

CITY OF LOS ANGELES

SYLMAR NEIGHBORHOOD COUNCIL

SYLMAR NEIGHBORHOOD COUNCIL  
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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Minutes of the  
**SYLMAR NEIGHBORHOOD COUNCIL (SNC)**  
**GENERAL BOARD MEETING**  
**Thursday, April 23, 2009**

Sylmar Recreation Center, 13109 Borden Ave., Large Gym, Sylmar, CA 91342

**1. Call to Order and Pledge of Allegiance**

V.P. of Administration Tammy Flores called the meeting to order at 6:38 p.m. The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Manny Figueras.

**2. Roll Call**

Roll Call was taken by the Secretary. Board Members present: Hiral Bhakta, Cheri Blose, Rick Donnelly, Tammy Flores, Fabian Garcia (late), Randall Kelly, Nick Krall, Rudy Lopez (late), George Ortega, Guillermo Reyes, Jeanne Rowe, Jim Schopper, and Quyen Vo-Ramirez (late).

Board Members absent: Erlin Arellano (excused), Bonnie Bernard (excused), Hector Cabrera (unexcused), Saul Gonzales (unexcused), Martin Laufer (excused), Jan Sandstrom (excused), Esteban Tavares (excused) and Lynn Zekanis (excused).

Ten of the 21 Board Members were present at the beginning of the Meeting, which is not a quorum, therefore, the business of the Council was limited to discussions, without any Motions being introduced, votes taken or decisions made, until after an 11th Board Member soon arrived to make a quorum, and the business of the Council could be conducted. Also attending were approximately 23 Stakeholders and Guests.

**3. Adoption of Minutes**

Ms. Flores suggested and it was agreed to **TABLE** approval of the March 26, 2009 Minutes to the next General Board Meeting.

**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), announced that Saturday, 9:00-12:00, there'll be a Stetson Ranch tree planting. Mr. Schopper announced that registration of 200 people is full. Mr. Figueras reported that the State Insurance Commissioner was here on the 21<sup>st</sup> and "secured close to \$46 million for Fire survivors . . . who'll receive an average of \$100,000-125,000." Saturday at 9:00 is the Baseball Grand Opening at Sylmar Recreation Center.

Charles Chacon, LAPD [L.A. Police Dept.] Mission Division (east of Glenoaks Blvd.) Senior Lead Officer (Cell 818-634-0619, Office 818-838-9847), reported that most crime now is property crime; yesterday there was a home invasion robbery. Log on to the crime alert website [www.lapdonline.org](http://www.lapdonline.org) to see video of the suspects. Many other crime types are down; suspicious activities reports from citizens have helped. Saturday, May 9<sup>th</sup>, 10:00-2:00 at the Recreation Center, there'll be a Job Fair. At Bishop Alemany High School on Sepulveda Blvd. by Brand Blvd., there'll be a gun buy-back program event hosted by the LAPD Mission Station.

Rudy Cancinos, L.A. Unified School District Community Outreach Coordinator, New Construction Office (213-893-6820), announced that June 3<sup>rd</sup>, at 10:00 a.m., at Olive Vista Middle School, outgoing School Board Member Julie Korenstein will be honored. The NC is invited to send a representative to speak there. There'll be a Planning Meeting Tuesday at 11:00 a.m. at the School Library.

Mr. Krall reported that the Relay for Life event was supported by a number of local businesses. Also, "a settlement was reached" regarding the Providence Holy Cross Medical Center will pay most remaining legal costs of CARE (Community Advocating Responsible Expansion). In return, CARE won't file any legal challenges to the Hospital expansion project. June 19-22 at Mission College, there'll be a Job Fair. The Long-Term Recovery Group is working on Oakridge Mobile Home Park residents' recovery; debris is scheduled to be removed by around May 4<sup>th</sup>.

Mr. Schopper announced that on Wednesday at 2:45 p.m. there was a power outage due to a cable fire; power was restored by the next day. Crews are still working on it; there'll probably be some 10-15 minute outages while equipment is being tested.

