

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, October 23, 2008

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

1. Call to Order and Pledge of Allegiance

Ms. Quyen Vo-Ramirez called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. LAFD (L.A. Fire Dept.) Captain Dan Curry led the Pledge of Allegiance.

2. Roll Call

Roll Call was taken by the Secretary. Board Members present: Erlin Arellano, Bonnie Bernard (late), Hiral Bhakta, Hector Cabrera, Rick Donnelly (late), Tammy Flores, Fabian Garcia (late), Randall Kelly, Nick Krall, Martin Laufer, George Ortega, Guillermo Reyes, Jim Schopper, Esteban Tavares, Quyen Vo-Ramirez.

Board Members absent: Cheri Blose (unexcused), Saul Gonzales (excused), Jeanne Rowe (excused), Jan Sandstrom (unexcused), Lynn Zekanis (excused).

Fifteen 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 15 Stakeholders and Guests.

3. Adoption of September 25, 2008 BOD Minutes

MOTION (by Mr. Kelly, seconded by Mr. Krall): to approve the Minutes of the September 25, 2008 General Board Meeting as written.

MOTION PASSED without any objections.

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), commended the LAFD and LAPD (L.A. Police Dept.) for their efforts on the Marek Fire, and community members for helping. On October 17th, the City Council approved a \$50,000 award for information leading to the conviction of the person responsible for the October 9, 2007 hit and run of Joseph Wichmann. October 30th at 9:30 a.m. is the Grand Opening of Drapes 4 Show at Foothill and Arroyo. The L.A. Emergency Management Dept. declared October Wildland Fires Awareness Month. November 13th is The Great Southern California ShakeOut Emergency Response Drill.

Antonio Sanchez, East Valley Area Director of Neighborhood and Community Services for Mayor Villaraigosa (818-778-4990; antonio.sanchez@lacity.org), also thanked everyone for their Marek Fire help. There'll be a Thank You Pancake Breakfast. The Mayor's Community Budget Day and Congress of Neighborhoods was Saturday, October 11th. He encouraged completing the Mayor's Online Budget Survey. The Mayor's Day of Service is November 22nd and projects can be submitted.

Dan Rosales, Jr., Planning Deputy for Councilman Alarcon (818-756-8409; dan.rosales@lacity.org), announced that Section Eight financial assistance is being provided to fire evacuees.

Charles Chacon, LAPD Mission Division Senior Lead Officer (Cell 818-634-0619, Office 818-838-9847), reported that property crime is down, but gang crime is up, including vandalism. Burglars were arrested based on "great citizen information." The San Fers Gang member shooter was caught. Report graffiti to Graffiti Busters at (818) 362-8702.

Jose Herrera, LAPD Foothill Division Foothill Officer (818-439-5071; foothilljeopardy@gmail.com), described neighborhood gang violence that also affects other young people and children. The LAPD's Jeopardy Program, for gang prevention and intervention (<http://www.midvalleyjeopardy.org>), has after-school activities, especially boxing. He distributed flyers about and announced the annual "Tip-A-Cop" Fundraiser November 18th, 11:00 a.m. - 9:00 p.m. at Acapulco Restaurant [8431 Sunland Blvd., Sun Valley].

LAFD Captain Dan Curry, of Fire Station 91, described fire conditions and efforts. Local foliage is being replaced by housing and other structures. This is the largest Fire Station District in Los Angeles, and Fire Stations 98 and 75 help. Fire vehicles are constantly on call all day. The six-month annual drought makes foliage very dry and Santa Ana winds cause fires, with October the busiest fire month. Ornamental vegetation can be very flammable; it helps to not have much patio furniture out. "Smoldering remains" from the Marek Fire were put out just before this meeting. If a fire is near, have your valuables ready to go and your car pointed out. He thanked

the LAPD, L.A. Animal Control and Evacuation Center staff for their help. Local community boundaries are being “dropped” so that local agencies can “work together and talk to each other” and “drill a lot together.” Capt. Curry recommended filming your home and possessions to prove their existence to your insurance company. It’s okay to stay in your home if you can help; if not, evacuate.

Ms. Vo-Ramirez said it was “amazing to see the collaboration” between agencies and jurisdictions, and thanked them and SNC Board Members Ms. Flores, Mr. Tavares, Ms. Arellano, Mr. Garcia, Mr. Krall and everyone at the Red Cross Shelter. The San Fernando Road from Polk Street to Hubbard Street Business Improvement District Fall Newsletter will be linked to the NC website.

Ms. Flores announced that Census 2010 jobs are available from November 8 – March 9, with work ending in April. Info is available at www.census.gov/losangeles and (866) 861-2010.

