

CITY OF LOS ANGELES

SYLMAR NEIGHBORHOOD COUNCIL

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13109 Borden Ave.
Sylmar, CA 91342

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, January 22, 2009

Sylmar Elementary School, Auditorium, 13291 Phillippi Ave., Sylmar, CA 91342

1. Call to Order and Pledge of Allegiance

President Quyen Vo-Ramirez called the meeting to order at 6:36 p.m. The Pledge of Allegiance was said.

2. Roll Call

Roll Call was taken by the Secretary. Board Members present: Erlin Arellano, Hiral Bhakta, Cheri Blose, Rick Donnelly, Tammy Flores, Fabian Garcia, Randall Kelly, Nick Krall, Martin Laufer, George Ortega, Guillermo Reyes, Jan Sandstrom, Jim Schopper, Esteban Tavares, and Quyen Vo-Ramirez.

Board Members absent: Bonnie Bernard (excused), Hector Cabrera (excused), Saul Gonzales (unexcused), Jeanne Rowe (excused), and 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 14 Stakeholders and Guests.

3. Adoption of Minutes

The following correction to the December 18, 2008 General Board Meeting Minutes was requested:

Page four, Item #8, second paragraph: "Mr. Donnelly read the Award" should read "Mr. Kelly read the Award."

MOTION (by Ms. Flores, seconded by Mr. Kelly): to approve the Minutes of the December 18, 2008 General Board Meeting as corrected.

MOTION PASSED by acclamation as corrected without any objections, with Mr. Bhakta abstaining.

4. Housekeeping; 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 LAPD (L.A. Police Dept.) Mission Division for their quick response and arrest yesterday to the murder on Yarnell Street. He distributed a flyer for and announced "Senator Correa announces 2nd hearing on mobile home park wildfire safety in Sylmar: February 6, 2009" at 11:00 a.m. at Mission College.

Charles Chacon, LAPD Mission Division Senior Lead Officer (Cell 818-634-0619, Office 818-838-9847, www.lapd.org), announced that there's been a "lot of property crime," especially on Glenoaks Blvd. "in the last two weeks" at "all times of the day and night," including of cars. He reminded not to leave valuables in view or in cars; put them in the trunk. Nine juveniles were arrested for curfew, others for drinking in public, and six for truancy last week. We need to support the Friday night teen program at Sylmar Recreation Center. Car tags and license plates are being stolen, especially of Toyota Camrys; remove previous years' tags, then score it in little pieces. Information may soon be available on the 15575 Herrick Ave. and Excelsior St. fire. The Mission Division is being included with the Van Nuys Division. Captain Villegas has not yet been replaced.

Luis P. Sanchez, Sr. Structural Engineer, L.A. Building and Safety Dept. (213-482-6787; www.lacity.org), reported for Antonio Sanchez (818-778-4990; antonio.sanchez@lacity.org) of the Mayor's Office that Antonio Sanchez' Office is at the Van Nuys City Hall.

Nick Krall, of L.A. City District Seven Councilman Richard Alarcon's Office (818-756-8409; nick.krall@lacity.org) and SNC Public Relations Coordinator, announced that a traffic light will be installed at Bradley Ave. and Roxford St., and the Councilman's Office is seeking street maintenance project proposals, including for street lights, curb cuts and sidewalks. CERT [Community Emergency Response Team] classes for personal and community safety are being held now; see www.cert-la.com. Approximately 370 of the 700 home fire victims have been reached. The Oakridge Mobile Home Park clean-up is scheduled for early February, to be finished by the middle or end of March. Every Tuesday in February at Olive Vista Middle School, educational workshops will be held on finance and housing; see www.rebuildsylmar.org. He gave the NC a list of eight families that need air filters.

Greg Bartz, Neighborhood Council Liaison, L.A. Dept. of Water and Power (213-367-2800, greg.bartz@ladwp.com), introduced himself and described their renewable energy program. He distributed and reviewed a handout about the program. A 30-page presentation is available at www.ladwp.com at the Neighborhood News link. State Assembly Bill 32 and State Senate Bill 1368 are driving the effort. Wind, solar and geothermal are the main energy sources; some natural gas and coal will still be

needed. Many proposals are still being refined, and environmental studies and community input is still being done. “Nothing has been finalized yet.”

Amelia Herrera-Robles, Neighborhood Empowerment Analyst, L.A. Dept. of Neighborhood Empowerment (DONE) (818-374-9895; amelia.herrera-robles@lacity.org), distributed a handout about and encouraged attending the NC Valley Town Hall Meeting January 24th from 8:00 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. at the Braude Building at Van Nuys City Hall [6262 Van Nuys Blvd.] regarding transportation issues. Neighborhoods can contribute up to \$5,000 to non-profit organizations. Regarding Neighborhood Council Files, the City Council voted to approve a two-year pilot program; Form 54 will need to be submitted to open a Council File.

