

CITY OF LOS ANGELES

SYLMAR NEIGHBORHOOD COUNCIL EXECUTIVE OFFICERS

PRESIDENT: Tammy Flores
VICE-PRESIDENTS: Bonnie Bernard
and Quyen Vo-Ramirez
TREASURER: Lynn Zekanis
PUBLIC RELATIONS: Rick Donnelly



SYLMAR NEIGHBORHOOD COUNCIL

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Minutes of the SYLMAR NEIGHBORHOOD COUNCIL (SNC) GENERAL BOARD MEETING Thursday, January 24, 2008 Hubbard Street Elementary School (Auditorium) 13325 Hubbard St., Sylmar, CA 91342

1. Call to Order and Pledge of Allegiance

President Tammy Flores called the meeting to order at 6:33 p.m. The Pledge of Allegiance was said.

2. Roll Call

Roll Call was taken by Stakeholder Sherry Lincoln. Board Members present: Tammy Flores, Bonnie Bernard, Quyen Vo-Ramirez, Lynn Zekanis, Rick Donnelly, Erlin Arellano, Cheri Blose (late), Hector Cabrera, Fabian Garcia (late), Farooq Ghias, Eugene Hernandez, Randall Kelly, Nicholas Krall, Fidel Ramirez, Guillermo Reyes, Rudolfo Lopez, George Ortega, Louis Perry (late), Jeanne Rowe, Jan Sandstrom, and Jim Schopper.

All 21 of the General Board Members were present, which is a quorum, and the business of the Council could be conducted.

Also present were approximately 35 Stakeholders and Guests.

3. Adoption of 11/15/07 General Board Meeting (GBM) Minutes. GBM Minutes for 12/13/07 unavailable but recorded on tape. [The following Agenda Item was addressed between Item #s 13 and 14.]

Ms. Flores noted and Ms. Sandstrom confirmed that pages are missing from some Minutes copies. Ms. Flores read the last two pages to Board Members. Corrections to the November 15, 2007 General Board Meeting Minutes included: page one: Bishop Alemany (not "Alleghany"); page two, line one: Lori (not "Lloyd") Wheeler; and, same paragraph, second-to-the-last line: Fiddler's Green (not Fiddler's "Three").

MOTION (by Mr. Donnelly, seconded by Ms. Zekanis): to accept the November 15, 2007 General Board Meeting Minutes as read and corrected.

DISCUSSION: Mr. Kelly would like to be able to read the complete Minutes before voting. Ms. Bernard said that she agrees, but that the Minutes were available at the December meeting and were e-mailed.

MOTION PASSED, with 12 in favor (Bloese, Donnelly, Ghias, Hernandez, Krall, Lopez, Ramirez, Reyes, Sandstrom, Schopper, Vo-Ramirez, and Zekanis), two opposed (Kelly and Ortega), and five abstentions (Arellano, Bernard, Cabrera, Perry, and Rowe). Absent for this vote was: Garcia.

4. Explanation of stakeholder comments, speaker cards, etc

Ms. Bernard asked that Stakeholders raise their hands to be called on to speak, after which they will be called upon in order.

5. Public Officials' and President's announcements and presentations

Lori Wheeler, Field Deputy for L.A. County District Three Supervisor Zev Yaroslavsky, reminded eligible voters to vote in the February 5th State elections. Also, the Supervisor is working on a list of community suggestions and will soon have a response.

Amelia Herrera-Robles, L.A. Dept. of Neighborhood Empowerment (DONE) Project Coordinator, prefers to wait to speak on Items 16 and 19.

Ms. Flores is giving up her time in order for Mr. Perry to make his presentation later. [The following was said between Item #s 11 and 12.] Mr. Perry thanked everyone for allowing him to be part of this Board and community for four great years, especially Mr. Schopper, with whom he has enjoyed closely working; Ms. Flores for her leadership; and Ms. Vo-Ramirez for her contributions and involvement. He also encourages incoming Board Members to not watch and coach from the sidelines, but to get involved and give back to the community.

6. Public Comments

Stakeholder Aliso Lopez of the San Fernando Valley Partnership announced a community meeting January 26th from 8:30 a.m. – 1:00 p.m., where we can voice our opinions on the many changes happening at Sylmar High School.

