

CITY OF LOS ANGELES

SYLMAR NEIGHBORHOOD COUNCIL

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, May 22, 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 6:48 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, Rick Donnelly (late),  
Tammy Flores, Fabian Garcia, Gene Gatmaitan, Saul Gonzales, Randall Kelly, Nick  
Krall, Martin Laufer, George Ortega, Guillermo Reyes, Jeanne Rowe, Esteban  
Tavares, Quyen Vo-Ramirez.

Board Members absent were:

Hector Cabrera (excused), Jan Sandstrom (excused) Jim Schopper (excused), and  
Lynn Zekanis (excused).

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

Also present were approximately 27 Stakeholders and Guests.

**3. Adoption of April 24, 2008 Minutes**

The following correction of the April 24, 2008 General Board Meeting Minutes was  
requested: page five, Item 10: "Mr. Kelly" should be "Mr. Krall."

**MOTION** (by Mr. Laufer, seconded by Mr. Reyes): to accept the April 24, 2008  
General Board Meeting Minutes as corrected.

**MOTION PASSED** without objection.

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

Ms. Flores explained the above.

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

Manny Figueras, Constituent Svcs. Rep. for L.A. City District Seven Councilman Richard Alarcon (818-756-8409; manny.figueras@lacity.org), announced that 45 bus benches will be approved; bus shelters are next. Bus bench advertising revenues would stay within Sylmar, not go to the City's General Fund. On May 19<sup>th</sup>, Councilman Alarcon introduced a Motion to the City Council to not cut \$18.8 million for critical City services from next year's budget.

Charles Chacon, LAPD (L.A. Police Dept.) Mission Division Senior Lead Officer, (Cell 818-634-0619, Office 818-838-9847), explained that there are two Senior Lead Officers for Sylmar, and that they need help to keep crime down. Property crime is up, with most burglaries from midnight to 6:00 a.m. If you see suspicious people watching a home, they're probably casing it; call the Police. Auto theft and street robberies have increased. Call (877) ASK-LAPD for non-emergencies, or 911 for emergencies. Especially with school out, we need to be watchful.

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Joseph Pina, L.A. Unified School District (LAUSD) New Construction Community Outreach Liaison (213-893-6809), distributed flyers about and invited everyone to a Pre-construction Meeting at Morningside Elementary School on June 3<sup>rd</sup> from 6:30 – 8:00 p.m. for Valley Region Elementary School #8; groundbreaking will be June 16<sup>th</sup> at 10:00 a.m. Groundbreaking for Valley Region High School #5 will be June 9<sup>th</sup> at 10:00 a.m. There'll be a CEQA (California Environmental Quality Act) meeting on June 12<sup>th</sup> from 6:30 – 8:00 p.m. at Olive Vista Middle School, and a June 16<sup>th</sup> groundbreaking ceremony there.

Ms. Flores mentioned that Presidential Volunteer Awards were received for volunteers, and that Ms. Arellano is graduating.

Mr. Krall said that there was a Relay for Life wrap-up Meeting and that he's handed off the event leadership to next year's Chair, Mr. Tavares. Approximately \$11,000 was raised and they're still accepting donations.

Mr. Garcia encouraged Stakeholders to complete and submit the Stakeholder Surveys to DONE (the L.A. City Dept. of Neighborhood Empowerment) (213-485-1360; www.lacityneighborhoods.com).

Ms. Blose announced that there'll be a Sylmar Chamber of Commerce Installation Dinner on June 7<sup>th</sup> at St. Didacus School Hall. State 39th District Assemblyman Felipe Fuentes will be there and tickets are \$25. Also, Stetson Ranch improvements need to be made; she's working with Dan [Rosales, Jr., Planning Deputy for Councilman Alarcon (818-756-8409; dan.rosales@lacity.org)].

Mr. Reyes reported that the Mayor's Clean-Up Day on May 3<sup>rd</sup> was productive and fun, and he thanks the volunteers. The next Public Services Committee Meeting will be June 2<sup>nd</sup> at 6:30 p.m. at the NC Office.

Ms. Rowe thanked outreach volunteers, saying "this is one of the most exciting" committees she's worked with. There'll be a Town Hall Picnic in August.

LAPD Captain Jorge Villegas is hosting a Meeting around May 29<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 p.m. and invited Public Services Committee volunteers.

LAPD Captain Dwayne Hiyakawa introduced himself and said that he's replacing Captain Bill Scott.