Mr. Krall announced the L.A. Dept. of Cultural Affairs Master Plan effort, which is a “chance for cultural and artistic groups to . . . coordinate events.” He’ll arrange to put their Meetings on the SNC website.

Mr. Garcia announced an Officer Appreciation Day at LAPD Mission Station. First setup will be October 28th from 3:00 – 6:00 p.m. The event will be October 29th starting at 10:00 a.m., with final setup beginning at 6:00 a.m.

Ms. Bernard is “grateful” and thanks the Fire and Police Depts. for an evacuation effort “coordinated very well.”

6. Public Comments

Stakeholder Lynn Platkin, representing Carole Lutness, 38th State Assembly District Democratic Candidate (661-755-3772; lutness4assembly@yahoo.com; www.lutness4assembly.com), described Ms. Lutness’ plans to address economic problems and support education, energy independence and infrastructure improvements.

Stakeholder John Herman, President, Optimists Club of San Fernando/Sylmar (818-698-4095; bigjohn12522@ca.rr.com), announced that the Club “meets on the second and fourth Wednesday evenings of each month at the Hubbard St. Denny’s [Restaurant].” The Club started with 36 Members. There’ll be social activities and service projects, “preferably for the Youth,” including at the Sylmar Recreation Center Halloween Party October 31st, 5:30 – 8:00 p.m.

Amelia Herrera-Robles, Neighborhood Empowerment Analyst, L.A. Dept. of Neighborhood Empowerment (DONE) (818-374-9895; amelia.herrera-robles@lacity.org), thanked Board Members for attending the Mayor’s Community Budget Day and Congress of Neighborhoods. She encouraged completing the Mayor’s online Budget Survey. There’ll be a Town Hall Meeting regarding the

financial disclosure issue, which she described. Board Members are being asked to complete Forms 52 and 53.

Virginia Corbin-Marinovich, Director, Sylmar Recreation Center (818-367-5656; Virginia.Corbin-Marinovich@lacity.org), announced the Halloween Carnival, October 31st, 5:30 – 8:30 at the Center and thanked the NC for its funding. Councilman Richard Alarcon will attend and volunteers are welcome.

7. Reports

Secretary's Report

Stakeholders and organizations sent more than 50 e-mails to the Secretary this month. Seven Stakeholders called and one visited the Office. Councilman Alarcon's Office's fire evacuee information update, land use project documents, bills, events and such were quickly forwarded or posted as needed. The V.P. of Communications was notified of Board Members' e-mail inboxes being full.

Treasurer's Report/Budget Committee

Mr. Kelly distributed documents and explained the latest budget allocations which will be submitted to DONE. Six Demand Warrants totaling \$7,611 were processed from July through September.

Land Use

Mr. Ortega reported that the Committee "has been effective . . . in the commercial community"; a commercial builder contacted the NC before building. The next Committee Meeting is November 17th [at 6:30 p.m. at the SNC Office].

Commercial/Business Interests

Ms. Sandstrom is not present and there is no report.

Outreach

Mr. Bhakta announced the next Committee Meeting on November 6th, 6:30 p.m., at the SNC Office and encouraged visiting the SNC website and signing up to receive information, including an events calendar every Sunday.

Election Committee – Chair to be appointed

Events

Mr. Tavares said he told the Mayor's Day of Service planning Meeting that the SNC will participate and maybe "team up" with Sylmar High School. The Committee will continue to assist fire evacuees and is working with the Beautification and Grants Committee to recognize assistance volunteers.

Public Services

Mr. Schopper reported that the next Committee Meeting is November 3rd [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 and attempted many times to contact Stakeholder Joan Costa regarding her cleanup assistance request.

Beautification/Grants

Ms. Arellano reported that the next Committee Meeting is October 30th at 6:30 p.m. at the SNC Office. Mayor's Day of Service projects will be discussed.

Education

Mr. Gonzales is absent and there is no report.

Public Safety/Emergency Preparedness

Mr. Garcia reported the Committee will be contacting fire evacuees about how the Committee can further help. Ms. Flores described evacuee assistance efforts, including by many youth, and that local businesses donated food and supplies.

Bylaws Ad Hoc

Mr. Laufer distributed a packet of SNC Bylaws "Article III [Three]: Governing Body" recommended revisions and reviewed some of them. He reported that the Committee met and also discussed Article II [Two]; they decided not to re-introduce Article II to the full Board.

New Business

8. Presentation by Council District 7 on future community improvements, such as additional Street Sweeping, Street Resurfacing, Side Walk installation and Street Furniture.

