

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, February 26, 2009

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

1. Call to Order and Pledge of Allegiance

Vice-President Rick Donnelly called the meeting to order at 6:36 p.m. and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

2. Roll Call

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

Board Members absent: Bonnie Bernard (excused), Cheri Blose (excused), Tammy Flores (excused), Jeanne Rowe (excused), and Jan Sandstrom (excused).

Twelve 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 18 Stakeholders and Guests.

3. Adoption of Minutes

MOTION (by Mr. Kelly, seconded by Mr. Bhakta): to approve the Minutes of the January 22, 2009 General Board Meeting as written.

MOTION PASSED without any objections.

4. Housekeeping, Stakeholder comments, Speaker Cards, and Timekeeper.

Mr. Donnelly 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), distributed a flyer regarding and announced a February 28th "Free Valley Spay & Neuter Day" at the Animal Care Center at Brand and Sepulveda Blvds. Licensing will also be available.

March 7th there'll be a Community Prayer Service and lunch at L.A. Lutheran High School for those affected by the recent Fires.

Mr. Figueras welcomed John Lonergan, LAPD [L.A. Police Dept.] Mission Division Senior Lead Officer (818-634-0610), who reported that crime is down 30% in the last 28 days because four men were arrested above Eldridge Ave. who were committing burglaries and stealing metal, including hundreds of pounds of spooled wire. Year-to-date, crime is up 5% for the Mission Division side lead by Charles Chacon, LAPD Mission Division Senior Lead Officer (Cell 818-634-0619, Office 818-838-9847), while Officer Lonergan's side is at the same level. There'll be a March 6th Curfew Task Force Meeting of various groups. Some residents were removed from sober living houses for drug, probation and other violations, which may result in more of them being homeless. He welcomed Bill Scott, LAPD Mission Division Captain (818-838-9800), who introduced himself. Captain Scott knows people in Sylmar and has been with the LAPD for 19 years. He explained things about law enforcement, including that plainclothes officers are in the area. The San Fers gang has 722 documented members; 122 have been served with arrest warrants. He encouraged people to contact the Police about suspicious activity. "Party cars" have returned; eight parties were cited last weekend. One officer looks for party websites and calls local Commanders to alert them.

Ms. Vo-Ramirez read letters from Virginia Corbin-Marinovich, Director, Sylmar Recreation Center (818-367-5656; Virginia.Corbin-Marinovich@lacity.org), thanking the NC for material donations to the Recreation Center, and from Steve Poizner, State Insurance Commissioner (800-927-4357; www.insurance.ca.gov), thanking the SNC for its participation in the recent Insurance Department [Fire] Recovery Forum.

6. Public Comments

Noel Weiss, L.A. City Attorney candidate, noted that 33 NCs are against Measure B. He "wants to alert the Board" about the "power grab by the Mayor and City Council." Stakeholder Ivan Forbes reported about a Stakeholder who needs help, and that he has the first solar home in the area; since 1983, it has run almost all on its own power.

Stakeholder Ron Rackerby is concerned about dump trucks driving in early mornings on Fenton St. by Olive View Dr. Mr. Laufer explained that they're removing toxic dirt from the fire-ravaged Oakridge Mobile Home Park. Mr. Figueras added that they'll be finished by late March and encouraged calling Jose A. Rodriguez, Field Deputy for L.A. City District Seven Councilman Richard Alarcon (818-756-9115; jose.a.rodriguez@lacity.org) if there's a problem. Ms. Vo-Ramirez reminded that no such work should be done before 7:00 a.m.

7. Committee Reports

Secretary's Report

The Secretary reported that there's a working phone and fax in the Office. The phone number is still 818-833-8737 and the website address is still www.sylmarnc.org. Rick Donnelly, George Ortega, Nick Krall, and especially Jim Schopper, who installed and also helped move things out of the Office to be donated, were thanked. Many of the items were donated to the Sylmar Recreation Center, whose Director Virginia Corbin-Marinovich was also thanked. Future projects include fixing Board Member e-mail account problems; updating the Stakeholder database; finishing recycling thousands of pages of unused, obsolete and duplicate flyers, brochures and documents; and

finishing archiving computer and hardcopy documents that were never organized since the beginning of the Neighborhood Council more than five years ago.

