conduct an informal crime prevention assessment of RBJ property. The assessment was completed on June 18, and recommendations were presented to the Resident Council.

APD Recommendations:

- Install door alarms with time delay triggers
- Improve exterior lighting, especially near park-facing side
- Add signage and repaint interior to improve wayfinding throughout building.

- Secure stairwells to prevent hiding places.
- Secure garage and trash room access points
- Use existing camera system as foundation for broader monitoring

Considerations for Implementation:

- Some recommendations require permits or capital investment
- Management enforcement and staffing were identified by APD as critical gaps
- Resident Services team committed to presenting these findings to RBJ Board and DMA for prioritization

ITEM 5. Additional Topics

Garage Sale Update:

- Planning in progress, led by residents.
- Date has been pushed due to conflicting priorities and space considerations.
- Residents prefer an event open to RBJ residents and broader community.
- 19 residents expressed interest in selling.

Resident Newsletter:

- Issue 2 released.
- Call for volunteers to join newsletter committee for writing, editing, and distribution

Other Notes and Comments:

- Multiple residents acknowledged Resident Services efforts and distinguished them from management responsibilities.
- Repeated call for increased accountability, transparency, and follow-through on policy enforcement.
- Next Resident Council meeting to include response to operational concerns raised in this session.
- Audio recording and minutes to be shared with management and board stakeholders

At 3:30 PM, the meeting was called to a close and adjourned.

STEERING COMMITTEE MEMBER

DATE