7. Report from Ms. Bloese on Board Members with three or more unexcused absences. Discussion and possible Board action.

It was agreed to Table this discussion until the next Meeting.

OLD BUSINESS

8. Progress of letters voted to be sent at August Board meeting

It was agreed without any objections to Table this discussion.

9. City Attorney information about enforcement of By-Laws and Code of Conduct.

MOTION (by Ms. Flores, seconded by Ms. Sandstrom): to remove Item #9 from the Agenda.

MOTION PASSED, with 10 in favor (Bernard, Donnelly, Ghias, Hernandez, Krall, Lopez, Sandstrom, Schopper, Vo-Ramirez, and Zekanis) and seven abstentions (Arellano, Cabrera, Kelly, Ortega, Ramirez, Reyes, and Rowe). Absent for this vote were: Blose, Garcia, and Perry.

10. Discussion and possible Board action regarding uses for Edison property dedicated to the community of Sylmar between Sayre and Hubbard Streets.

MOTION (by Ms. Bernard, seconded by Mr. Reyes): that consideration of uses for the [Southern California] Edison [Company] property dedicated to the community of Sylmar between Sayre and Hubbard Streets be sent to the Outreach Committee to have further discussion and community input, out of which recommendations will be brought to the Board.

DISCUSSION: Mr. Krall believes that this Item should be referred to the Land Use Committee.

AMENDED MOTION (by Ms. Bernard, seconded by Mr. Reyes): [the above Motion to say "Outreach and Land Use Committees".]

MOTION PASSED, with 16 in favor (Arellano, Bernard, Donnelly, Ghias, Hernandez, Kelly, Krall, Lopez, Ortega, Ramirez, Reyes, Rowe, Sandstrom, Schopper, Vo-Ramirez, and Zekanis) and one abstention (Cabrera). Absent for this vote were: Blose, Garcia, and Perry.

11. Discussion and possible Board action regarding 912 Commission Report

It was agreed without any objections to Table this discussion until the next Meeting, pending receipt of the Report from the Councilman's office.

12. Committee Reports

Treasurer / Budget Committee

Ms. Zekanis is reconciling the second quarter Report and will give it to the incoming Treasurer, and will stay around for training and support.

Secretary

Ms. Flores read correspondence addressed to the Office.

Beautification / Grants

Ms. Vo-Ramirez reported that we had a community clean-up in October. We're going to pick up 150 fruit trees from Tree People at Brand Park in Mission Hills this

Saturday, and will be giving these trees to our volunteers at our next community clean-up. She needs assistance picking up the trees.

Commercial / Business Interests

No report at this time.

Education

Mr. Ramirez thanks the Board for having had the opportunity to work with them, and congratulates the incoming Board Members and extends his support to them.

Land Use

Mr. Krall described that with all the challenges in the housing and financial markets, we've seen less large developments but more subdivisions, except for the proposed Las Lomas development. We'll be meeting soon regarding the K-8 span school project and the Community General Plan update.

Outreach

Mr. Donnelly said that he's proud to have been a part of this Board and Committee, which has made many strides; he'd like to do more next year, and it's good to see this many Stakeholders. Ms. Flores said that it was a wonderful experience helping to organize and participate in the Toys for Tots event.

Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness

Mr. Lopez thanks the Board for this wonderful opportunity and knows the incoming Board will be great; he offers his services and asks that we maintain a relationship with the [Los Angeles Police Department] Mission Station.

Public Services

Mr. Perry mentioned that he gave his report earlier.

Rental and Manufactured Home Protection

It was agreed to drop this Committee at this time.

Election

Ms. Vo-Ramirez declared that we had a very successful election despite it being so close to the holidays. Ballots were cast by 202 Stakeholders, including more youths than last year, thanks to our youth candidates, Ms. Arellano and Esteban Tavares. Ms. Arellano received more votes, 163, than any other candidate.

13. Ad Hoc Committees

There were no reports at this time.