Treasurer's Report/Budget

Mr. Kelly explained the "[SNC] Budget 2008-2009" and "[SNC] Budget Reconciliation [2008-2009 2nd Quarter]." Section 101, "Facility," includes \$4,843 that would've been used for rent which now "can be used for something else."

Land Use

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

Commercial/Business Interests

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

Outreach

Mr. Bhakta reported that this Saturday at 10:00 a.m. there'll be a Community Dental Fair at Olive View Medical Center. He talked with the Girl Scouts and the Panorama City NC about co-sponsoring a Health Fair. The SNC website calendar is "full of events." He encouraged people to see the website's "Community Resource Tab" and sign up for event e-mails.

Election Committee – Chair to be appointed.

Events

Ms. Arellano reported that the Committee is meeting with the Outreach Committee and Sarah Delgadillo of the Girl Scouts about co-sponsoring a Health Fair. The Committee will be organizing a Community Appreciation Day. Mr. Tavares added that the Committee will meet Wednesdays March 4th and 11th at 6:30 p.m. at the Sylmar Recreation Center in the Susan B. Anthony Building.

Public Services

Mr. Reyes reported that the Committee will meet Monday March 2nd at 6:30 p.m.; they'll discuss the upcoming Big Sunday event.

Beautification/Grants – Chair to be appointed.

Education

Mr. Gonzales is seeking information about loan modification scams. Mr. Figueras mentioned that L.A. Neighborhood Housing Services (www.lanhs.org) [818-834-7858] handles such complaints, adding that a local man "was fraudulently notarizing documents" and "will go to prison." The person he stole the notary stamp from may also have participated.

Public Safety/Emergency Preparedness

There was no report at this time.

Bylaws ad hoc

Mr. Laufer reported that, in Item 14 later in this Meeting, he'll discuss the "Neighborhood Council Bylaws, Revised XX, XXXX" [revised Articles IV-VI (four through six) and "[SNC] Bylaws, 9/07/07 DONE apprvd" [the complete Bylaws]

handouts he distributed. The adoption of the Bylaws revisions “should complete the conversion of our Bylaws to conform to the City template.” Ms. Zekanis noted that the NC will need to redo the Elections section.

Old Business

8. Discussion of postponing Community Appreciation Day.

MOTION (by Mr. Kelly, seconded by Ms. Arellano): to postpone Community Appreciation Day from February 28, 2009 to March 28, 2009 at 12:00 p.m. at the Sylmar Recreation Center.

DISCUSSION: It was noted that the Agenda mistakenly said “March 28, 2008” instead of “March 28, 2009.” Ms. Vo-Ramirez explained that the LAPD’s San Fernando Valley Coalition on Gangs and the Sylmar Recreation Center are being worked with regarding obtaining equipment for the Friday Night Teens Program. Ms. Arellano said she found the Fire assistance volunteers list and needs help confirming contact information.

MOTION PASSED without any objections.

New Business

9. Presentation and Introduction by Candidates for City of Los Angeles City Attorney. Candidates Noel Weiss and David Berger spoke. (It was noted that the Agenda mistakenly says “Carmen Weiss,” instead of “Noel Weiss.”) More information can be obtained at www.noelweiss.com and www.berger4ca.com.

[The following presentations were made after Item #10.]

Candidates Michael Amerian and Carmen Trutanich spoke. More information can be obtained at www.michaelamerian.com and www.tru09.com.

Javier Arguello spoke on behalf of LAUSD School Board candidate Nury Martinez.

10. Presentation by Lisa Bianconi from the Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA) on the Annual Budget.

Margarita de Escontrias spoke for Ms. Bianconi, who was unable to attend. Ms. Bianconi met with officials regarding the former Price Pfister site. The CRA is starting budget preparations for fiscal year 2010 and is consulting with many NCs. They’re mandated to “set aside 20% for affordable housing” and are working with the Sylmar BID [Business Improvement District] on a streetscape project. Ms. Vo-Ramirez expressed that the public is invited to be a part of that process and invited the speaker to return to address the NC.

