

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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Secretary: David Levin

Minutes of the
SYLMAR NEIGHBORHOOD COUNCIL (SNC)
GENERAL BOARD MEETING

Thursday, September 25, 2008

at Palacio Torres, 12341 San Fernando Road, Sylmar, CA 91342

1. Call to Order and Pledge of Allegiance

Ms. Quyen Vo-Ramirez called the meeting to order at 6:39 p.m. and 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 (late), Hector Cabrera, Rick Donnelly, Tammy Flores, Fabian Garcia, Randall Kelly, Nick Krall, Martin Laufer, George Ortega, Guillermo Reyes, Jeanne Rowe, Jan Sandstrom, Jim Schopper, Esteban Tavares, Quyen Vo-Ramirez, and Lynn Zekanis (late).

Board Members absent: Gene Gatmaitan (unexcused), Saul Gonzales (unexcused).

Nineteen 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 attending were 31 Stakeholders and Guests.

3. Adoption of August 28, 2008 BOD Minutes

MOTION (by Mr. Kelly, seconded by Mr. Laufer): to approve the Minutes of the August 28, 2008 General Board Meeting, as written.

MOTION PASSED without objection.

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

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 the

Emergency Preparedness Fair on September 27th at the Panarama City Mall. Also, \$450,000 per year for five years has been funded to prevent drop outs at Sylmar, San Fernando and Arleta High Schools. Yesterday, there was a suicide on the Metrolink train tracks. Mr. Figureas introduced Melanie McShane (818-599-1589; melanie.mcshane@olsonmax.com), Mission Area Community Police Advisory Board (CPAB) Civilian Co-Chair.

Charles Chacon, LAPD Mission Division Senior Lead Officer (Cell 818-634-0619, Office 818-838-9847), reported on behalf of himself and John Lonergan, Senior Lead Officer, (818-634-0610), that crime is up 3% and is mostly property crimes, and is down almost one-half since children returned to school; this “shows the importance of [youth] programs.” Daytime burglaries are mainly in the Olive View and Carey Ranch areas, usually through the back ends of unalarmed houses. The new [San Fers] Gang Injunction has led to five documented arrests; the gang is estimated to have 730 members, including in prison, who were estimated to have been committing 13 crimes per month, but only five per month since the Injunction.

Maria Townsend of Providence Holy Cross Hospital reported that the Trauma Center was ready to and took care of many of the Chatsworth train crash victims. Also, they’re working to build the expansion as fast as possible.

Ms. Arellano announced the next Beautification Committee Meeting on September 29th at 6:30 p.m. at the SNC Office; they’ll be doing grant-writing work. Mr. Bhakta announced the Outreach Committee’s next usual second Tuesdays Meeting on October 14th at 6:30 p.m. at the Office. Ms. Flores assisted with and described the excellent train crash response. Mr. Krall announced a political Candidates Forum on Sunday, October 12th, 2:00 – 6:00 at the Sylmar Recreation Center, sponsored by the SNC.

Ms. McShane thanked Mr. Bhakta for his many outreach announcements. Ms. Vo-Ramirez announced that an excellent Sylmar Women’s Club Meeting is raising scholarship money for students. Also, at the CPAB Meeting, the police promised to provide more Gang Injunction details. More information about the Sylmar Youth Task Force is available through Officer Chacon and the St. Didacus School website [www.stdidacus.org].

6. Public Comments

Stakeholder Prisca, a long-time resident, reported that a neighbor has not done promised home improvements. Mr. Figueras offered to help.

Ms. McShane announced an October 29th Officer Appreciation Event in which volunteers serve food to the Officers from 7:00 a.m. – 8:00 p.m. She’s seeking volunteers and/or funding. Ms. Vo-Ramirez referred her to the Outreach Committee. Ms. McShane also announced a December 6th Sylmar Women’s Club Meeting.

Scott Chamberlin, Director, Hope Gardens Family Center (213-673-4825; hopegardens@urm.org; www.hopegardens.org), distributed a “1st Year Anniversary Fact Sheet” and “Semi-Annual Report,” noting that 50 families and 104 children have been served in 15 months, and described their successful and effective transitional housing and assistance program for mothers and children.