Mr. Schopper read a letter from Lynn Zekanis resigning from the Board.

Mr. Donnelly read a 'thank you' letter from the City Recreation and Parks Dept. regarding the NC's support of the Spring Egg Hunt.

Ms. Vo-Ramirez arrived from a meeting with the Mayor; the NC budget will be cut 10%, from \$50,000 to \$45,000 per year; it could've been cut by half. She told the Mayor that Sylmar still needs help for the Sylmar Fires survivor families who're still displaced and need assistance. She read a letter from the Recreation and Parks

Dept. thanking the NC for supporting the Teen Skate Program. Also, more than 600 people were served at [the March 28<sup>th</sup>] Community Appreciation Day, including the Mayor, Councilmen Alarcon and Weiss, and Senator Padilla. The barbeque cooking was prepared for and done by Lynn Zekanis and her family for days before and on Community Appreciation Day. Ms. Vo-Ramirez accepts Ms. Zekanis' resignation letter.

## **6. Public Comments**

Linda Salazar, Outpatient Substance Abuse Counselor for Phoenix House, spoke about the 120-bed facility. Patients stay for a six-month minimum and a full support staff is available.

Stakeholder Eugene Hernandez is concerned and claimed that people are "panicking" about potential noise and light nuisances regarding the Mission College expansion project.

Angel Barnuevo, Field Deputy for State 20th District Senator Alex Padilla (818-901-5588; angel.barnuevo@sen.ca.gov), arrived and said, between the Outreach and Public Services Committee reports, that he'll address the Meeting regarding SB 23 later in this Meeting.

## **7. Committee Reports**

### Secretary

The Secretary reported that there was a posting problem with Mission College which will have to be worked out. Much work was done in support of Community Appreciation Day. The Minutes of last Tuesday's Special Joint Meeting with the City Education and Neighborhoods Committee is 98% written; the list of government representatives who testified has been requested.

### Treasurer/Budget

Mr. Kelly reported that the NC is "currently operating under budget . . . The Committee will meet within the next couple of weeks."

### Land Use

Mr. Ortega reported that Mission College is having a Scoping Meeting Tuesday at 7:00 p.m. at the Campus Center regarding their Expansion Project, with a follow-up Meeting this Saturday.

### Commercial/Business Interests

Ms. Vo-Ramirez reported that she's working with local businesses to get gift cards for Oakridge Mobile Home Park residents.

### Outreach

Mr. Bhakta summarized the Minutes of the latest Committee Meeting and noted, "It's a good thing we had Community Appreciation Day when we did; if we'd waited two weeks, it would've been HOT!"

Election Committee – Chair to be appointed.

Events

Ms. Arellano and Mr. Tavares were not present and there was no report.

Public Services

Mr. Reyes reported that the Committee will meet, as usual, on the first Monday, May 4<sup>th</sup>, 6:30 p.m. at the NC Office. Mr. Schopper reported that Rebecca Woods of Landfill Technologies called regarding that the City wants to build incinerators “to lighten the load of [the] Sunshine Canyon [landfill]”; he believes that the NC “needs to stand our ground . . . to avoid the City building all of them in the northeast Valley.” Also, low-interest DWP [L.A. Dept. of Water and Power] payment programs are available.

Beautification/Grants – Chair to be appointed.

Education

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

Public Safety/Emergency Preparedness

Mr. Garcia was not yet present and there was no report.

Bylaws ad hoc

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

**Tabled**

**8. Discussion and possible action** to support a letter from stakeholder Jeh Meher of World Gym, addressed to Council Member Richard Alarcon of CD-7.