## **6. Public Comments**

Stakeholder Mercedes Anaya voiced that there're lots of stray and abused animals with no tags or collars, and we need to take action. There're a lot of broken fences and people don't stop when they drive near the animals.

Stakeholder Sandra Chapman distributed flyers and announced that the L.A. County Parks and Recreation Dept. is starting programs and classes at Veteran's and other parks for children, including "tiny tots." Though the El Cariso pool is "out of service," Hansen Dam trips are planned. At the Sylmar Recreation Center [13109 Borden Avenue; 818-367-5656], Camp Sylmar will be held July 7<sup>th</sup> – August 29<sup>th</sup>, and the Co-ed Youth Summer Basketball League registration is being held.

Stakeholder Louis Shapiro, a State 39<sup>th</sup> Assembly District candidate, introduced himself and distributed a flyer about his candidacy.

## **7. Reports**

### Secretary

Stakeholders are welcomed to visit the Office. Hours are very limited, so it's best to call ahead to confirm that someone will be there. Lots of documents are to be organized and outreach to be assisted with. There's an extremely limited time to do what needs to be done; the Board may want to consider allocating more resources to bring the Office current and up to speed and continue the great start we've made. The Secretary can be contacted through the [www.sylmar.org](http://www.sylmar.org) website, e-mailed at [secretary@sylmarnc.org](mailto:secretary@sylmarnc.org), or called at 818-833-8737.

### Treasurer

Mr. Kelly said that there's no report.

### Bylaws

Mr. Laufer reported that there was no Meeting because there was no quorum; the Committee needs volunteers. We need to add an ethics component to the Bylaws.

He e-mailed an Ethics Bylaws template to all Board Members and will consider it at next month's Meeting.

#### Land Use

Mr. Ortega reported that the Committee has approved some projects in which people were trying to enhance their property or business. The next Meeting will be June 9<sup>th</sup> at 6:30 p.m. at the Office.

#### Commercial / Business Interests

Ms. Sandstrom was not present to give a report.

#### Outreach

Mr. Bhakta announced two new Committee members, Linda and Laura. He encouraged Stakeholders to participate in Committees, saying the NC is a great resource. The next Meeting will be June 10<sup>th</sup> at 6:30 p.m. at the Office.

#### Election Committee

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

#### Events

Mr. Tavares said that there was no report at this time.

#### Public Services

Mr. Reyes announced that there'll be a Committee Meeting on June 2<sup>nd</sup> at 6:30 p.m. at the Office and encouraged Stakeholders to call or e-mail about anything they want the Committee to look at. Ms. Flores added that Committee members attended the all-day Neighborhood Congress, at which gang prevention and neighborhood revitalization were discussed.

#### 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.

#### Ethics

Ms. Vo-Ramirez noted that there's no Ethics Committee at this time, and announced that 150 trees were donated for the Sylmar area by the local nursery. Options 4 Youth, churches and other local organizations participated in the Mayor's Clean-Up Day.

## Old Business

### 9. Discussion and possible Board action to transfer Sylmar Relay funding.

**MOTION** (by Mr. Laufer, seconded by Mr. Donnelly): to transfer approved funding of \$500 for the Sylmar Relay for Life from electrical equipment to LAUSD facility rental fee, as there was substantial lighting for the Relay from the facility.

**MOTION PASSED** without objection.

[The following Items are presented in the order they appeared on the Agenda. There were no Item numbers 8, 12, 18, 19 or 20.]

## New Business

### 15. Discussion and possible Board action on proposed San Fer Gang Injunction and Safety Zone by City Attorney. Question and answer by Councilman Richard Alarcon and Captain Jorge Villegas of Mission Area Police Station.

Captain Villegas distributed and reviewed a "Proposed San Fer Gang Injunction Fact Sheet," and discussed the Gang Injunction proposed by the City Attorney. Despite gang prevention activity, there was a 165% increase in gang activity last year in the Valley, mainly in Sylmar by the San Fer gang. The proposed Injunction would not allow "nuisance activities to be done" in a certain "safety zone." The City Attorney filed the complaint April 10<sup>th</sup>; there'll be a Hearing June 24<sup>th</sup>. The Court will decide whether the Injunction should be upheld. There're an estimated 750-900 members, predominantly 12-25 years old, of the San Fer gang, which is tied to the Mexican Mafia. They mostly recruit and gather at El Cariso and Sylmar Parks.