7. Reports

Secretary’s Report

The Secretary reported that approximately five Stakeholders contacted the Office this month. Documents regarding land use projects, bills, events and other things were promptly forwarded or posted as needed. Two people came in who appeared to be selling suspicious-sounding door-to-door fire extinguisher services and were immediately turned away. The SNC office is located at 13515 ½ Hubbard St., two blocks south of Hubbard St. Elementary School, on the second floor, between the Denny’s and Yum Yum Donuts Restaurants. The phone number is 818-833-8737. The SNC website name is sylmarnc.org. The Office is open on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 10:15 – 3:15, except the fourth week of each month when we have these General Board Meetings.

Treasurer’s Report/Budget Committee

Mr. Kelly distributed and explained the “[SNC] Budget 2008-2009”. The “projected rollover from” 2007-2008 is \$25,928; with the “Yearly Allocation” 2008-2009 of \$50,000, the “Projected Balance” for 2008-2009 is \$75,928.

Land Use

Mr. Ortega reported that the next Committee Meeting is October 7th at 6:30 p.m. at the SNC Office.

Commercial/Business Interests

Ms. Sandstrom said that there is no report.

Outreach

Mr. Bhakta encouraged visiting the SNC website and signing up to receive information.

Election Committee – Chair to be appointed

Events

Mr. Tavares said that there was no report.

Public Services

Mr. Schopper reported that the next Committee Meeting is October 6th at 6:30 p.m. at the SNC Office, and invited participation and input. The Committee is working with Stakeholder Ivan Forbes regarding having Caltrans install a 210 freeway sound wall. The Committee is also writing a letter to DOT (the L.A. Dept. of Transportation)

and the L.A. Bureau of Street Services regarding street paving. Mr. Reyes reported that the Committee will plan Mayor's Day of Appreciation events.

Beautification/Grants

Ms. Arellano reminded about the next Committee Meeting on September 29th at 6:30 p.m. at the SNC Office.

Education

Mr. Gonzales is absent and there is no report.

Public Safety/Emergency Preparedness

Mr. Garcia announced the November 22nd Mayor's Day of Service, and that the Sylmar Youth Task Force will have a 5K Charity Run in January or February.

Bylaws Ad Hoc

Mr. Laufer reported that the SNC "Bylaws need to be redone to comply with" City guidelines.

New Business

8. Presentation and update by Assistant City Planner Anita Cerna, from the Los Angeles Bureau of City Planning on the Sylmar Community Plan.

Anita Cerna, Planning Assistant, L.A. Department of City Planning (818-374-5042; www.planning@lacity.org), distributed a "Sylmar Community Plan Area" map and "Potential Development & Design Standards for San Fernando Road" handout, and made a slide presentation. She explained that the Plan "tells you what you can do on your property . . . establishes policies . . . [and] sets long-range goals." This is the third year of a three-year program to revise the Plan. There were 11 public meetings in early 2007, each attended by approximately 50 people, and there've been approximately 12 public meetings in 2008. An EIR (Environmental Impact Report) Scoping Meeting will be held to help determine how development will affect housing, transportation and more; in early 2009, there'll be another EIR Meeting and another Open House Meeting. "Unique character" neighborhoods, such as equestrian, are being noted and will mostly stay the same; they're "not dictating architecture." The Department is considering adding housing and is "looking to add" commercial land in some areas. They're working to preserve industrial and open space, as well as "retrofitting" Wash areas for recreational uses and runoff water capture. Online maps will be available.

Stakeholder Eugene Hernandez expressed concern that there isn't enough open space, that a building "moratorium" is needed, and that zoning often doesn't match the Community Plan. Ms. Cerna responded that the Department is already reducing a lot of the building capacity and that they make recommendations to the City, which has approval over them.

9. Discussion and possible action to support the Business Improvement District (BID), Vista at Sylmar on the proposed green belt; a planted screen to parallel chain link fence along train rails between Hubbard St. and Polk St. on Truman and San Fernando Rd. Presentation by Al Avilar, President of the BID.

Al Avila, President, Sylmar BID, explained that the BID is a “self-imposed assessment on property owners to improve the district.” They’re working to by landscape portions of six median areas in “the green belt along San Fernando Road” through apportioning CRA (Community Redevelopment Agency) funds, as well as having banners and street furniture designed and approved by the City. Also, a pedestrian bridge could be built over San Fernando Road. The BID wants additional funding from the NC.