14. Elected officials recognition of outgoing Board Members

L.A. City District Seven Councilman Richard Alarcon noted that the NC is an imperfect democracy that works most of the time. He announced that the City Council has agreed to allow NCs to file up to three Council Files each, as long as

Board Members file City Form 700, which asks that Board Members disclose their financial assets. He noted that the City is moving forward with the Lowe's and Costco projects at the Fisher Price Location. Also, he's working with the Truck Drivers Academy and Lopez Canyon Teamsters, who're looking for driver candidates, especially women and African-Americans; he's asked that 25%, or 40, of these slots be set aside for Sylmar residents. The position pays \$40.00 per hour; drivers will be working at the Port and they must have a clean record.

Regarding the proposed Las Lomas development, he says there should be mitigation and that the developers should pay for the EIR (Environmental Impact Report). He said he doesn't understand how Las Lomas is meeting such opposition, while 'taking the proper steps,' while a 20,000-unit development 'slipped in the back door' in Newhall off the same 14 freeway that would be affected by Las Lomas 'without any mitigation'; he feels that the Newhall project would be an assault on the communities at our end, especially since there hasn't been a traffic study going southbound into our neighborhoods. Santa Clarita has done a better job of showing opposition. He would never support a project where there was not a balance between housing and jobs, and doesn't believe the Newhall development is balanced. He encouraged people to write letters opposing Las Lomas; developments like this should be stopped. We need to support projects that create jobs and protect the environment, like the Rim of the Valley Habitat Corridor. He takes the NC seriously and would like to work closely with it and the Land Use Committee, and will bring us any news on large developments.

Councilman Alarcon, as well as Angel Barboda of State 20th District Senator Alex Padilla's office, handed out certificates of recognition to outgoing Board Members and thanked them for their services.

15. Installation of incoming Board Members

Ms. Vo-Ramirez announced the names of and Councilman Alarcon swore in the incoming Board Members, who are as follows: Erlin Arellano, Hiral Bhakta, Hector Cabrera, Fabian Garcia, Gene Gatmaitan (absent), Saul Gonzales, Nicholas Krall, Martin Laufer, Guillermo Reyes, and Esteban Tavares.

16. Description of Executive Officer positions and duties by DONE Project Coordinator

Ms. Herrera-Robles facilitated the election and described the positions and duties of the Executive Board: President, Vice-President of Administration, Vice-President of Communications, Treasurer, and Public Relations Officer. Nominations and votes were as follows:

For President: Ms. Rowe nominated and Ms. Vo-Ramirez accepted; Ms. Sandstrom nominated and Ms. Flores accepted; and Mr. Kelly nominated and Mr. Krall accepted. There were eight show-of-hands votes for Ms. Vo-Ramirez, eight for Ms. Flores, and three for Mr. Krall. Ms. Herrera-Robles declared that a coin toss can break the tie vote. Mr. Kelly asked whether a complete re-vote can be taken in

which those who voted for the losing candidate (Mr. Krall) can re-cast their votes for either Ms. Vo-Ramirez or Ms. Flores; Ms. Herrera-Robles agreed that it can be done. A re-vote was taken in which there were ten show-of-hands votes for Ms. Vo-Ramirez and nine for Ms. Flores. Ms. Vo-Ramirez was declared to be the incoming President.

For Vice-President of Administration: Mr. Donnelly nominated and Ms. Flores accepted, and Mr. Kelly nominated and Ms. Zekanis accepted. There were 12 show-of-hands votes for Ms. Flores and six for Ms. Zekanis. Ms. Flores was declared to be the incoming Vice-President of Administration.

For Vice-President of Communication: Ms. Sandstrom nominated and Mr. Donnelly accepted, and Mr. Schopper nominated but Ms. Zekanis declined. There were 19 show-of-hands votes for Mr. Donnelly. He was declared to be the incoming Vice-President of Communications.

For Treasurer: Mr. Reyes nominated but Ms. Zekanis declined; Ms. Vo-Ramirez nominated and Mr. Kelly accepted; and Ms. Bernard nominated but Mr. Laufer declined. There were 19 show-of-hands votes for Mr. Kelly. He was declared to be the incoming Treasurer.

For Public Relations Officer: Hiral Bhakta nominated and Mr. Krall accepted; Ms. Vo-Ramirez nominated but Mr. Laufer declined; and Mr. Kelly nominated but Ms. Zekanis declined. There were 19 show-of-hands votes for Mr. Krall. He was declared to be the incoming Public Relations Officer.

