

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



SYLMAR NEIGHBORHOOD COUNCIL

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**Minutes of the  
SYLMAR NEIGHBORHOOD COUNCIL (SNC) GENERAL BOARD MEETING  
Thursday, June 26, 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 6:35 p.m. Stakeholder Esteban Tavares led the Pledge of Allegiance.

**2. Roll Call**

Roll Call was taken by the Secretary. Board Members present:  
Erin Arellano, Bonnie Bernard, Hiral Bhakta (late), Cheri Blose, Hector Cabrera, Rick Donnelly, Tammy Flores, Randall Kelly, Nick Krall, Martin Laufer, George Ortega, Guillermo Reyes, Jeanne Rowe, Jan Sandstrom, Jim Schopper, Esteban Tavares, Quyen Vo-Ramirez, Lynn Zekanis (late).

Board Members absent:

Fabian Garcia (excused), Gene Gatmaitan (unexcused), Saul Gonzales (excused),

Eighteen of the 21 Board Members were present at the beginning of the Meeting, which is a quorum, and the business of the Council could be conducted. Also present were approximately 27 Stakeholders and Guests.

**3. Adoption of May 22, 2008 Minutes**

The following corrections to the May 22, 2008 Minutes were requested:

Page eight, Item #13, Discussion: "Mr. Garcia" should read "Mr. Gonzales".

Page seven, Item #10: "Mr. Kelly" should read "Mr. Krall".

**MOTION** (by Mr. Donnelly, seconded by Ms. Flores): to approve the Minutes of the May 22, 2008 General Board Meeting, as corrected.

**MOTION PASSED** without any objections

#### **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.**

Charles Chacon, LAPD (L.A. Police Dept.) Mission Division Senior Lead Officer, (Cell 818-634-0619, Office 818-838-9847), stated that crime is increasing, especially property theft, mainly auto theft. He reminded everyone not to leave their car engine on while they're away from the car, for example, going inside a business to quickly buy something; your car can be stolen that fast. Burglaries have increased, including by people posing as employees, and entering through side gates; he advised putting something such as a wooden stick in the window track to help prevent the window from being opened. A Preliminary [Gang] Injunction was approved on June 24<sup>th</sup> for one month; they'll be in court next month for permanent approval. Weekly crime statistics are available every Tuesday morning. Call if you see auto racers. There's been an increase in metals theft and recycling centers have been asked to contact the police if they notice an increase in metals recycling.

LAPD Captain Jorge Villegas wanted to "thank the Board for their support of the San Fers Gang Injunction." There was "zero opposition" at the court. The Mission Hills NC and L.A. City District Seven Councilman Richard Alarcon (818-756-8409; [lacity.org/council/cd7](http://lacity.org/council/cd7)) supported the Injunction. The Police are "developing a matrix" to track the Injunction's effectiveness. He explained the Injunction and that, specifically, gang members cannot congregate at the Sylmar Recreation Center.

Jessyca Avalos, Field Deputy for Councilman Alarcon (818-756-8409; [jessyca.avalos@lacity.org](mailto:jessyca.avalos@lacity.org)), announced a Dedication Ceremony and Community Celebration at Telfair Park, 15721 Cobalt Avenue, on June 28<sup>th</sup>, 10:00 – 1:00.

Ms. Vo-Ramirez announced that she sent a letter in May regarding the Fire Station 91 removal of the basic ambulance 12-hour shift. She read a reply letter that she received from Fire Chief Douglas Barry describing the re-staffing of Fire Station 91 with a Basic Life Support (BLS) ambulance "every day" as of July 1<sup>st</sup>. Ms. Vo-Ramirez attended a Community Meeting which discussed the formation of a coalition of local governments that would include NCs, to work on regional planning and city issues such as transportation. She added that the Teen Extreme Program at Sylmar Park, run by the Recreation Center, began; hundreds of youth and Board Members Fabian Garcia, Randall Kelly, Nick Krall, George Ortega, Guillermo Reyes, Jim Schopper, and Esteban Tavares were in attendance. The Board Members participated in a game of softball with Council Member Richard Alarcon vs. the Sylmar Teens, and it was "very successful." She congratulated Board Members Ms. Arellano and Mr. Tavares for their recent high school graduation.