Concern was expressed regarding environmental impacts. Mr. Avila responded that some trees will be included. Mr. Krall requested improvement of the dirt lot at Oro Grande St. and San Fernando Rd. that is used for car sales. Ms. Vo-Ramirez responded that this Agenda Item is about whether to support only this element of the green belts along the chain link fence, not the entire project.

MOTION (by Mr. Kelly, seconded by Mr. Krall): to support the Business Improvement District (BID), Vista at Sylmar on the proposed green belt; a planted screen to parallel chain link fence along train rails between Hubbard St. and Polk St. on Truman and San Fernando Rd.

DISCUSSION: Mr. Donnelly wants to hear more discussion. Mr. Avila said they’re working to facilitate that. Ms. Vo-Ramirez clarified that the planted screen would only be on the street side of the fence.

MOTION to CALL FOR THE QUESTION. There were no objections.

MOTION PASSED without any objections

Recess

There was a brief recess.

10. Discussion and possible action to approve the following recommendations by the Outreach Committee:

- a. To support, “The San Fernando Veterans Parade” sponsored by Council District 7, with financial partnership not to exceed \$1,500 towards programs and/or T-shirts for event.

Dan Rosales, Jr., Planning Deputy for L.A. City District Seven (CD7) Councilman Richard Alarcon (818-756-8409; dan.rosales@lacity.org), seeks support for the San Fernando Veterans Parade sponsored by CD7. He distributed a newspaper article and financial documents about the Parade, and explained the origin of it. Veterans from all major conflicts will be honored. It’s “become a great event” for the entire Valley with around 2,000 participants and will be televised. Sponsors’

names will be shown on 3,000-5,000 t-shirts, which he estimated will cost \$1,951 to produce.

Ms. Vo-Ramirez cleared with Amelia Herrera-Robles, Neighborhood Empowerment Analyst, L.A. Dept. of Neighborhood Empowerment (DONE) (818-374-9895; amelia.herrera-robles@lacity.org), that the dollar amount shown on the Agenda can be changed.

MOTION (by Ms. Flores, seconded by Ms. Sandstrom): to allocate \$1,951 to support the San Fernando Veterans Parade, sponsored by Council District 7, towards T-shirts.

MOTION PASSED with two abstentions.

- b. To support, Halloween Festival at Sylmar Recreation Center with financial partnership in the amount of \$300 towards candy for the event. Virginia Corbin-Marinovich, Director, Sylmar Recreation Center (818-367-5656; Virginia.Corbin-Marinovich@lacity.org), seeks funding, volunteers and/or candy for the October 31st Halloween Carnival and invites participation. Carnival activities will include games/prizes, a costume parade, moon bounce, piñata, food and more. Around 800 children are expected. She's asking organizations to have their own booths with their own literature. The Optimists Club and others are participating.

MOTION (by Ms. Flores, seconded by Mr. Tavares): to support the Halloween Festival at Sylmar Recreation Center with financial partnership in the amount of \$500 towards candy for the event.

MOTION PASSED with 16 in favor, none opposed and three abstentions, including Ms. Arellano, who's under 18 and cannot vote on financial matters, and Mr. Kelly, who works for the L.A. City Recreation and Parks Dept.

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

- a. To support, ZA2007-0386 T-Mobile Proposed WTF at 12639 Glenoaks Sylmar Retail Center (T-Mobile Site) SV00947-A, to move 20' from the originally approved location. Mr. Ortega distributed a "Master Land Use Permit Application" and map regarding and recommended acceptance of the above project.

MOTION (by Mr. Laufer, seconded by Mr. Kelly): to accept the Land Use Committee's recommendation to support the ZA2007-0386 T-Mobile Proposed WTF at 12639 Glenoaks Sylmar Retail Center (T-Mobile Site) SV00947-A, to move 20' from the originally approved location.

DISCUSSION: The tower would be moved 20 feet from north to south.

MOTION PASSED without objection.

- b. To support the two revised Community Impact statements (CIS) presented at the July 24, 2008 BOD meeting.

Mr. Ortega distributed a “Community Impact Statements” handout, explaining that the community needs more business development and homeowner financial education.

MOTION (by Mr. Kelly, seconded by Ms. Blose): to support the two revised Community Impact Statements presented at the July 24, 2008 General Board Meeting (see attached).

DISCUSSION: concern was spoken that communities also need more housing.

MOTION to **CALL FOR THE QUESTION**. There were no objections.