Ms. Herrera-Robles congratulated everyone and looks forward to working closely with the incoming Board. Ms. Flores handed the gavel to Ms. Vo-Ramirez, who welcomed the incoming Board.

NEW BUSINESS

17. Discussion and possible Board action regarding hiring of a temporary or permanent Secretary

DISCUSSION: Ms. Zekanis voiced that we still need to address whether or not to have a temporary Secretary or a permanent Secretary, since our last Secretary resigned. Ms. Bernard said that she has contacted other Neighborhood Councils regarding their paid Secretaries, but none of them are willing to be our NC's Secretary; [the] Apple One [Agency] is still working on finding us a temporary Secretary, and we still have candidates to look over who responded to our craigslist[.com] ad. Mr. Krall expressed that we may need to reconsider increasing the Secretary's weekly hours, which used to be 20 hours [per week] from 10 to 15, or reduce the Secretary's responsibilities; the previous Secretary said he couldn't complete what was required of him. Ms. Zekanis commented that it wasn't the number of hours; the duties "weren't his skill set."

MOTION (by Ms. Flores, seconded by Mr. Laufer): to hire a temporary Secretary between now and when we hire a permanent Secretary

DISCUSSION: Mr. Kelly agrees with hiring a temporary Secretary, and is "willing to step up, along with the others" and assist until a permanent Secretary is hired; later, we may want to "revisit the issue of more hours versus less hours."

MOTION PASSED, with 15 in favor (Bernard, Blose, Cabrera, Donnelly, Flores, Gonzales, Kelly, Krall, Laufer, Ortega, Reyes, Rowe, Sandstrom, Schopper, and Zekanis) and three abstaining (Arellano, Bhakta, and Tavares). Absent for this vote was: Garcia.

18. Discussion and possible Board action to decide day and place for monthly General Bd. Meetings

Various comments and concerns were expressed regarding that the NC can meet anywhere as long as we announce it ahead of time and list it in advance; when we change the location, we lose people; they've shown up angry when they finally arrive at the location; the location needs to be consistent; and that, in the past, the problem was that people would show up at another location because the location listed wasn't the posted location. Mr. Cabrera reported that he met with PTA parents from Oceola Elementary School and they've expressed interest to have Meetings there; the Principal is willing to work with us, and we should try to move our Meetings to the southern part of our district. Ms. Bernard would like to only have town hall meetings at Oceola.

MOTION (by Ms. Bernard, seconded by Mr. Laufer): to have our General Board Meetings at Hubbard Street Elementary School the fourth Thursday at 6:30 p.m. as many months as we can each year, with the Outreach Committee researching where the other monthly Meetings can be held.

DISCUSSION: Mr. Laufer remarked that we can schedule other meetings like our Committee meetings at other schools; we should be meeting with PTAs.

MOTION PASSED, with 14 in favor (Arellano, Bernard, Blose, Cabrera, Donnelly, Flores, Gonzalez, Kelly, Laufer, Reyes, Sandstrom, Schopper, Tavares, and Zekanis) and four opposed (Bhakta, Krall, Ortega, and Rowe).

19. Discussion and possible action regarding NC election schedule implications related to the City Clerk's administration of the elections, which are: a) extend current Board Member terms to 2010; b) move election forward to second quarter of 2008; and c) keep current election process for 2008.

Ms. Herrera-Robles described that NCs are being asked to select one of the three options for their election administration. Option a) extends current Board Member terms to 2010, and the City Clerk will conduct those elections. They will do what the Election Committee and Independent Election Administrator have done in the

past, and will canvas 100% of the community. The Board will decide whether they want the election to be staggered, with half the Board being elected every two years, or have everyone elected in 2010. Option b) would move the election forward to the second quarter of 2008; we would have our next election by this June and need to have all our paperwork in by March. Option c) would keep the current election process for 2008. The NC would have to amend the By-Laws by March 15 to have the election before the end of the second quarter, and the term limits clause would not apply anymore.