6. Public Comments

Stakeholder Sherry Lincoln announced and described the April 18th and 19th Relay for Life event at Olive Vista Middle School. Big Sunday will be held May 2nd and 3rd. JPL is having an Open House, also on May 2nd and 3rd.

Joh Meher, owner of the fitness center at Foothill Blvd. and Sayre St., is concerned that the soon-opening Mission College Fitness Center will be overwhelming competition. His fitness center is “in a densely populated neighborhood,” but other businesses in the shopping center would lose business if his closed. He’d like the NC to agendize to do something to have the College Fitness Center “open limited days of the week.”

7. Committee Reports

Secretary

The Secretary thanked everyone who assisted with moving the Office to the Sylmar Recreation Center, including Fabian, Hiral, Erlin and her friend, Quyen, and especially Rick, Jim and George. The Office is open on Mondays, Tuesdays and Thursdays from 10:15 – 3:15, except the fourth week of each month when we have these General Board Meetings. Check our website at www.sylmarnc.org or call us at 818-833-8737 for more information. The Minutes of the December 18th Special Board Meeting, a ‘Board Member Board Meetings Attendance’ list, an updated “Office Equipment and Supplies Inventory” and a “Pending Office projects” list were completed and sent to the Executive and/or full Board. Also, free Internet ads were posted about this Meeting.

Treasurer/Budget

Mr. Kelly is working on the second quarter reconciliation.

Land Use

Mr. Ortega reported that the next Meeting will be Monday, February 9th.

Commercial/Business Interests

Ms. Sandstrom said that there was no report.

Outreach

Mr. Bhakta said that there was no report.

Election – Chair to be appointed

Events

Mr. Tavares reported that the next Meeting will be Monday, February 12th at 6:30 at the Office. Ms. Arellano noted that the next Optimists Club Meeting will be January 28th at 7:00 at Denny's Restaurant on Hubbard.

Public Services

Mr. Schopper reported that the next Meeting will be Monday, February 2nd at the Office, and they're looking for projects, for example, clean-up.

Beautification/Grants – Chair to be appointed

Education – Mr. Gonzales was not present.

Public Safety/Emergency Preparedness

[This report was made after Item #10.]

Mr. Garcia reported that he drafted an Emergency Preparedness Plan that he'll pass around for everyone to write their comments on it.

Bylaws ad hoc

Mr. Laufer deferred his report to Item #14 below.

8. Discussion and possible action to seat a new Board Member in the vacated seat in the Homeowner category.

[This Agenda Item was addressed after the Public Safety/Emergency Preparedness report.] Ms. Vo-Ramirez explained that Rudolfo Lopez presented documents confirming, is therefore qualified, and she would like to appoint him to be on the NC Board as the Homeowners Representative.

MOTION (by Mr. Laufer, seconded by Mr. Bhakta): to accept the appointment of Rudolfo Lopez to be the Sylmar Neighborhood Council Homeowners Representative.

DISCUSSION: Mr. Lopez, an LAPD Sergeant, introduced himself.

MOTION PASSED by a unanimous hand vote, with 13 in favor.

Mr. Krall administered the Sylmar Neighborhood Council Oath with Mr. Lopez, who joined the other Board Members.

9. Presentation by Candidates for City of Los Angeles Controller: Kathleen "Suzy" Evans, Wendy Greuel and Nick Patsouras.

L.A. City District Two Councilwoman Wendy Greuel (818-756-8121; councilmember.greuel@lacity.org; lacity.org/council/cd2) spoke. She thanked and said "this [NC] . . . stepped up to the plate" regarding the Sylmar Fires. She reviewed some of her accomplishments as a Councilwoman, including supporting NCs being able to open Council Files, cutting business taxes, creating anti-gridlock zones and protecting open space. As City Controller, she would work to implement many of outgoing Controller Laura Chick's plans. She'd be an independent voice to hold elected officials accountable and would do a public "scorecard." The CERT (Community Emergency Response Team) is very important and a Horse Advisory Task Force is being created.

Ms. Evans and Mr. Patsaouras were not present.

Recess

10. Presentation of Sylmar Neighborhood Council “Spirit” Awards for our community members who displayed heroism and selflessness during the Sylmar Sayre Fire.

Ms. Vo-Ramirez announced and explained the Spirit Award presented to Ms. Bea Laufer, who put out small fires at neighbor’s homes during the Sylmar Fires. Dan Rosales, Jr., Planning Deputy for L.A. City District Seven Councilman Richard Alarcon (818-756-8409; dan.rosales@lacity.org; www.cityplanning.lacity.org), was not present but was also awarded for putting out “spot fires all over the neighborhood.” Ms. Vo-Ramirez encouraged Stakeholders to keep sending neighborhood information to the NC.