MOTION PASSED with 11 in favor, three opposed (Garcia, Laufer, Zekanis) and six abstentions (Arellano, Bhakta, Bernard, Sandstrom, Schopper, Tavares).

12. Discussion and possible action to approve the following recommendation by the Bylaws Committee: To approve Article II of the Sylmar Neighborhood Council Bylaw as it has been inserted into the Department of Neighborhood Empowerment Bylaw Template.

Mr. Laufer distributed “Article II: Elections and Selections” of the SNC Bylaws, noting that the “entire language is straight from DONE.” This language combines the business representative positions, but does not change the number of Directors. He is requesting the Board’s approval of this recommendation.

DISCUSSION: Ms. Bernard is concerned about the phrase on page two, next-to-last sentence, “The President shall have the discretion to appoint . . .” Ms. Zekanis reminded that this language is “verbatim direct from the City Attorney,” and Ms. Vo-Ramirez pointed out that this language is “also from the previous Bylaws” and “hasn’t changed.” Mr. Kelly likes the language, as “the Board will approve or not.” Mr. Laufer added that “if we vary the format’s language, we can count on the City Attorney” disapproving it.

MOTION (by Mr. Laufer, seconded by Ms. Rowe): to approve Article II of the Sylmar Neighborhood Council Bylaws as it has been inserted into the Department of Neighborhood Empowerment Bylaws Template.

MOTION PASSED with one opposed (Ms. Bernard) and no abstentions.

13. Discussion and possible action to renew our webmaster Wendy Moore's contract for the Sylmar Neighborhood Council website at:

- a. 46 hours at \$4,500 plan or b. 51 hours at \$5,000 plan

Mr. Donnelly explained that it's time to vote on renewing the SNC's website maintenance contract with Moore Business Results (MBR). The NC "went way over . . . the hours for this last year"'s contract and he "recommend[s] approval . . . of the 46 hours at \$4,500 plan "as one of our major outreach tools."

MOTION (by Mr. Donnelly, seconded by Ms. Flores): to renew the SNC webmaster Wendy Moore's contract for the Sylmar Neighborhood Council website at 46 hours at \$4,500.

DISCUSSION: There were comments regarding MBR doing more or less work. Mr. Donnelly declared that MBR has been "very efficient with their time" and that they're "very familiar with [NC]s." Ms. Moore remarked that she developed a custom website based on a cost estimate from work done for other NCs, which are "half [the SNC's] size" and less active.

MOTION to CALL FOR THE QUESTION. There were no objections.

MOTION PASSED without objection, with Ms. Arellano abstaining.

14. Discussion and possible action to approve a. renew the Sylmar Neighborhood Council office lease at 13515 ½ Hubbard Street, Sylmar 91342, or b. Sylmar Recreation Center, one office space in the Susan B. Anthony Building at 13109 Borden. Ave. Sylmar 91342.

Stakeholder James Boniface voiced that the NC needs to "stop spending the community's money when you can get a space for free" and the money can be used for youth and other programs. Ms. Vo-Ramirez noted that the Executive Board worked on this. Ms. Flores stated that the current office rent amount is \$1,485 per month and that the landlord is willing to reduce the rent to \$1,300 per month with no utilities or maintenance payments, and is "willing to not increase the rent for two years."

Ms. Vo-Ramirez said that the Sylmar Recreation Center (SRC) arrangement is modeled on what an NC in South L.A. has. The Recreation and Parks Superintendent offered the SRC at no cost; the NC would only pay for the Internet connection. This would also help the NC comply with the DONE financial formula of spending one-third of the NC's budget on each of the three categories of Operations, Outreach, and Community Improvement. The current rent would total \$19,372, which is more than 38% of the budget. She said that the City Attorney "was shocked" that one of the NC Board Members rents from the same landlord. Government Code 1090 says that 'as long as a Board Member rents from a landlord, the organization that the Board Member belongs to cannot rent from the same landlord' and it "would be a felony." The SRC is open Monday-Friday 9:00

a.m.-9:00 p.m., and Saturday and Sunday 10:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m. The arrangement would be a "Use Partnership Agreement . . . not a lease" and it "would be a shared office" if the SRC needs it at times.