Ms. Flores said that there will still be only one polling place and the Board will decide its location. Translations services have been requested. There will be absentee ballots, and citizenship will not be required. The City Clerk will hold two candidate information meetings. We can assist with the polling place set up, but when it opens we cannot be there. The City Clerk will have the template for the procedures and we just have to make sure our By-Laws comply.

MOTION (by Ms. Flores, seconded by Mr. Krall): that we choose option a) to extend current Board Member terms to 2010, when we'd have our next election, and have the election run by the City Clerk

DISCUSSION: Ms. Herrera-Robles noted that we're just voting on the administration portion of the election right now to see who would operate the election and when it would be held.

Ms. Blöse made a **MOTION** and it was agreed to **CALL FOR THE QUESTION.**

MOTION PASSED, with 13 in favor (Arellano, Bernard, Blöse, Donnelly, Flores, Gonzalez, Kelly, Krall, Laufer, Reyes, Sandstrom, Schopper, Tavares), two opposed (Ortega and Zekanis), and three abstaining (Bhakta, Cabrera, and Rowe).

20. Appointment of Committee Chairs by President

Ms. Vo-Ramirez appointed Mr. Laufer and Ms. Rowe, who both accepted, to Co-Chair a By-Laws Committee, and Mr. Schopper, who accepted, to Chair the Public Services Committee. Other Committee Chairs will soon be appointed.

21. Retreat for Board Members discussion and possible action

Ms. Vo-Ramirez pointed out that, in the past, the retreat was for Board Members to familiarize themselves with the Brown Act, the Code of Conduct, and Conflict of Interest and Ethics training usually conducted by DONE and an outside moderator. Ms. Herrera-Robles said that DONE is required to provide support and training for NCs; she noticed that we had two standing Committees in our By-Laws, but over nine Committees listed. We can address the By-Laws at this retreat and anything else we want to discuss.

MOTION (by Ms. Sandstrom, seconded by Mr. Kelly): that we Table this Item and look at options for a retreat date and location by communicating through e-mail.

MOTION PASSED without any objections.

22. Board Member Comments

Ms. Herrera-Robles indicated that it's up to the Board and what our By-Laws state as to whether to vote for the Executive Board every year or in 2010.

Mr. Krall mentioned that we have a youth Board Member, Esteban Tavares, who has an opportunity to go to Washington D.C. regarding a school-based youth in government program; he has to raise \$1,700 for the trip and needs help. Mr. Krall will be teaching a course for parents and kids on the ABCs of teaching your kids about money. The Relay for Life will be held April 12th at Olive Vista Middle School.

Ms. Arellano announced a benefit concert coming up and put on by Options for Youth students; they held a Unity for Youth Festival two years ago and would like to do something similar to that with a Battle of the Bands sometime in September. Mr. Kelly would like to have, on our next agenda, discussions regarding other Board Members taking DONE's Ethics & Conflict of Interest exam, and the use of the SNC's name in support of things such as State Propositions.

Ms. Rowe related that, when she was a part of the Sylmar Chamber of Commerce, she adopted the phrase "It all comes together in Sylmar," because all the freeways meet here. Mr. Ortega thinks we should work on getting our Agendas to reflect City Council Agendas.

Ms. Sandstrom wants us to remember to thank those that have worked so hard for this Board. Ms. Flores appreciates all the hard work and support from everyone, especially Ms. Zekanis; depending upon her health, she doesn't know how long she will remain as a Vice-President, but will support Ms. Vo-Ramirez and this Board for as long as she can, and knows that Mr. Kelly will do a great job.

Ms. Bernard is going to enjoy her next two years on the Board. Ms. Vo-Ramirez thanks the Board for this opportunity and will work for the Board and community; she says that she's a quick study and knows that there's a very talented Board with 20 other Members who will assist. She will also work closely with DONE to ensure collaboration and partnership, and thanks Mr. Donnelly for the refreshments.

23. Next Meeting date, future Agenda Items – please submit in writing to the Executive Board or email to sylmarnc@verizon.net.

Mr. Kelly wants to review the Brown Act, and the Conflict of Interest and Ethics exam.

24. Closing Remarks, Announcements; Acknowledgements & Adjournment

This Meeting was adjourned at 9:10 p.m.