

CITY OF LOS ANGELES

SYLMAR NEIGHBORHOOD COUNCIL

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**EXECUTIVE OFFICERS**

**PRESIDENT:** Quyen Vo-Ramirez

**VICE-PRESIDENTS:**

Tammy Flores and Rick Donnelly

**TREASURER:** Randall Kelly

**PUBLIC RELATIONS:** Nick Krall



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Secretary: David Levin

**Minutes of the  
SYLMAR NEIGHBORHOOD COUNCIL (SNC) GENERAL BOARD MEETING  
Thursday, April 24, 2008**

Hubbard Street Elementary School, Auditorium  
13325 Hubbard St., Sylmar, CA 91342

**1. Call to Order and Pledge of Allegiance**

President Quyen Vo-Ramirez called the meeting to order at 6:43 p.m. Stakeholder Charles Partello led the Pledge of Allegiance.

**2. Roll Call**

Roll Call was taken by the Secretary. Board Members present: Erlin Arellano, Bonnie Bernard, Hiral Bhakta, Cheri Blose, Hector Cabrera, Rick Donnelly, Fabian Garcia, Gene Gatmaitan, Saul Gonzales, Randall Kelly, Nick Krall, Martin Laufer, George Ortega, Guillermo Reyes, Jeanne Rowe, Jim Schopper, Esteban Tavares, Quyen Vo-Ramirez, and Lynn Zekanis (late).

Board Members absent were: Tammy Flores (excused) and Jan Sandstrom (excused).

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

Also present were approximately 45 Stakeholders and Guests.

**3. Adoption of March 27, 2008 Minutes**

The Minutes of the March 27, 2008 meeting were **ACCEPTED** without any objections.

**4. Housekeeping; explanation of Stakeholder comments and Speaker Cards; Timekeeper.**

Mr. Donnelly explained the above and Mr. Ortega agreed to be the Timekeeper.

**5. Public Officials, Community Representatives and Board Member announcements and presentations.**

Manny Figueras, Constituent Services Representative for L.A. City District Seven Councilman Richard Alarcon (818-756-8409; manny.figueras@lacity.org),

announced a May 3<sup>rd</sup> Open House from 9:00 – 3:00 at the East Valley Sanitation Yard. He has information on why Councilman Alarcon voted “no” on the recent DWP (the L.A. Department of Water and Power) (800-342-5397; ladwp.com) rate increase request. He distributed copies of an article noting the Councilman’s work on creating an injunction against the San Fers gang. The Councilman’s office is working to install more bus benches, and with the office of State 20<sup>th</sup> District Senator Alex Padilla (818-901-5588; dist20.casen.govoffice.com) and the LAPD (L.A. Police Dept.) (911 in progress / emergency; 311 non-emergency; lapd.org) to “clean up” the two homes housing sex offenders.

Dan Rosales, Jr., Planning Deputy for Councilman Alarcon (818-756-8409; dan.rosales@lacity.org), announced that the Councilman will recommend two citizens to be on the Oversight Committee to the Los Angeles Department of Water Power. He said that they hope that the gang injunction will be in place by May 6<sup>th</sup>, and they’ll soon have a community hearing about it.

Jessyca Avalos, Field Deputy for Councilman Alarcon (818-756-8409; jessyca.avalos@lacity.org), announced and distributed flyers regarding a Youth Job Fair May 17<sup>th</sup>, 10:00 – 2:00, at Sylmar Park. Also May 17<sup>th</sup> from 9:00 – 4:15 at Sylmar Park, the Chivas [USA] Kick-It at the Park Clinic will be held; it costs \$5 and children will get giveaways. She also distributed flyers and announced a free health screening on April 27<sup>th</sup> from 8:00 – 3:00 at Guardian Angel Church.

Charles Chacon, LAPD Senior Lead Officer (818-838-9847), welcomed all the Stakeholders and reported that crime is down 15%. Still, don’t leave keys in your car; there’s a lot of auto theft. The largest crime area is around Sylmar High School. He explained an “observations arrest,” in which officers see suspicious activity and discover weapons, drugs, etc. Officer Chacon assured that the police will continue checking the houses in which the sex offenders live. He distributed flyers for the “Sylmar Xtreme Teens” summer program that starts Friday night, June 13<sup>th</sup>, 6:00 – 9:00 p.m. at Sylmar Park; volunteers are needed.

Angel Barnuevo, Field Deputy for State Senator Padilla (818-901-5588; angel.barnuevo@sen.ca.gov), reported that they’re looking into getting the sex offenders out of the area. He announced a job fair at the Pacoima Employment Development Department April 26<sup>th</sup>, 9:00 – 1:00. They’re seeking input regarding tough budget choices, and their office has internship opportunities.