Recess

11. Discussion and possible action regarding buying a coffee maker for Fire Station 91.

[This Item was addressed after Item #9.] Mr. Donnelly explained that the Fire Station is “looking for help.” Several price quotes were obtained near \$750 and they’re seeking a discounted price. It’s a “good chance to give back” to the Fire Department.

MOTION (by Mr. Donnelly, seconded by Mr. Kelly): to allocate \$750 to Fire Station 91 in Sylmar to purchase a coffee maker.

DISCUSSION: Mr. Schopper noted that this was discussed and approved by the Public Services Committee. Mr. Tavares described that their current coffee maker serves up to six people; at least nine firefighters are there at a time. Mr. Donnelly explained that the money would buy a high-capacity coffee maker. Ms. Vo-Ramirez added that other engine companies rotate there during emergencies.

MOTION PASSED without any objections, with Ms. Arellano (due to being under age 18), Mr. Gonzales and Mr. Ortega abstaining.

12. Discussion and possible action to sponsor and participate in the annual Sylmar Relay for Life April 18th and 19th 2009.

Mr. Krall announced the third annual Relay for Life 24-hour worldwide event, a “great way of getting the community out and involved.” Mr. Garcia stated that he and Mr. Tavares are the Co-Chairs; their goal is to have 30 teams, including 50 [cancer] survivors and \$50,000 fundraised. He encouraged the community to participate; there’ll be an April 18th planning Meeting at Olive View Middle School. See www.relayforlife.org/sylmarca.

MOTION (by Mr. Krall, seconded by Mr. Reyes): to allocate funds for T-shirts for the Sylmar Relay for Life April 18th and 19th 2009, not to exceed \$650.

MOTION PASSED without any objections, with Ms. Arellano (due to being under age 18) abstaining.

13. Discussion and possible action to participate in the Stetson Ranch Clean Up April 25, 2009. Volunteers will be planting trees with community members and the City of Los Angeles Department of Recreation and Parks.

Mr. Kelly explained that there would be no cost to the NC and the event is co-sponsored by many local organizations and all local public officials. The goal is to plant 150 trees and this is an “outreach opportunity.”

MOTION (by Mr. Kelly, seconded by Mr. Laufer): to participate in the Stetson Ranch Clean Up April 25, 2009.

DISCUSSION: Mr. Kelly explained that Stetson Ranch is a Recreation and Parks facility; they’re working with equestrians to expand and improve it, and to help restore fire-damaged areas.

MOTION PASSED without any objections.

14. Discussion and possible action about Hansen Dam Fourth of July events.

Mr. Krall explained that there’ll be fireworks, not a light show like last year, with Jumbotron screens throughout the Park. There’ll also be events such as returning soldiers reunions. The event is being organized by a non-profit committee and the funds would be used to pay for the insurance contract.

MOTION (by Mr. Krall, seconded by Mr. Bhakta): to support and sponsor the Fourth of July events at Hansen Dam with financial partnership not to exceed \$2,000.

DISCUSSION: Ms. Zekanis believes that the “money can be better spent . . . for those in need.” Mr. Schopper suggested matching funds and is concerned that the event is out of [the NC’s] area. Mr. Krall observed that the nearest such events are at USC and elsewhere, and that 50,000 people are expected to attend, while the City Council District 7 Office is allocating \$25,000 for the event. Mr. Lopez noted that the NC “could do our own 4th of July sometime.” Mr. Krall reminded that, last year, multiple NCs participated and a lot of Sylmar people attended; it’s “actually a three-day event.” Mr. Bhakta added that participation last year was “very positive” and that people can sign in for NC information on a laptop computer at the event. Mr. Tavares said that we need to see more Board Members at community events and “this is a great outreach opportunity.”

MOTION PASSED with 10 in favor, five opposed (Cabrera, Gonzales, Laufer, Lopez, and Zekanis) and Ms. Arellano (due to being under age 18) abstaining.

15. **Discussion and possible action** to approve Land Use Committee recommendation. Mr. Ortega distributed a handout and explained the project, which would be a smaller “Fresh and Easy” market in the former supermarket space in the Sylmar Center shopping center.