- 11. Discussion and possible action** to support Councilmember Richard Alarcon’s support of the residents of Oakridge Mobile Home Park re: fire debris removal. Mr. Krall explained that the Councilman called, not wrote, on behalf of the residents. Clean-up money has been identified and residents are being notified that the City will clean up individual spaces at no expense to homeowners. Residents will be able “to sift through the rubble” in February. The Councilman’s Office is working on what’ll happen after there’s “no use of [homeowners’] properties.” Mr. Laufer is concerned about why “taxpayers” should pay for the cleanup if insurance companies might pay; there’re “no documents to look at yet.” Mr. Kelly suggested supporting the Councilman’s effort. Ms. Vo-Ramirez observed that the Councilman has helped to raise \$2 million from a non-profit organization to help with the clean-up; the State and FEMA will help. She added that the State Health Commissioner declared that the Park is “a health hazard.” Mr. Krall added that the Park will be rebuilt and there’s “a lot of commitment” by various organizations. The Councilman’s Office is trying to avoid Park residents being liable for up to \$500 for the clean-up.

MOTION (by Mr. Kelly, seconded by Ms. Sandstrom): to support Councilmember Richard Alarcon’s support of the residents of Oakridge Mobile Home Park, requesting the residents’ permission to allow the City of Los Angeles to remove debris from their property. The cost will be paid for in part by: City of Los Angeles, State of California and Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA).

FRIENDLY AMENDMENT (by Mr. Laufer): to support Councilmember Alarcon writing a letter of support for the residents.

FRIENDLY AMENDMENT ACCEPTED by Mr. Kelly.

MOTION to CALL FOR THE QUESTION (by Ms. Flores). There were no objections.

MOTION PASSED without objections, with Mr. Krall abstaining.

- 12. Discussion and possible action** to provide a Sylmar Neighborhood Council Community Appreciation Day to honor Sylmar Fire responders and survivors.

Mr. Kelly expressed that this is an “opportunity for the [NC] to recognize the various agencies . . . in the aftermath of the Fire . . . [and] an effort to give complete recognition to everyone involved.” Mr. Krall voiced that this could be combined with Councilman Alarcon’s recognitions. Mr. Garcia suggested adding the words “and recognize.” Ms. Vo-Ramirez stated that the website will note that air purifiers are available; also, 75 fruit trees will be donated to Stakeholders. Mr. Arellano has volunteer and donor lists.

MOTION (by Mr. Kelly, seconded by Mr. Reyes): to provide a Sylmar Neighborhood Council Community Appreciation Day on February 28, 2009 at 12:00 p.m. at Sylmar Recreation Center to honor our Los Angeles County and City Fire Departments, Los Angeles County and City Police Department, Sylmar Recreation Center, Sylmar High School, Community Volunteers and Fire Survivors by allocating funds for set up, outreach, food and related expenses, not to exceed \$2,000.

DISCUSSION: Ms. Blose said that a barbeque could be hosted for Fire responders. Mr. Reyes believes that “we should concentrate on recognizing the volunteers and businesses who did the donating.” Mr. Tavares will volunteer to help and stated that [the NC] should recognize paid responders. Mr. Laufer would like the NC to send letters to all Fire Departments that responded. Mr. Kelly said that there would be event planning meetings.

MOTION PASSED with one abstention (Ms. Arellano).

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

- a. 12939 Gladstone St. CUP to allow a wireless telecommunication facility.
Mr. Ortega distributed handout #1 and explained it and the project.

MOTION (by Mr. Ortega, seconded by Mr. Kelly): to approve the Conditional Use Permit project at 12939 Gladstone Ave. to allow installation of a wireless telecommunication facility housed in a 12’ by 20’ structure with a 45’ high monopine on a 27,070 s.f. lot, pending neighborhood approval.

DISCUSSION: Ms. Blose elaborated that this would be to accept the project as presented to the NC until a Public Hearing is held.

MOTION to CALL FOR THE QUESTION (by Mr. Kelly). There were no objections.

MOTION PASSED with Ms. Sandstrom opposed and two abstaining (Bhakta, Kelly).

- b. 13356 Eldridge Avenue CUP to allow a wireless telecommunication facility.
Mr. Ortega distributed handout #2 and explained it and the project, saying “there’re no residences within a 500’ radius of this facility.”

MOTION (by Mr. Ortega, seconded by Mr. Reyes): to approve the Conditional Use Permit project at 13356 Eldridge Avenue to allow installation of a wireless telecommunication facility on the sides of a parking structure at Mission College.