Ms. Arellano announced that the San Fernando Pioneer Memorial Cemetery beautification is a "beautiful job" and they're seeking volunteers to help.

Mr. Bhakta announced that the NC is invited to participate at the July 4<sup>th</sup> Hansen Dam Celebration and volunteers are needed.

Mr. Donnelly attended the June 7<sup>th</sup> NC Congress; it was a positive experience and he'll bring more information.

Ms. Blöse will be attending a Zoning Commission Meeting and is both "encouraged" and "disappointed" by things; she'll receive more information. There're no allocations for any community centers and they've "abandoned" horse overlay zoning. ETI (Equestrian Trails, Inc.) (818-362-6819; www.etinational.com) will conduct an area horse census. Their previous census indicated around three times more horses than were registered with the City, especially on the other side of San Fernando Road.

Ms. Flores, speaking for Mr. Garcia, thanked the Town Hall volunteers, especially the door-knockers and others who worked in the heat. She added that a letter was sent to LADOT (the L.A. Dept. of Transportation) regarding Sayre Street traffic and she'll follow up. Manny Figueras, Constituent Svcs. Rep. for Councilman Alarcon (818-756-8409; manny.figueras@lacity.org), will list 40 bus benches that've been approved; bus shelters are next.

Ms. Sandstrom reported that she's canvassing the area and shopping centers are employing; the Committee will meet next month to discuss "what can be done" regarding the economy.

## **6. Public Comments**

Allen Riddle, of Cascades Golf Course, would like the Land Use Committee's May 20<sup>th</sup> letter rescinded, saying it "wasn't truthful." He wasn't notified of subsequent meetings and he wanted to enter a proposal. It's "inaccurate" that the Yarnell Street and Foothill Boulevard lights are working, and he believes that sidewalk maintenance is the City's responsibility.

[The following comments were given during Item #14.]

Jack Lindblad, State Assembly candidate, introduced himself and spoke of the need to protect our watershed and "to have a State Assemblyman who represents the hopes and needs of the NC, not developers."

## **7. Committee Reports**

### Secretary

The Secretary reported that 14 Stakeholders e-mailed the Board through the website regarding the proposed Gang Injunction; all 14 were in favor of it. A computer filing system has been set up and a large amount of uncategorized e-mails have been successfully categorized into e-mail folders. Correspondence, telephone and e-mail messages, event and program flyers postings, and supply needs have been promptly and rapidly processed. Walk-in Stakeholders have been promptly and

professionally assisted. There is a very large amount of work to do for the NC, about which the Board may be interested in allocating the resources for this, to improve the efficiency, work, outreach and visibility of the NC in and for the community.

#### Treasurer/Budget

Mr. Kelly is reconciling the fourth quarter budget. The NC is “on target with expenditures” and \$3,500 is unused. It looks like we’ll “carry over approximately \$25,000 into next year,” as predicted.

#### Bylaws

Mr. Laufer reported that the Committee didn’t meet, as there was no quorum; he’ll introduce a Motion later in this Meeting.

#### Land Use

Mr. Ortega reported that the next Committee Meeting will be July 14<sup>th</sup> and will discuss Community Plan data.

#### Commercial Business Interests

The Committee did not meet; a future meeting date will be announced in July.

#### Outreach

The Committee will present in item #11 below.

#### Election

The Election Committee Chair will be announced.

#### Events

Mr. Tavares mentioned that Tia Chucha’s Celebrating Words Festival was June 21<sup>st</sup> at El Cariso Park and he’d hoped to see more Board Members there. He encouraged Board Members to attend the Youth4Unity Festival, sponsored by Options For Youth, at El Cariso Park on July 12th.