Mr. Kelly indicated that "a City agency can operate in a City facility." Ms. Corbin-Marinovitch stated that "rooms would be locked" when not in use, "meeting rooms would be air conditioned," and that the facility is ADA-compliant. If a meeting ran late, the NC would pay for \$20 per hour staffing. Ms. Zekanis believes that "this is a great opportunity . . . for the community." Ms. Sandstrom expressed that "this is a great idea . . . the NC can show the community we're serious about" helping. Mr. Krall cautioned that the SRC location could work "as long as we can operate efficiently and effectively" in the office. Mr. Kelly added that the Executive Board also sought other options and that the Parks Department indicated that they would cooperate. Mr. Laufer opined that the NC having an office in a City park "puts us more in the eyes of the community." "People are using the office without signing in" and "have keys to the office" who should not.

Mr. Garcia believes the NC "should give it a try . . . for the savings." Ms. Bernard "would definitely resign" if it would enable the NC to keep the current office space. This is the first "she's heard of this" regarding her renting space in the same building. She added that the NC should give Stakeholders more notice of moving the office, and the City Attorney and DONE signed the current lease. Ms. Blose contends that "parking at the Park is terrible." Officer Chacon said "it's a great idea . . . cars are stolen from the lot where you're at all the time." "What better place to be than a park . . . to get [the NC] more in the community." "The parking lot . . . is usually pretty good . . . [and] wouldn't be an issue." The police would be "around" more because they're "there a lot."

MOTION (by Ms. Zekanis, seconded by Mr. Tavares): to approve the SNC having one office space at the Sylmar Recreation Center in the Susan B. Anthony Building at 13109 Borden Avenue.

DISCUSSION: Ms. Zekanis noted that if DONE approves this, the NC would use it. Mr. Krall would like 'more information to make a more informed vote.'

MOTION PASSED with 12 in favor (Arellano, Donnelly, Garcia, Kelly, Laufer, Ortega, Reyes, Rowe, Schopper, Tavares, Vo-Ramirez, Zekanis), three opposed (Bernard, Blose, Krall) and four abstentions (Bhakta, Cabrera, Flores, Sandstrom).

15. Discussion and possible action to remove Director Gene Gatmaitan from the Board of Directors for the Sylmar Neighborhood Council.

MOTION (by Mr. Kelly, seconded by Mr. Laufer): to remove Gene Gatmaitan from the Board of Directors of the Sylmar Neighborhood Council due to his four consecutive absences, as stated by the SNC Bylaws.

Mr. Kelly agreed to **AMEND THE MOTION** to read as follows: to remove Gene Gatmaitan from the Board of Directors of the Sylmar Neighborhood Council due to his four consecutive unexcused absences, as stated by the SNC Bylaws.

DISCUSSION: Ms. Herrera-Robles recommended sending Mr. Gatmaitan a Certified letter. Ms. Vo-Ramirez responded that that will be done and that Mr. Gatmaitan has not responded to any of many e-mails and phone calls.

MOTION PASSED with two abstentions (Bernard, Bhakta).

16. Board Member Comments - Comments from Board on subject matters within the Board's jurisdiction.

Mr. Krall announced the April 18-19, 2009 Sylmar Relay for Life 24-hour fundraising event. There'll be a September 30th Meeting at **1:00 CARUSO'S REST** October 1st at the Sylmar Recreation Center, Susan B. Anthony Building 7:00 P.M.. Ms. Flores announced the General Board Meetings on October 23rd and November 20th, 6:30 – 9:30 p.m. at the Hubbard Street Elementary School, and January-March at Gridley St. Elementary School.

Ms. Herrera-Robles congratulated the NC for reaching out to the community by rotating the General Board Meetings locations. She distributed a flyer regarding the Mayor's Community Budget Day and Congress of Neighborhoods, Saturday, October 11th, 8:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m., at City Hall (213-485-1360, lacityneighborhoods.com, done.budgetday@lacity.org); there'll be free workshops, child care, parking and food. Mayor Villaraigosa will speak.

17. Next Meeting date, Future Agenda Items – Please submit in writing to the Executive Board.

Ms. Vo-Ramirez thanked Mr. Avila for helping to arrange and Palacio Torres for hosting this Meeting, and the Stakeholders for attending. The next General Board Meeting will be at Hubbard Street Elementary School.

18. Closing Remarks, Announcements; Acknowledgements & Adjournment

Ms. Vo-Ramirez **ADJOURNED** the Meeting without any objections at 9:46 p.m.

Minutes written by DL.