Steven Henze, L.A. County Board of Supervisors District Five candidate, spoke against the Injunction, believing it to be racist against Latino and black people, "criminalizing youth of color." We need jobs programs, not gang injunctions. Captain Villegas responded that he agrees that job and gang prevention programs need to be available; factual information is available to support a gang injunction. The Captain described various programs already in place and that the Injunction is one tool and mechanism to help reduce gang crimes. Ms. Vo-Ramirez explained that the Injunction would include approximately ¾ of Sylmar, and also the City of San Fernando.

Stakeholder Lucille Esquera, State Assembly 48<sup>th</sup> District candidate, expressed that the Injunction institutionalizes racism by the police, and we don't need more police. Stakeholder Connie Lanfer commented that we need the Injunction; problems start at home. She showed pictures of graffiti in the Sylmar Park pool and said that she was attacked by two 14-year-old taggers. Parents are afraid. The Injunction isn't racial profiling; the people doing the graffiti happen to be of the same race in this area. Another Stakeholder said that Latinos who want to live in Sylmar to be near

their families can't because the neighborhood and schools aren't safe for children; we can improve the situation and the Injunction is "a great beginning."

Stakeholder Peter Bebring said that "Gang Injunctions are overly broad tools" and that they "make activities which would otherwise be legal, illegal. Many people have been identified by police as gang members who weren't. Captain Villegas responded that we need certain information to identify a person as a gang member; often they'll self-identify because of the pride they have in being a gang member. The Injunction would enforce against many gang activities and would be of indefinite duration; legal activities would be allowed. People who've been Injunction-serviced would need something to prove that they are doing the activity they say they're doing. The LAPD needs community support. Many people have expressed concern regarding gang activity; the Injunction can also help increase property values.

Mr. Krall stated that we "need to give the police the tools to do their job," and need to teach parents "how to get involved with their kids." Mr. Rosales noted that the Injunction was initiated by the City Attorney's Office; Councilman Alarcon hasn't yet taken a position on the Injunction. Captain Villegas said that El Cariso Park didn't have the level of activity to be included in the Injunction. He's seen other gangs grow when one gang has an Injunction, but the San Fers claim an "entire area, unlike most gangs that claim individual streets." Mr. Ortega is concerned that the Injunction is government "over-reaching."

Stakeholder Lara Nevin expressed that she appreciates all that the police do for the community; we need to help families. Stakeholder Terry Nevin encouraged the Board to vote in favor of the injunction; we need to "help provide [the police] with the means to suppress" violence in our community.

Ms. Vo-Ramirez added that we're hoping to develop this discussion at a Town Hall Meeting. She took a straw poll of the Board in which the Board agreed with this idea.

**MOTION** (by Mr. Garcia, seconded by Ms. Flores): to continue this discussion as a Town Hall Meeting on June 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup>, depending upon the availability of speakers and a location.

**DISCUSSION:** Ms. Vo-Ramirez would convene a Special Meeting to give Councilman Alarcon a decision in time. Ms. Flores encouraged Board Members to attend the Special Meeting, and Stakeholders to check the Internet regarding gang injunctions.

**MOTION PASSED** without objection.

The Meeting was recessed for 13 minutes from 8:54 – 9:07 p.m.

**10. Discussion and possible Board action to participate in the planning of the 4<sup>th</sup> of July event at Hansen Dam.**

Stakeholder Cile Borman distributed a sample calendar with advertising, and documents relating to and spoke about the “Unity of the Communities” Fourth of July Celebration at Hansen Dam. They’ll give away green shopping bags with the NC’s name on it. They’re doing more advertising this year; the Pacoima and Foothill Trails District NCs, the Lake View Terrace Improvement Association, and Council District Seven are already supporting the event, which is in its 15<sup>th</sup> year. The Sylmar Chamber of Commerce participated. We can make it a big NC outreach event. The NC would have a booth on “Neighborhood Council Avenue.” All NC Outreach Committees would come together to continue event planning. Ms. Borman is asking for up to \$5,000 to be allocated for outreach.

Mr. Kelly clarified that the NC can allocate for specific items; we can allocate \$1,000 this year and more next year.

**MOTION** (by Mr. Kelly, seconded by Ms. Rowe): to send this discussion to the Outreach Committee and support the Hansen Dam Fourth of July Celebration, to include an NC booth on “Neighborhood Council Avenue,” in the amount of \$500.