MOTION (by Mr. Ortega, seconded by Mr. Laufer): to approve the Land Use Committee recommendation to approve of the City granting a Conditional Use Permit (CUP) for a beer and wine license for the 15,568 square foot space at 13307 Gladstone Avenue.

DISCUSSION: The license would be new. A representative for Ofcr. Chacon relayed that the Officer “sees no problem” with the license.

MOTION PASSED with 11 in favor, one opposed (Lopez) and four abstaining (Gonzales, Kelly, Krall, and Vo-Ramirez).

Mr. Ortega will write a letter about the NC approval for Ms. Vo-Ramirez to sign.

16. **Discussion and possible action** to approve the recommendation by the ad hoc Bylaws Committee: To approve the last half of Article IV, Article V and Article VI as written.

Mr. Laufer distributed handouts (see Item 7 above) and explained that Article IV (four) has seven Sections; Articles I and II have already been approved. Green text represents new language to make the Bylaws current with City requirements. Ms. Zekanis added that the Addendums, which are long, are available in hardcopy and on the website. She reviewed and explained the revisions, including that the conflict-of-interest guidelines are now spelled out.

MOTION (by Ms. Zekanis, seconded by Mr. Bhakta): to approve the recommendation by the ad hoc Bylaws Committee to approve Bylaws revisions to Article IV (four) (Sections three through seven), Article V (five) and Article VI (six) as written.

DISCUSSION: Mr. Kelly is concerned that the proposed revision to Article IV, Section D, line two, “disproportionately,” can be misinterpreted. Mr. Laufer countered that there are “plenty of opportunities for disproportionate benefit” to Board Members, “not

necessarily about finances . . . the key [phrase] is “disproportionate benefit.” There was discussion about amending the Motion.

AMENDED MOTION (by Ms. Zekanis, seconded by Mr. Bhakta): to approve the recommendation by the ad hoc Bylaws Committee to approve Bylaws revisions to Article IV (four) (Sections three through seven), Article V (five) and Article VI (six), except for striking out the Article IV, Section D second section beginning “No director shall . . .”

AMENDED MOTION PASSED without any objections

17. Board Member Comments

Ms. Arellano would like a Relay for Life representative to attend the Optimists Club. Mr. Bhakta encouraged people to visit the NC website and call 311 to report street lights out or graffiti, and reported that he’s working to get street lights fixed. Mr. Laufer relayed that Bea Laufer “thanks the [NC] for the Spirit Award that was given to her.” Mr. Donnelly is working with the Post Office regarding forwarding mail from the old Office location; they instructed that only the NC’s name needs to be on the first line of received mail, while any individual names need to be on the second line.

Mr. Kelly announced that the San Fernando Valley Coalition on Gangs is issuing \$50,000 in local grants at \$5,000 each; the application deadline is March 27th and the awards will be given April 4th. Mr. Krall announced this weekend’s Job Fair at Magic Mountain and a BONC (L.A. Board of Neighborhood Commissioners) (213-465-1360; <http://www.lacityneighborhoods.com/commissioners.htm>) Special Meeting regarding Financial Form 54 for establishing Council Files. He encouraged submissions of small projects for Council District Seven.

Mr. Ortega encouraged thinking about the land use “changes we want to see”; for example, streets can be widened without increasing capacity, such as with bike and equestrian paths. Mr. Schopper recommends voting “no” on Measure B. Mr. Tavares encouraged Board Members to attend community events. Ms. Zekanis apologized for recent General Board Meeting absences, which were due to a new job assignment. Ms. Vo-Ramirez suggested not using e-mail for arguments and to notice what the current situation is before e-mailing. She thanked Stakeholders and Board Members for attending, and Stakeholder Sherry Lincoln for greeting and assisting attendees.

18. Next Meeting date, Future Agenda Items

[The next General Board Meeting will be held on Thursday, March 26th at 6:30 p.m. here at Sylmar Elementary School, Auditorium, 13291 Phillippi Ave., Sylmar.]

19. Closing Remarks, Announcements, Acknowledgements and Adjournment

Ms. Vo-Ramirez **ADJOURNED** the Meeting without any objections at 9:34 p.m.

Minutes written by DL.