Jeh Meher, World Gym owner, reviewed his concerns regarding the proposed Mission College Fitness Center and said that 500 neighborhood petition signatures were gathered opposing the Center. He contended that public funding is specified for public education use only and is concerned about whether the Center is really only for students. Ms. Vo-Ramirez responded that this issue needs to be brought to the Chamber of Commerce; the NC cannot tell people how to use their land. However, the NC can support an EIR [Environmental Impact Report] being done that specifies that the Center should be only for students. Mr. Schopper related that Mr. Meher was led to believe that a “neutral party” was needed to resolve the issue, and that’s why he came to the NC.

Mr. Meher added that, last Monday, Ms. Valles told a residents meeting that all they needed to do to use the Center was pay \$60 for a class and register as a student, and it’d be like a membership; he claimed that this is contradictory to what she said at the last [NC General Board] Meeting. He would like the NC to issue a letter of support that the Center needs to be only for students and faculty, not the general public. Stakeholder Jason Little added, on behalf of Sylmar Square Shopping

Center business tenants, that they're "worried about the presence of a big-box tenant" and want the NC to help ensure that the Center wouldn't drive out small businesses.

**MOTION** (by Mr. Kelly, seconded by Ms. Flores): to **REFER** this Item to the Public Services Committee, and that the NC facilitate a meeting between Mr. Meher, Ms. Valles, and Mr. Figueras of City Council District Seven to resolve this."

**MOTION PASSED** without any objections, with Mr. Reyes abstaining.

Mr. Meher agreed to give the NC a copy of the signed petitions.

9. **Discussion and possible action** to participate in the Valley Regional Congress of Neighborhood Councils on May 30, 2009 in financial partnership up to \$1,500 towards the venue.

Sean Rivas, Outreach Chair of the Granada Hills South NC and for the [Saturday, May 30<sup>th</sup>] DONE Valley Regional Congress of Neighborhood Councils, announced that the set up for the Congress will be held Friday, May 29<sup>th</sup>, at a night time to be determined, at Panorama High School. Information is available at [www.ValleyRegionalCongress.org](http://www.ValleyRegionalCongress.org). Nominations are being accepted for current and past Board Members for Recognition Awards to be donated by a local company. He's asking for financial support for event printing and outreach. City agencies and the DWP will also have booths for Stakeholders to ask questions. The Northridge West NC allocated \$1,000, Sunland-Tujunga \$500, and so have other NCs. Ms. Flores added that the event will be open to the public, with breakfast and lunch available.

**MOTION** (by Mr. Kelly, seconded by Mr. Reyes): to support the Valley Regional Congress in the amount of \$1,000.

**DISCUSSION:** Mr. Rivas noted that all 31 Valley NCs are invited. The Panorama High School Principal lowered the facility use fee for this event, which will be the first such Congress in the Valley. DONE is funding \$12,500 of it. Ms. Flores added that the High School has parking for 375 cars and is centered in the Valley.

**MOTION PASSED** without any objections.

Recess: There was a brief recess.

### **New Business**

10. **Presentation** by Mission College President Judith Valles.

[This Item was first addressed before Item #8. Ms. Vo-Ramirez suggested Tabling this Item because Ms. Valles would not be able to attend this Meeting.]

**MOTION** (by Mr. Ortega, seconded by Mr. Bhakta): to **TABLE** Mission College President Judith Valles presenting regarding the proposed operation and fees of the campus gym.

**MOTION PASSED** without any objections.

[This Item was re-opened by Ms. Vo-Ramirez after Item #8, when Ms. Valles unexpectedly arrived.]

Ms. Valles contended that “seven statements are false” on a flier circulated around the neighborhood and that “every other community college in the country has a fitness center . . . Students deserve a P.E. [Physical Education] building.” She contended that the campus gym [“Fitness Center”] will not be “open to the public”; it is not a “commercial enterprise”; and there will be no membership fee, rather, most people will pay \$60 for a three-unit college class that uses the Center. She distributed some copies of the Classes Catalog and reviewed some of the P.E. classes to be offered. Fitness Center users will only be allowed in the Center during their class time. Ms. Vo-Ramirez reviewed Mr. Meher’s questions and Ms. Valles responded to each question.