Rudy Cancinos, L.A. Unified School District Community Outreach Coordinator, New Construction Office (213-893-6820), announced a community meeting April 29<sup>th</sup> at 6:30 p.m. at Olive Vista Middle School, regarding a Preliminary Environmental Assessment for a Dronfield and Bledsoe Streets K-8 school construction plan. Also, a pre-construction meeting regarding Valley Region Elementary School #8 will be held on June 3<sup>rd</sup> at 6:30 p.m. at Morningside Elementary School. There’ll be a groundbreaking ceremony on June 16<sup>th</sup> at 10:00 a.m. at Valley Regional Elementary School #8.

Mr. Krall distributed flyers for and announced the annual Financial Workshop for Parents and their Teens, to be held June 17<sup>th</sup> at 6:00 p.m. at the Sylmar Public Library Community Room. He announced that the NC's Sylmar Relay for Life team raised more than \$1,200. Ms. Vo-Ramirez added that the Relay for Life raised more than \$7,000 overall for cancer research and assistance to cancer patients and their families.

## **6. Public Comments**

Stakeholder Armeda Torrez, of Friends of the Library, distributed a flyer and announced a May 17<sup>th</sup> Library Book Sale.

Stakeholder Joan spoke about a tree overhanging her property. Ms. Vo-Ramirez referred her to Councilman Alarcon's office.

Stakeholder Moises Carillo of St. Didacus School distributed a flyer and announced their annual Casino Night April 26<sup>th</sup> at 6:30, adding that there'll be raffle prizes.

Stakeholder Cile Borman of the Foothill Trails District NC announced the Unity in the Community event July 4<sup>th</sup> at Hansen Dam. She asked the SNC to support the event, noting that it's the largest event of its kind in the San Fernando Valley, drawing 40,000 people. There'll be vendors, food and fireworks. Ms. Vo-Ramirez asked Ms. Borman to complete the financial partnership application on the SNC website [sylmarnc.org].

Stakeholder Arlene Mejorado distributed a flyer and said that the Lake View Terrace Community Center, off the 210 freeway at Foothill Blvd. and Wheatland Ave., is for the whole family; there're free workshops and classes, and author readings.

## **7. Committee Reports**

### **Secretary**

The Secretary reported the Office has information regarding community events, issues, services, projects, and contact information. The Office is organizing years of documents and files, and the computers now have security software installed. The Secretary can be contacted through the website, e-mailed at secretary@sylmarnc.org, or called at 818-833-8737.

### **Treasurer / Budget**

Mr. Kelly distributed copies of the proposed 2008-2009 Budget, noting that it must be submitted to DONE (the L.A. City Dept. of Neighborhood Empowerment) (213-485-1360; www.lacityneighborhoods.com) by June 13<sup>th</sup>. Also, the third quarter reconciliation is complete and will be submitted to DONE by the end of this week.

### **Bylaws**

Mr. Laufer reported that the Committee met April 1<sup>st</sup> and established its mission and goals, including that it will address any future ethics issues.

### **Ethics**

This report was included in the Bylaws Committee report.

### **Land Use**

Mr. Ortega reported that three projects were presented at the Committee Meeting; one presenter was asked to make changes and re-present at the next Meeting.

### **Commercial / Business Interests**

This report was included in the Land Use Committee report.

### **Outreach**

Ms. Rowe distributed their Committee Meeting Minutes. Mr. Bhakta reported that the Committee will meet on the second Tuesday each month at 6:30 p.m. at the Office; their next Meeting is May 13<sup>th</sup>. He urged Stakeholders to sign up to receive NC information and to visit our website, which lists community events.

### **Election Committee**

[There was no report at this time; a Chair will be appointed.]

### **Events**

This report was included in the Outreach Committee report.

### **Public Services**

Mr. Reyes reported that the annual Community Clean-up Day is May 3<sup>rd</sup>, starting at 8:00 a.m. at Sylmar Park. Volunteers are needed; you can register at the website. Volunteers will be eligible for free trees, a continental breakfast, and a t-shirt. The Committee will meet April 28<sup>th</sup> at 5:30 p.m. at the Office. Mr. Schopper added that we need help to clean up the community; it's a way to show your community pride.

### **Beautification/Grants**

This report was included in the Public Services Committee report.

### **Education**

This report was included in the Public Services Committee report.

### **Public Safety/Emergency Preparedness**

This report was included in the Public Services Committee report.

### **Old Business**

[There was no Agenda Item #8.]