DISCUSSION: Ms. Arellano stated that “many Mission College students complain that they don’t get good [cell phone] reception in classrooms.”

MOTION to CALL FOR THE QUESTION (by Ms. Flores). There were no objections.

MOTION PASSED unanimously without objections.

- c. 12961 San Fernando Road, Variance to permit parking and overnight storage of commercial vehicles.

Mr. Ortega distributed handout #3 and explained it and the project, saying that “neighbors object to vehicles that were accessing on El Cajon St.”; the owner moved the access to San Fernando Rd.

MOTION (by Mr. Ortega, seconded by Mr. Bhakta): to approve the project at 12961 San Fernando Road, a Variance to permit parking and overnight storage of commercial vehicles (maximum of five) for off-site use in conjunction with an existing 41,800 s.f. packing foam manufacturing facility on a 1.68 acre site, on the conditions that none of the permitted vehicles access El Cajon Street, and the hours of operation for those vehicles be restricted to 7 a.m. to 5 p.m.

DISCUSSION: Mr. Ortega indicated that “the existing walls are higher than the minimum” and that the “El Cajon access would be used by” smaller vehicles; the restriction will be on the sublessee’s vehicles.

MOTION to CALL FOR THE QUESTION (by Ms. Flores). There were no objections.

MOTION PASSED unanimously without objections.

14. **Discussion and possible action** to approve the recommendation by the Ad-Hoc Bylaws Committee: to approve Article IV as written.

Mr. Laufer distributed and explained that the “Article IV: Neighborhood Council Operations” and “Board Rules for the Sylmar [NC], Revised 1/22/09” handouts were “molded . . . to the City template,” with much City wording added. Article IV is “to make the Bylaws more enforceable and usable.”

MOTION (by Mr. Laufer, seconded by Mr. Kelly): to approve the recommendation by the ad hoc Bylaws Committee to approve Article IV as written.

MOTION PASSED unanimously without objections, with Mr. Lopez abstaining.

15. **Discussion and possible action** to increase the Secretary hours.

Mr. Donnelly “suggests that the Board consider this. The Secretary does a lot of work outside the Office . . . and a lot of detail work . . . He’s made very good use of the

hours we've given him . . . He's done a lot of work for the Office move . . . Having the Office open more will serve the Stakeholders better."

MOTION (by Mr. Donnelly, seconded by Mr. Bhakta): to increase the Secretary hours from 15 to 20 hours a week for six months, to be reviewed in 60 days.

FRIENDLY AMENDMENT (by Mr. Kelly): to increase the Secretary hours from 15 to 20 hours a week until the end of the fiscal year on June 30th, to be reviewed in 60 days.

FRIENDLY AMENDMENT ACCEPTED by Mr. Donnelly.

MOTION PASSED unanimously without objections.

16. Board Member Comments

Ms. Flores announced that Tia Chucha [Centro Cultural, 10258 Foothill Blvd., Lake View Terrace; (818) 896-1479; info@tiachucha.com] will have a Grand Opening January 31st. Also, the Office will have phone service by early next week, and the Golden State Jobs Coalition will speak at a General Board Meeting.

Ms. Vo-Ramirez mentioned that the Office phone bill will be changed to an annual bill. Ms. Blose noted that Stetson Ranch was closed due to the Fires. Mr. Bhakta indicated that he will discuss certain issues with various Board Members.

Mr. Garcia announced CRT (Crisis Response Team) classes every Tuesday and Thursday from January 27 – March 12 at L.A. Academy in Westchester. They're more intense than CERT classes. Also, there's a free lunch program for children under 18 and seniors at the Sylmar Recreation Center from 11:30 a.m. -12:30 p.m., and snacks from 2:30 – 3:30. Finally, he was recently hired by the Mayor's Office to work with the GRID anti-gang program.

Mr. Donnelly reminded about the Valley Town Hall Meeting this Saturday 8:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. and that it's important to represent the NC. Mr. Krall announced a Sylmar Chamber of Commerce networking event this Saturday 12:00 – 2:00 and that a visual arts contest is coming. Ms. Sandstrom thanks Board Members for supporting Sylmar's newest business, Bahler's Indoor Batting Cages, which the Santa Clarita #8 bus line drops off at. Mr. Schopper announced that the Sylmar Mission Park will be opened in mid-March.

17. Next Meeting date, future Agenda Items

Ms. Vo-Ramirez thanked everyone for attending and announced that the next General Board Meeting will be Thursday, February 26th at 6:30 here at Sylmar Elementary School.

18. Closing Remarks, Announcements; Acknowledgements and Adjournment

Ms. Vo-Ramirez **ADJOURNED** the Meeting without any objections at 9:28 p.m.

Minutes written by DL.