**DISCUSSION:** It’s okay to allocate funds for an event outside the NC boundary because it’s close to the community.

**MOTION PASSED** without objection. Mr. Ortega and Ms. Arellano were absent.

**11. Discussion and possible Board action to participate in the Sylmar Friday Night Lights Teen Extreme Program at Sylmar Park in collaboration with the Los Angeles Department of Recreation and Parks, the Sylmar Youth Task Force (SYTF), and the Mission Area Police Station with financial partnership toward food for one Friday night, with a minimum of \$250, not to exceed \$500.**

Virginia Corbin-Marinovich, Director, Sylmar Recreation Center (818-367-5656; Virginia.Corbin-Marinovich@lacity.org), described the 10-week Teen Extreme Program and asked for support. It’s an economical way for teens to have fun and many organizations are supporting it. The kick-off is June 13<sup>th</sup> and volunteers are needed.

**MOTION** (by Mr. Krall, seconded by Mr. Reyes): to support the Sylmar Recreation Center Friday Night Lights Teen Extreme Program in the amount of \$350 to \$500.

**DISCUSSION:** Ms. Bernard would need an NC booth to be provided to support the event. Mr. Tavares responded that he confirmed with Moises Carillo [Volunteer Chair, SYTF (818-548-3715)], that there’ll be an NC booth. Ms. Rowe offered to personally sponsor one of the Friday nights.

**AMENDED MOTION** (by Mr. Krall, seconded by Mr. Reyes): to support the Sylmar Recreation Center Friday Night Lights Teen Extreme Program in the amount of \$500.

**AMENDED MOTION PASSED** without objection, with Ms. Arellano abstaining.

**13. Discussion and possible Board action to participate in the 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Celebrating Words Festival on June 21<sup>st</sup> from 12:00 a.m. – 7:00 p.m. at El Cariso Park with financial partnership toward stage rentals, with a minimum of \$250, not to exceed \$1,000.**

Stakeholder Trini Rodriguez, Operations Director of Tia Chucha's Centro Cultural (10258 Foothill Blvd., Lake View Terrace; (818) 896-1479; info@tiachucha.com), introduced herself. She's asking for support for the Festival, which is dedicated to the enhancement and enrichment of the community through building the arts and literacy. The funds would be used to rent sound equipment for the event.

**MOTION** (by Mr. Tavares, seconded by Mr. Donnelly): to support the Celebrating Words Festival on June 21<sup>st</sup> at El Cariso Park with an allocation in the amount of \$500, to rent sound equipment for the event, as part of Outreach.

**DISCUSSION:** Ms. Bernard "feels that this is too much" to allocate; "we're not a bank." Mr. Garcia stated that Tia Chucha "reaches out to a constituent base" that the NC doesn't; they're "definitely needed."

**MOTION PASSED** with all in favor except for Ms. Bernard, who opposed, and Ms. Arellano and Mr. Ortega, who abstained.

**16. Discussion and possible action to approve the following recommendations by the Land Use Committee:**

- a. variance for exception to landscape requirements for a new vehicle storage lot of 124,412 sq. ft. at 12850 Arroyo Street (just east of 210 Freeway).
- b. multi-family mixed-use project at 13260 Maclay Street, (southwest corner of Bromont Avenue) scope of project changed.
- c. two-lot subdivision of a 42,896 sq. ft. lot and a variance of the mid-lot width at 15800 Larkspur Street (west of Telfair Avenue).
- d. zone variance to allow a commercial wholesale plant nursery and landscaping business with trucks not to exceed 1.5 tons in RA-1 zone at 13520 Herron Street (west of Fenton Avenue).
- e. 54,177 sq. ft. Office/ Warehouse at 13278 Golden State Road, Sylmar.

Ms. Vo-Ramirez suggested and it was agreed without objection to **TABLE** the above Agenda Item.

**14. Discussion and possible board action to approve Sylmar Neighborhood Council (SNC) 2008-2009 budget.**

**MOTION** (by Ms. Flores, seconded by Mr. Krall): to approve the Sylmar Neighborhood Council proposed fiscal year 2008-2009 budget.

**MOTION PASSED** without objection, with Ms. Arellano and Mr. Tavares abstaining.

**17. Discussion and possible action establishing an ad hoc Bylaws Committee to report to the Board on recommended Bylaws amendments.**

Ms. Vo-Ramirez suggested and it was agreed without objection to **TABLE** the above Agenda Item.

**21. Board Member Comments**

There were no comments at this time.

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

Ms. Vo-Ramirez announced that the next General Board Meeting will be held June 26<sup>th</sup> at 6:30 here [at Hubbard Street Elementary School].

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

Ms. Vo-Ramirez thanked everyone for attending and **ADJOURNED** the Meeting at 9:39 p.m.