**9. Discussion and possible board action regarding re-opening our local Paramedic Unit.**

Ms. Vo-Ramirez explained that most communities have more Fire Stations than the one that we have. Our second Paramedic Unit was removed March 10<sup>th</sup>.

**MOTION** (by Mr. Laufer, seconded by Mr. Kelly): to submit a letter to the Los Angeles Fire Department addressed to Fire Chief Douglas Barry, Fire Station 91, the five Fire Commissioners, and CD [Council District] 7, requesting to “reopen” (return) our RA891 12-hour a.m. V-Staffed (Paramedic Unit) at Fire Station 91 in Sylmar.

**MOTION PASSED** without any objections.

**New Business**

**10. Report from Union Rescue Mission on Hope Gardens on the Education and Living facilities for our homeless women and children.**

Mr. Kelly explained that Hope Gardens assists homeless people to put their lives back together, and that their Director said that the SNC is their best supporter.

**11. Presentation of Sylmar Friday Night Lights Teen Extreme Program at Sylmar Park sponsored by Sylmar Youth Task Force and Mission Police Station.**

Mr. Carillo, Volunteer Chair of the Sylmar Youth Task Force (SYTF), distributed handouts and described that the SYTF, which started in January 2007, facilitates agencies, residents and youth to create more opportunities for youth. The Sylmar Park mural project has been a great success. Councilman Alarcon’s office and the LAPD have helped. Two students from Sylmar High School and one from Olive Vista School thanked the NC for their support; its helped the community, and taught them to overcome their fears and helped them to become better people. Mr. Carillo continued that there’ll be a kick-off event June 23<sup>rd</sup> with many governmental and other VIPs. They’ll have regular programs on Fridays from 6:00 – 9:00 p.m. He is requesting \$3,000 - \$4,800 in funding from the NC, which he presented to the Outreach Committee last Tuesday. This request includes \$1,679.93 for skateboarding equipment, for which he submitted a budget to the NC. There’ll be a camping program at Sylmar Park on June 20<sup>th</sup> for ages seven to 20. Officer Chacon added that Coach Lupe Yuhas of the SYTF, whom he introduced, has done a great job with the Sylmar Park “Raise the Bar” Girls Sports Program, which helps increase girls’ participation; last year, 120 girls participated. Virginia Corbin-Marinovich, Director, Sylmar Recreation Center (818-367-5656; Virginia.Corbin-Marinovich@lacity.org), thanked the NC for their continued support and asked the NC to support the new Teen Extreme Program, which starts June 13<sup>th</sup>, not only with an allocation, but also with volunteers; the Park will be fundraising. Ms. Vo-Ramirez said that the NC would put this Item on the Agenda of next month’s Meeting to consider this funding.

[There was no Agenda Item #12.]

**13. Discussion and possible board action to recognize a local Volunteer / Community-Based Organization to participate in the “Salute to Recreation” at Northridge Park.**

[This Item was discussed first under New Business, before Item #10, Ms. Vo-Ramirez having proposed it and there being no objections.]

Stakeholder Hugo Sanchez, Recreation Coordinator for the L.A. City Recreation and Parks Dept. (DRP) (311; laparks.org), announced the annual Salute to Recreation, May 30<sup>th</sup> through June 1<sup>st</sup> at Northridge Recreation Center. There'll be a carnival, performing stages, international food, and more. He's seeking NC support and the NC's name would be on 37,000 brochures to be distributed.

**MOTION** (by Mr. Donnelly, seconded by Mr. Bhakta): to nominate Mr. Tavares to be the representative to the NC from the Sylmar Youth Cancer Awareness Club.

**DISCUSSION:** Ms. Vo-Ramirez announced her intention to ask Mr. Tavares to be the NC representative from the Club. Mr. Krall expressed that Mr. Tavares was a great help and organizer for last year's Relay for Life. The Club held the first student-led assembly promoting healthy lifestyles and education about different aspects of cancer awareness. Ms. Vo-Ramirez added that the Club did a great community clean-up and participated with Officer Chacon regarding gang prevention.

**MOTION PASSED** without any objections, with Mr. Kelly abstaining.

**14. Discussion and possible board action to sponsor the Northeast San Fernando Valley Youth Job and Resource Fair in the amount of \$200 for financial partnership toward food.**

Officer Chacon stated that the Fair is seeking donations, including dessert. Mr. Carillo said they're "pulling this request" for NC funding because they found funding elsewhere. The Fair provides job skills training and local hiring opportunities.