- 11. Discussion and possible action** to support the letters of opposition from the Transit Coalition addressed to Caltrans and Council Member Richard Alarcon. Bart Reed, Executive Director, The Transit Coalition (818-362-7997; bart.reed@thetransitcoalition.us; www.transitcoalition.org), described the lack of sidewalks, poor drainage and dangerous intersections in Sylmar. He distributed and reviewed three letters he’d like the NC to support regarding Metro projects.

**MOTION** (by Ms. Blose, seconded by Mr. Kelly): to draft letters to support The Transit Coalition’s positions regarding opposing Metro’s proposed Roxford St. Widening at Sepulveda Blvd. Intersection Improvements Project; supporting the Hubbard St. Median Island and Bus Stop and Pedestrian Enhancements Project; and opposing the Foothill Blvd. and Sierra Hwy. Intersection Improvements Project.

**DISCUSSION:** Mr. Reed explained that the Roxford St. at Sepulveda Blvd. intersection is under Caltrans jurisdiction and he believes that Caltrans should fund the project, not the local community. He believes that the Foothill Blvd. and Sierra Hwy. Project would “serve to deflect motorists off a key transportation corridor and onto local streets.”

**MOTION to CALL FOR THE QUESTION** (by Ms. Blose) **PASSED** without any objections.

**MAIN MOTION PASSED** without any objections.

- 12. Report** from the Long Term Recovery Group, Liaison Tammy Flores. Ms. Flores reported that the LTRG is having their first Post Traumatic Stress Syndrome Workshop on March 28th at 6:30 p.m. at St. Didacus Church, to assist Fire survivors dealing with post-disaster stress and depression.

**13. Discussion and possible action** to support the following recommendations from the Land Use Committee:

1. 14360 Bledsoe Street, Conditional Use Permit (CUP) to allow installation of an unmanned wireless telecommunication facility of 6 panel antennas and 1 dish antenna attached to an existing SCE transmission tower and 4 ground cabinets located behind a new decorative slump stone wall.

Mr. Ortega distributed and reviewed documents regarding the project.

**MOTION** (by Ms. Blose, seconded by Mr. Kelly): to accept the Committee recommendation as described above.

**MOTION PASSED** without any objections.

2. 12621 Encinitas Avenue, Conditional Use Permit (CUP) to allow installation of an unmanned wireless telecommunication facility of 7 roof-mounted screened antennas and 4 ground cabinets placed behind a new 8' high wall enclosure. Mr. Ortega distributed and reviewed documents regarding the project.

**MOTION** (by Mr. Kelly, seconded by Mr. Donnelly): to accept the Committee recommendation as described above.

**MOTION PASSED** without any objections.

**14. Board Member Comments**

Mr. Garcia reported that the Relay for Life was very successful. There'll be a May 20<sup>th</sup>, 7:00 p.m. Meeting regarding a Relay for Life fundraising event. Mr. Bhakta announced an Outreach Committee Meeting May 12<sup>th</sup>; September 9<sup>th</sup> Health Fair preparations will be discussed. Ms. Blose announced a horse show next month at Stetson Ranch. Ms. Flores announced the next Valley Regional Congress Planning Meeting will be Tuesday at 7:00 p.m. at the Braude Center. Mr. Krall described how the State Insurance Commissioner assisted CARE in assisting the community in recovery from the Fires. Mr. Ortega announced a Land Use Committee Meeting May 11<sup>th</sup> at 6:30 p.m. at the Recreation Center's Susan B. Anthony Bldg.

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

Ms. Vo-Ramirez announced that the next General Board Meeting will be held on Thursday, May 28th at 6:30 p.m., here at the Recreation Center. She asked Board Members to submit Agenda Items at least one week before the Meeting.

**16. Closing Remarks, Announcements, Acknowledgements and Adjournment**

Ms. Vo-Ramirez **ADJOURNED** the Meeting without objection at 9:04 p.m. [This General Board Meeting will be immediately followed by a Special Board Meeting.]

Minutes written by DL.