#### Public Services

Mr. Reyes announced that the Committee will next meet on July 15<sup>th</sup> at 6:30 p.m. at the Office.

#### Beautification/Grants

Ms. Arellano reported that she’s networking with the San Fernando Pioneer Memorial Cemetery for their clean-up project.

#### Education

Mr. Gonzales was not present and there was no report.

#### Public Safety/Emergency Preparedness

A letter was submitted and read. There was no report at this time

## Tabled Items

### 8. Discussion and possible action to approve the following recommendations by the Land Use Committee:

Mr. Ortega distributed documents and explained projects a), c), and e) below:

- 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).  
Mr. Ortega said that the Committee wants landscaping in front and enforced security. The lot would include new and used cars and is under Edison power lines, so not too many requirements can be requested.
- b. multi-family mixed-use project at 13260 Maclay Street, (southwest corner of Bromont Avenue) scope of project changed  
Mr. Ortega said that this Item was not approved by the Committee.
- 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).  
Mr. Ortega said that there's an issue of the "definition of minimum lot width."
- 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 Herton Street (west of Fenton Avenue).  
Mr. Ortega said that this Item was not approved by the Committee.
- e. 54,177 sq. ft. Office/Warehouse at 13278 Golden State Road, Sylmar  
Mr. Ortega said that the Committee wants additional landscaping along the Freeway.

Mr. Ortega encouraged the Board to approve Items a), c), and e).

**MOTION** (by Mr. Krall, seconded by Mr. Laufer): to approve the 13278 Golden State Road property, with additional landscaping along the Freeway.

**MOTION PASSED** on a Roll Call vote as follows: Ms. Arellano – abstained; Ms. Bernard – yes; Mr. Bhakta – yes; Ms. Blose – yes; Mr. Cabrera – yes; Mr. Donnelly – yes; Ms. Flores – yes; Mr. Kelly – yes; Mr. Krall – yes; Mr. Laufer – yes; Mr. Ortega – yes; Ms. Rowe – yes; Ms. Sandstrom – yes; Mr. Schopper – yes; and Mr. Tavares – yes. Totals: 15 in favor and one abstaining.

**MOTION** (by Ms. Sandstrom, seconded by Mr. Kelly): to approve a variance for exception to landscape requirements for the 12850 Arroyo Street property.

**DISCUSSION:** Mr. Krall described possible geological issues with the property.

**MOTION to CALL FOR THE QUESTION** (by Mr. Kelly).

**MOTION PASSED** with Ms. Bernard opposed, and Ms. Arellano, Ms. Flores, Mr. Krall and Ms. Zekanis abstaining.

**MOTION** (by Mr. Kelly, seconded by Mr. Donnelly): to approve a two-lot subdivision of a 42,896 sq. ft. lot and a variance of the mid-lot width at 15800 Larkspur Street.

**MOTION PASSED** without opposition, with Ms. Arellano, Ms. Bernard, Mr. Bhakta, Ms. Sandstrom, and Ms. Zekanis abstaining.

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

Mr. Laufer stated that the NC “has to amend the Bylaws,” including the ethics section, because “of the City running the election.” Volunteers are needed; the process would be expedited if there was an ad hoc Committee. Ms. Zekanis added that the NC also needs to describe committees and standing rules, and define ad hoc and permanent committees. An ad hoc committee would be able to meet more often and make recommendations.

**MOTION** (by Ms. Zekanis, seconded by Mr. Schopper, with additional input from Mr. Krall and Mr. Kelly): that the Bylaws Committee be established as an ad hoc Committee for the remainder of the year in order to revise the Bylaws in accordance with the L.A. Dept. of Neighborhood Empowerment template and to amend the Neighborhood Council’s election procedures in accordance with City procedures.