**MOTION** (by Mr. Laufer, seconded by Mr. Kelly): to remove Item #14 from this Agenda.

**MOTION PASSED** without any objections, with Ms. Zekanis now present.

**15. Discussion and possible board action regarding parking, traffic and citations on Sayre Street on April 15, 2008.**

**MOTION** (by Ms. Bernard, seconded by Mr. Laufer): to submit a letter to the L.A. City Dept. of Transportation (LADOT) requesting 1) the LADOT to review Sayre Street between Gladstone Avenue and Mindora Avenue in regard to street parking and traffic; 2) the Parking Violations Bureau, Division of Audit and Investigation, to review and dismiss the citations given to those parked on Sayre Street on Tuesday, April 15, 2008, as there was a previous agreement with the homes on Sayre Street

to permit parking on parkways; 3) the City to allow parking on the parkway if no satisfactory parking conditions have been met; and 4) the City to post a notice for the time being to allow this parking.

**DISCUSSION:** There was extensive discussion regarding this Item. Stakeholder Arturo Arroyo, SNC Vice-President Tammy Flores' brother, spoke. On April 15<sup>th</sup>, many people's cars that were parked on Sayre Street between Gladstone Ave. and Mindora Ave. were, without warning, given parking citations, and many were towed away. Some people have received multiple tickets. Another Stakeholder declared that they've been parking there since 1989. Sayre is only 35 feet wide in that stretch and buses traveling in opposite directions are very close together; bus drivers have said there'll be a collision there someday. Cars speed there, making it even more dangerous. Lots of children live there and play in the street, so it's a big safety concern. Every time people put out their trash bins, it takes up even more street space. Many people's cars were parked on the parkways. He wants the City to stop ticketing cars there. He'll provide a copy of a letter written in 1989 by then-Councilman Ernie Bernardi "requesting the City to look into the situation." Mr. Arroyo declared that, "for right now we'll pay those tickets, but the next ones, we're not paying."

Ms. Avalos clarified that Mr. Arroyo showed her a copy of a 1989 letter from then-Councilman Bernardi's office "requesting that the City look into the problems on Sayre Street; it does not allow them to park on the parkway. It gives them no authorization to park on the parkway."

Deputy Rosales further clarified that "a constituent called regarding an RV . . . and . . . the DOT . . . decided to give spot citations that day." He stated that there's no room to expand Sayre Street. The land is owned by the City and was dedicated without any improvements. He advised the NC that parking violators may want to take advantage of the 21-day administrative review period to contest the citations. Ms. Vo-Ramirez agreed and said that that NC will work on the letter in the meantime.

Mr. Kelly pointed out that there was no "previous agreement with the homes on Sayre Street to permit parking on parkways," as stated in the second part of the above Motion, and asked Ms. Bernard if she would be willing to remove that part of the Motion. Ms. Bernard agreed, resulting in the following:

**AMENDED MOTION** (by Ms. Bernard, seconded by Mr. Laufer): to submit a letter to the L.A. City Dept. of Transportation (LADOT) requesting 1) the LADOT to review Sayre Street between Gladstone Avenue and Mindora Avenue in regard to street parking and traffic; 2) the Parking Violations Bureau, Division of Audit and Investigation, to review and dismiss the citations given to those parked on Sayre Street on Tuesday, April 15, 2008; 3) the City to allow parking on the parkway if no satisfactory parking conditions have been met; and 4) the City to post a notice for the time being to allow this parking.

**MOTION** (by Mr. Donnelly) to **CALL FOR THE QUESTION** was **PASSED** without any objections.

**AMENDED MOTION PASSED** on a roll call vote, with all in favor except for Mr. Ortega abstaining.

The Meeting was recessed for around 10 minutes until 8:30.

**16. Discussion and possible board action regarding upgrading the website.**

**MOTION** (by Mr. Donnelly, seconded by Ms. Bernard): to upgrade the SNC website by adding an interactive calendar at a cost of \$300.00, for the purpose of outreach.

**DISCUSSION:** Mr. Donnelly explained that this was not included in the original arrangement with website administrator Moore Business Results, and that it would be for 12 months.

**MOTION** (by Ms. Bernard) to **CALL FOR THE QUESTION** was **PASSED** without any objections.

**MOTION PASSED** on a roll call vote, with all in favor except for Ms. Arellano and Mr. Gonzales abstaining; Mr. Cabrera had left the Meeting before this vote.

**17. Discussion and possible action regarding recommended Bylaws changes.**

**MOTION** (by Ms. Bernard, seconded by Mr. Krall): to approve the language recommended by the Bylaws Committee in regards to absences and removal of Board Members. Refer to Bylaws Article VII, Section F1.