John De La Rosa, Public Works Liaison for Councilman Alarcon (818-756-8409), announced that the Councilman "wants to add 100 miles of street sweeping." He passed a map around that shows current street sweeping areas. The project would cost \$1.5 million, of which \$1 million would pay for street signs and \$500,000 for equipment. The money will be allocated within two months; every neighborhood will be notified in English, Spanish and Tagalog. The program will begin January 1st "if all goes well." He described some street and sidewalk damage causes, and the street repair request and repair processes. Sometimes streets are resurfaced, rather than repaired, due to budget restraints; there's an 80-year sidewalk repair backlog. Repair efforts are being focused around schools. "The City will not put new sidewalks in" over dirt and some areas are ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act)-exempt. He'll advise the NC when Roxford Street between San Fernando Rd. and the Five Freeway is going to be repaired. Mr. Krall encouraged calling the City to fill potholes.

9. Discussion and possible action to establish an Emergency Preparedness Ad-Hoc Committee. The committee is to establish emergency plan standards including Pre-planned emergency shelters, alternate traffic arteries, regional resource storage and communication systems to reach designated contacts within the community of

Sylmar from Neighborhood Watches, Faith Based organizations, Schools, and all other community based organizations to work in partnership with the CD-7 and all other Public Safety and Public Services.

Ms. Vo-Ramirez described the history of the effort and Mr. Krall described possible emergency preparation efforts.

MOTION (by Mr. Krall, seconded by Mr. Laufer): to create an ad hoc Emergency Preparedness Committee with a nine to 12-month timeline to outline an emergency preparedness plan and bring other local agencies into the planning.

DISCUSSION: Mr. Garcia described that the Public Safety/Emergency Preparedness Committee has been working on a “Crisis Response Plan” and they’re meeting October 28th at 6:30 p.m. at Buffalo Bruce’s. He suggested and Mr. Krall accepted the following amended Motion, replacing the phrase “an emergency preparedness” with “a Crisis Response” as follows:

AMENDED MOTION: to create an ad hoc Committee with a nine to 12-month timeline to outline a Crisis Response Plan and bring other local agencies into the planning.

DISCUSSION: Mr. Schopper described Councilman Alarcon’s idea to “localize groups using existing infrastructure” because if there’s a major disaster, “FEMA will take over.” Mr. Laufer doesn’t “see a reason to add another committee,” as Mr. Garcia already Chairs the Public Safety/Emergency Preparedness Committee; therefore, he withdraws his second of the Motion.

Mr. Krall **WITHDRAWS THE MOTION.**

Ms. Vo-Ramirez clarified that Public Safety/Emergency Preparedness Committee will continue as a regular Committee that needs to post Meeting notices.

Recess

There was a brief recess at this time.

10. Discussion and possible action to support the San Fernando Valley Coalition on Gangs and the Sylmar Recreation Center with financial partnership in the amount of \$2,500 towards the purchase of safety gear for the Mobile Skate Unit for Sylmar Recreation Center.

Ms. Vo-Ramirez reported that she received notification from Jorge Villegas, LAPD Foothill Division Captain (818-838-9800; villegasj@lapd.lacity.org) that the San Fernando Valley Coalition on Gangs received a donation from the SNC and other groups that make up the Coalition. Ms. Corbin-Marinovich is asking for funding for the Teen Extreme Program Program, noting that skateboarding and the need for additional safety equipment, such as helmets, and knee and elbow pads, is increasing. The equipment, which they currently share with other facilities, would be available daily. Moises Carillo, Volunteer Chair, Sylmar Youth Task Force (818-

548-3715), stated that, when funds are allocated, the equipment would be available within 4-6 weeks and that the Park is City-insured.

MOTION (by Mr. Krall, seconded by Mr. Bhakta): to support the Sylmar Recreation Center and the youth of Sylmar by purchasing skateboarding safety equipment in the amount of \$2,500.

DISCUSSION: Skateboarding would be at the outdoor basketball court. The SNC will be recognized and it will be an Outreach expense. The vendor will probably be “Fresh Parks.”

MOTION PASSED with Ms. Arellano (due to being under the age of 18) and Mr. Kelly abstaining.

11. Discussion and possible action to approve the following recommendations by the Public Services Committee:

- a. To support the letter to be sent to the Department of Transportation requesting services for the community of Sylmar.
Mr. Schopper said he’s withdrawing a letter the Committee was going to write to the DOT [L.A. Department of Transportation]. Mr. De La Rosa will provide additional information, and then the letter will be resubmitted to him.
- b. To support the letter from Mr. Ivan Forbes requesting sound walls off the 210 Freeway at the end of Leach Street.
Mr. Schopper read a letter the Committee wrote to Mr. Forbes in support of Mr. Forbes’ effort to have a 210 Freeway sound wall built.