**MOTION PASSED** unanimously.

**Recess**

There was a brief recess.

**New Business**

**10. Discussion and possible action to collaborate with the El Dorado Neighborhood Watch in an El Dorado Neighborhood Watch clean-up and potluck with financial partnership in the amount of \$250-\$500.**

Stakeholder James Clerf of the El Dorado Neighborhood Watch (EDNW) announced a project to clean up the San Fernando Road area, with which Graffiti Busters and the Clean & Green Youth Group from San Fernando is helping. He’s asking for an allocation for paper goods and food for the potluck.

Ms. Zekanis noted that the NC does two cleanups each year and asked why the EDNW doesn’t help. Amelia Herrera-Robles, DONE Neighborhood Empowerment Analyst (818-374-9895; amelia.herrera-robles@lacity.org) and a Stakeholder, said that she started the EDNW with Mr. Clerf in 2005. They had only one cleanup in 2006 due to limited volunteer time and it’s been two years since there was a

cleanup in this particular area. There're only six people coordinating the EDNW efforts.

**MOTION** (by Mr. Kelly, seconded by Mr. Bhakta): to collaborate with the El Dorado Neighborhood Watch by allocating \$500 to purchase paper goods and food for the cleanup of the San Fernando Road area and a potluck afterwards, based upon the EDNW's participation in Neighborhood Council cleanups.

**DISCUSSION:** Mr. Tavares asked whether the EDNW and the NC can coordinate their cleanups to be on the same day. Mr. Clerf agreed that that can be done. Ms. Herrera-Robles noted that they've outreached to businesses for help; previously, some didn't fulfill their pledges to help. The EDNW could use \$500 and would return unused money. Also, the EDNW changed their meeting schedule to allow more time for members to attend this Meeting. Ms. Zekanis believes that the NC should demand participation from groups asking for funding and that \$500 is "too steep"; "we don't even spend that much on our own cleanups."

**AMENDED MOTION** (by Mr. Kelly, seconded by Mr. Bhakta): to collaborate with the El Dorado Neighborhood Watch by allocating \$300 to purchase paper goods and food for the cleanup of the San Fernando Road area and a potluck afterwards.

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

11. **Discussion and possible action to establish an annual "Sylmar Neighborhood Council, Where the Community Comes Together Festival". First Sylmar Neighborhood Council Community Festival to be held in August with date to be announced.**

Ms. Rowe distributed a "Report – Outreach Committee" and stated that "this is not a correction to the May [General Board Meeting] Minutes, but a revised recommendation from the Committee."

**MOTION** (by Ms. Rowe, seconded by Mr. Tavares): to co-sponsor, with the LAPD Mission Station, their National Night Out on Tuesday, August 5<sup>th</sup> from 6:00 – 8:30 p.m., to include a basketball clinic for youth program, for ages eight to 19 and their families, at Sylmar Park in both gyms, and the outside area events, to include food/drinks, etc., the allocation not to exceed \$1,500.

Ms. Rowe explained that the funds would be used to pick up food costs not donated and other event needs, and a financial report would be given at the September General Board Meeting. Also, this is an excellent example to the community that the NC exists and is reaching out to them. Volunteers are needed.

**DISCUSSION:** The Committee is working with the Kiwanis Club and other local groups. National Night Out is to "take back the night," provide "good old times" activities, and make the community more active; it would also encourage

Stakeholder participation and awareness. Council District Seven is co-sponsoring. Mr. Tavares added that this is a “great outreach opportunity . . . for future events.”

**MOTION PASSED** unanimously except for Ms. Arellano abstaining.

**12. Discussion and possible action for a SNC Board workshop for strategy planning regarding Community Plan/revitalization and goal-setting for the Board. Also, on how we can work together to bring this about.**

Mr. Krall explained that this is a “tremendous opportunity” for community groups “to affect what’s happening in our community.” “We’re at a critical point in our Community Plan.” A comprehensive plan for the community can be created and a planner may be hired.