[The current Bylaws language is as follows:]

1. A Board member has three (3) unexcused consecutive absences from Board meetings. This is considered a vacancy: An unexcused absence is one which has not been communicated to any board member.

[The proposed revised Bylaws language would replace the above and is as follows:]

1. A Board member has three (3) unexcused consecutive absences from Board meetings. This is considered a vacancy: ~~An unexcused absence is one which has not been communicated to any board member.~~ An excused absence is one which has been communicated to a member of the Executive Board in advance of the meeting.
  - a. After two (2) consecutive absences, a Board member will be contacted by a member of the Executive Board to remind them of the Bylaws, Article VII, section F.

b. After three (3) consecutive absences, a Board member shall be notified via Certified letter by the Executive Board of their removal based on the Bylaws Article VII, section F.

**DISCUSSION:** Ms. Zekanis explained that this is to conform to the DONE Bylaws structural template and is part of a process that'll take some months.

**MOTION PASSED** unanimously on a roll call vote.

**18. Discussion and possible board action regarding ethics regarding the Bylaws and the Sub-Committee.**

**MOTION** (by Ms. Zekanis, seconded by Mr. Kelly): to add an Ethics section to the SNC Bylaws and clarify the responsibilities of the Ethics Sub-Committee.

**DISCUSSION:** Mr. Laufer explained that it was suggested to add an Ethics section either within or as an addendum to the Bylaws, and that the Committee is requesting the Board to authorize this work. DONE and the City Attorney's Office would be consulted, then the section would be presented to the Board for approval. Ms. Zekanis added a recommendation to include the Ethics Sub-Committee within the existing Bylaws Committee. Mr. Laufer stated that the goal is that, once the Bylaws revisions are completed, the Bylaws Committee would become an Ethics Committee. He noted that DONE requires that Board Members pass an ethics test and that some Board Members may not have yet completed that. Ms. Vo-Ramirez confirmed that only six Board Members have taken the ethics test.

**MOTION PASSED** with all in favor except for Ms. Arellano abstaining.

**19. Appointment by the President of a Parliamentarian, a Sergeant at Arms, an LADWPMOU [LADWP Memorandum of Understanding Oversight Committee] Representative, and Liaisons to the Los Angeles Neighborhood Council Coalition (LANCC) and the Planning Oversight Committee.**

Ms. Vo-Ramirez requested volunteers for the above positions. Ms. Zekanis volunteered to be the Parliamentarian and Mr. Laufer volunteered to be the Sergeant at Arms. Mr. Gatmaitan volunteered to be the LADWPMOUOC Representative, with Ms. Flores, who'd indicated to Ms. Vo-Ramirez her interest in the position, as the back-up. Mr. Donnelly volunteered to be the LANCC Liaison and Mr. Krall volunteered to be the Planning Oversight Committee Liaison, with Mr. Gonzales as the back-up.

[There was no Agenda Item #20.]

**21. Board Member Comments**

Mr. Kelly asked the Board to compare last year's Budget with this year's proposed Budget; it needs to be approved by June 13<sup>th</sup>. There'll only be one more

Committee Meeting before the next General Board Meeting, at which we must vote on the Budget.

Mr. Donnelly offered to carpool with those who're attending the President's Awards this Sunday at the Rose Bowl.

Mr. Krall thanked Board Members for their support of the Relay for Life event, including overcoming a number of logistical problems. It was lots of fun and next year's Chairperson will be Mr. Tavares.

Mr. Laufer noted that the City appointed a Horse Advisory Task Force, and that the NC needs to count the number of horses in Sylmar and address the issue.

Mr. Ortega reported that the NC received a Certificate at the BONC (L.A. City Board of Neighborhood Commissioners) Meeting honoring the SNC's five-year existence.

Ms. Blose estimated that there're 4,000 horses in the northeast San Fernando Valley, but the charro community has resisted being involved and registering their horses.

Ms. Bernard would like to know how many Stakeholders know of the NC, and urges the creation of "solid plans" for more outreach and participation. She said the NC shouldn't allocate money for events unless the NC can use the event for outreach.

Ms. Arellano noted that she would've participated in the Relay for Life, but was out of town at that time.

Ms. Vo-Ramirez thanked Mr. Krall and Mr. Garcia for organizing the Relay for Life, and noted that the SNC name was on that event's t-shirts.

**22. Next Meeting date and future Agenda Items**

Ms. Vo-Ramirez announced that the next General Board Meeting will be May 22<sup>nd</sup>.

**23. Closing Remarks, Announcements; Acknowledgements & Adjournment**

Ms. Vo-Ramirez adjourned the Meeting without any objections at 9:02 p.m.