MOTION (by Mr. Schopper, seconded by Ms. Bernard): to approve the letter from the Public Services Committee to Caltrans regarding the building a sound walls off the 210 Freeway at the end of Leach Street.

Mr. Schopper distributed and read a letter the Committee wrote to the L.A. Dept. of Transportation regarding the sound wall.

MOTION PASSED unanimously.

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

Mr. Laufer explained that Article II, “Terms,” is mandated by DONE, including “no term limit,” and that Article III is important if a Board Member wants to explain their absences and remain on the Board.

MOTION (by Mr. Laufer, seconded by Mr. Kelly): to accept Article III of the Sylmar Neighborhood Council Bylaws as it has been inserted by the Bylaws Committee into the Department of Neighborhood Empowerment Bylaws Template.

DISCUSSION: Ms. Bernard believes that the Board Member removal procedure as written by the Committee is “a little overdone.” Mr. Garcia recommended that the wording should clarify that a Board Member can appear before the Board would vote them off. Ms. Herrera-Robles clarified that it’s up to the NC when it may want to remove and/or reinstate a Board Member. Mr. Laufer explained the challenge of defining “what constitutes an unexcused absence.” Mr. Krall expressed that “it’s a professional courtesy” to accept excused absences” and is concerned that “they’re taking out a seat” by continuing absences. Ms. Bernard suggests consideration for extended illness or out-of-area work. Mr. Kelly pointed out that “extraordinary circumstance” is already “taken care of by the voting process.” Mr. Tavares wanted to know how “Board Members who don’t participate in community events” means “being taken care of.” Mr. Laufer elaborated that Bylaws Article IV [Four] addresses this. Ms. Vo-Ramirez reminded that a Board Retreat document was signed by Board Members that they’ll serve on at least one Committee.

There were no objections to a **CALL FOR THE QUESTION** by Mr. Ortega.

MOTION PASSED with Ms. Bernard and Ms. Flores abstaining.

13. **Discussion and possible reconsideration** of Bylaws change making the President solely responsible for filling vacant board seats. Per DONE representative, this does not match the intention of their recommendations.

Ms. Vo-Ramirez stated that this Agenda Item was not on the original version of this Agenda, is not written in the proper form to be reconsidered, has her and Mr. Kelly’s initials when they did not see or approve this Agenda version, has not been approved by the Executive Board for distribution and, anyway, a Motion for Reconsideration must be proposed by a member of the original Motion vote’s prevailing side. Ms. Flores related that she “asked [Mr. Krall] to put [this Item] in” the Agenda and explained how it got there. Mr. Kelly described e-mails sent regarding this Agenda and the need to follow the Agenda revision procedure, especially, to include all five Executive Board Members in Agenda revision e-mail communications; it “looks like the President was bypassed.” Ms. Bernard said that other Bylaws language had worked before. Mr. Laufer “firmly stands by” the Article II language, which allows a vacancy to be filled and is a “very important provision” that “doesn’t allow the President to play God.” Ms. Herrera-Robles urged Board Members “to reacquaint yourselves with” the Rules of Conduct and related documents because it “reflects on trust . . . key to this communication.”

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

- a. To support the zone change for the 13640 Foothill Blvd. property.
Mr. Ortega described the project.

MOTION (by Mr. Ortega, seconded by Mr. Krall): to approve the zone change from RA-1 to C21VL to allow the building of 13,000 s.f. of retail on a 35,429 s.f. lot at 13640 Foothill Boulevard (north of Hubbard St.) as presented.

MOTION PASSED without any objections.

- b. To support the installation of an emergency power backup system to an existing wireless telecommunications facility.

Mr. Ortega described the project and explained that the Agenda incorrectly shows the project address as 12707 Bledsoe St. (west of Dronfield), when it should say 12707 Foothill Blvd. (west of Vaughan St.).

MOTION (by Mr. Ortega, seconded by Mr. Krall): to approve the installation of an emergency power backup system to an existing wireless telecommunications facility at 12707 Foothill Blvd. (west of Vaughan St.).

MOTION PASSED with Mr. Bhakta abstaining.

15. Board Member Comments

Ms. Vo-Ramirez reminded Board Members to submit Agenda items to her.

16. Next Meeting date, future Agenda Items

Ms. Vo-Ramirez thanked Stakeholder Sherry Lincoln for her service at these Meetings, and the Stakeholders for attending. The next General Board Meeting will be held at Hubbard Street Elementary School on November 20th, the third Thursday, not the usual 4th Thursday, due to the Thanksgiving holiday.

17. Closing Remarks, Announcements; Acknowledgements & Adjournment

Ms. Vo-Ramirez **ADJOURNED** the Meeting without any objections at 9:33 p.m.

Minutes written by DL.