**MOTION** (by Mr. Krall, seconded by Ms. Bernard): to establish an ad hoc committee that would have a three-year time frame to establish a coordinated vision/plan for the northeast Valley community in and around Sylmar, to achieve improvements in safety and the business and residential community, the environment, and the coordination of all the related groups that benefit from being a part of the community, to one year from today.

It was agreed to **AMEND THE MOTION**, replacing “three-year” with “one-year”, because ad hoc committees cannot exceed one year in length and cannot be attended by more than five Board Members, to read as follows:

**AMENDED MOTION** (by Mr. Krall, seconded by Ms. Bernard): to establish an ad hoc committee that would have a one-year time frame to establish a coordinated vision/plan for the northeast Valley community in and around Sylmar, to achieve improvements in safety and the business and residential community, the environment, and the coordination of all the related groups that benefit from being a part of the community, to one year from today.

**DISCUSSION:** It was noted that this is bigger than the Land Use Committee and “way beyond [that] scope.” Ms. Vo-Ramirez noted that Darren Martinez, Deputy L.A. City Attorney, Neighborhood Council Advice Division (213-978-8132; d.martinez@lacity.org), okayed NC Presidents speaking on any Motion; NC Presidents just can’t make Motions. She said that this committee idea was sparked from a Los Angeles Neighborhoods Council Congress (LANCC) Community Meeting that some NC members attended. It’s a proposal to get San Antonio [Texas] Riverwalk-type projects for our area. This would also allow us to apply for Federal grants once we have a community revitalization plan. Ms. Flores voiced that it’s “important to upgrade our community” with lighting, move the power lines underground, and “to create a safer, cleaner, more beautiful community for all of us.” Ms. Arellano expressed that the workshop would be a “great opportunity to share these ideas with the community.” Mr. Tavares declared, “I’m interested to help. Sign me up.” Mr. Ortega added that this idea can be used “to make improvements in a more integrated, holistic way.”

**MOTION to CALL FOR THE QUESTION** (by Ms. Flores).

**MOTION PASSED** with Ms. Bernard, Ms. Blose, Mr. Cabrera, Mr. Ortega, and Ms. Zekanis opposed, and Mr. Bhakta abstaining.

**13. Discussion and possible action to establish Sylmar Park Recreation Center as a posting location.**

**MOTION** (by Mr. Laufer, seconded by Ms. Flores): to establish Sylmar Park Recreation Center as the Neighborhood Council's fifth mandatory posting location, as the fifth location is required by the L.A. City Dept. of Neighborhood Empowerment.

**DISCUSSION:** the posting location would be indoors; the Center is usually open weekdays from 7:00 a.m. – 9:00 p.m. and weekends from 7:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.

**MOTION PASSED** unanimously.

[The following Items were labeled "13," "14," and "15" on the Agenda, but are actually Items #'s 14, 15 and 16.]

**14. Board Member comments**

Ms. Rowe said that today, at the LAPD Mission Division Meeting, Captain Villegas said that because Sylmar supported the Gang Injunction, it is considered to be part of L.A.'s revitalization. Mr. Kelly relayed that the San Fernando Valley Coalition on Gangs is looking to purchase equipment, and that "if it comes up, we should support it." Ms. Bernard requested that the Executive Board require Committee Chairpersons to ensure that all Committee Minutes are posted on the NC website. Ms. Arellano would like the Minutes to note that her abstentions on financial votes are because she is under 18 years of age. Ms. Flores encouraged people to e-mail concerns to Mr. Krall or her. Ms. Herrera-Robles distributed packets about and announced that the L.A. Dept. of Public Works is accepting beautification grants applications.

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

Ms. Vo-Ramirez announced that the next General Board Meeting will be held on July 24<sup>th</sup>.

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

Ms. Vo-Ramirez **ADJOURNED** the Meeting without any objections at 9:00 p.m.