

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



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Minutes of the  
**SYLMAR NEIGHBORHOOD COUNCIL (SNC)**  
**GENERAL BOARD MEETING**  
**Thursday, September 24, 2009**

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

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

President Quyen Vo-Ramirez called the meeting to order at 6:39 p.m. The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Ms. Vo-Ramirez.

**2. Roll Call**

Roll Call was taken by the Secretary. Board Members present: Erlin Arellano (late), Ricardo Benitez, Cheri Blose, Hector Cabrera, Rick Donnelly, Fabian Garcia (late), Saul Gonzales, Randall Kelly, Nick Krall, Martin Laufer, Liz Meher, George Ortega, Guillermo Reyes, Jeanne Rowe, Jan Sandstrom, Jim Schopper, and Quyen Vo-Ramirez.

Board Members absent: Hiral Bhakta (excused), Tammy Flores (excused), Rudy Lopez (excused).

Fifteen of the 20 Board Members were present at the beginning of the Meeting, which is a quorum, so the Board could make Motions and take votes. Also attending were 15 Stakeholders and Guests.

**3. Adoption of Minutes**

The following correction to the August 27, 2009 General Board Meeting Minutes was requested by Mr. Kelly:

Page one, Item #3: "**MOTION** (by Mr. Kelly, seconded by Mr. Laufer): to approve the Minutes of the July 23, 2009 Special Board Meeting" should show a different maker of the Motion. [It should read, "**MOTION** (by Mr. Reyes, seconded by Ms. Flores): to approve the Minutes of the July 23, 2009 Special Board Meeting".]

**MOTION** (by Mr. Laufer, seconded by Mr. Cabrera): to approve the Minutes of the August 27, 2009 General Board Meeting as corrected.

**MOTION PASSED** with Mr. Kelly and Mr. Donnelly abstaining.

**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 Certificates of Appreciation are available for Stakeholders Bonnie Bernard, Esteban Tavares and Lynn Zekanis. There'll be a Green Workshop on October 1<sup>st</sup>, 8:30 – 10:30 a.m. at Precision Dynamics Corp. Fire Prevention Week is October 4 – 10. The woman whose car killed a woman and injured her niece at Dronfield and Paddock Streets probably will be charged with a misdemeanor.

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 Senior Lead Officer John Lonergan reported that daytime burglaries are being committed, mainly from 12:00 – 6:00 p.m. by children, so it's "very important . . . to report" children out weekdays from 8:30 – 3:00; "they're truant." He encouraged people to call 1-877-ASK-LAPD and say something like "I see juveniles . . . Please check it out." Several young juveniles were recently caught for burglary. In Officer Chacon's area, a lot of late-night burglaries are being done on Foothill Blvd. "Call it in" if you see juveniles after 10:00 p.m. Officer Appreciation Day was "really appreciated."

Amelia Herrera-Robles, Project Coordinator, L.A. Dept. of Neighborhood Empowerment (DONE) (213-473-6451; Amelia.Herrera-Robles@lacity.org), distributed brochures regarding and reminded about the Empower LA 2009 Congress of Neighborhood Councils and Mayor's Budget Day on October 10, 2009. She encouraged Board Members to participate in DONE's conflict-of-interest (Ethics) Training, which is available online [at the following Internet address] <http://ethics.lacity.org/education/ethics2007/?audience=done> and is "open to everybody, not just Board Members."

**6. Public Comments**

Jenny Carey, of the L.A. Education Partnership, spoke. They're "helping to create a network of services to support students," and there's a "new Solar and Wind Academy" at Sylmar High School. She can be contacted at [jcarey@laep.org](mailto:jcarey@laep.org).

**7. Committee Reports**

**Secretary**

The Secretary reported that, apparently, all Board Members' e-mail accounts are working with no problems. Requested SNC e-mail account changes were made, including establishing forwarding addresses. DONE e-mailed all Board Members about how to revise their own listing on the DONE website. Other corrections are up to Board Members and individual senders.

#### Treasurer/Budget

Mr. Kelly reported that the NC is “still within the budget . . . [The NC is] waiting for DONE to update their records . . . then [the NC] will have [it’s] last quarter [2008-2009] reconciliation.”

#### Land Use

Mr. Ortega reported that, at the last Committee Meeting, two applicants did not attend. Also, one applicant, whose project had been approved by the Committee, e-mailed that they’re still negotiating, so the Committee withdrew that project from consideration. The proposal to build an RV park on SCE [Southern California Edison] land was very “contentious” in the Committee, which voted to deny recommending it.

#### Commercial/Business Interests

Ms. Sandstrom reported that she is “stepping down as Chair of this Committee.”

#### Outreach

Ms. Rowe said that she’ll address Items that appear later in this Agenda.

#### Election Committee

Mr. Laufer said that there was no report.

#### Events

Ms. Arellano was not present at the moment and there was no report.

#### Public Services

Mr. Schopper reported that a contact person was established for the Golden State Jobs Coalition.

Beautification/Grants – Chair to be appointed.

#### Education

Mr. Gonzales reported that he’s been meeting with parents at Harding Elementary School regarding GATES [Gifted and Talented Educational Services] Program funding.

#### Public Safety/Emergency Preparedness

Mr. Garcia reported that a well-attended Neighborhood Watch Meeting was held in the Rancho Cascades area. Also, children were caught regarding some recent break-ins.

#### Sex Offenders Population Reduction ad hoc Committee

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

#### Additional Reports -- requested by the President

No additional reports were requested at this time.

## **New Business**

8. **Presentation** of Sylmar Neighborhood Council Certificates of Appreciation, Spirit Awards and Certificates of Acknowledgement for work performed on the Sylmar Neighborhood Council.

Ms. Vo-Ramirez noted that Mr. Figueras did this earlier in the Meeting. She thanked Ms. Bernard, Mr. Tavares and Ms. Zekanis for their service.

9. **Discussion and possible action** to send a letter of support regarding the Community Beautification Grant Program Budget.

Ms. Vo-Ramirez announced that “several community-based groups have received \$10,000 each from this Program; it would be detrimental for them to lose this funding.”

**MOTION** (by Mr. Laufer, seconded by Mr. Donnelly): to send a letter of support to Los Angeles City Council Members and the Mayor to NOT reduce the Community Beautification Grant Program Budget.

**MOTION PASSED** with Mr. Garcia abstaining.

10. **Discussion and possible action** to support a Community Beautification matching grant project between Glenoaks and Excelsior on Foothill Blvd.

**MOTION** (by Mr. Laufer, seconded by Ms. Sandstrom): to support a Community Beautification matching grant project, between Glenoaks and Excelsior on Foothill Blvd., to remove existing burnt and old wooden horse rails and replace with pre-cast wood textured concrete fencing for Horse Rails to match existing ones south of Glenoaks, in the amount of \$5,000 towards labor and material.

**DISCUSSION:** Ms. Vo-Ramirez indicated that matching grant donors were found; the allocation “would be out of the Community Improvement Budget.” The project will be assigned to the Public Services Committee and “Guillermo Reyes and Jim Schopper will be the Project Managers.” She “doesn’t think there’ll be a problem getting approval” for the project. Mr. Donnelly would like to ensure that the SNC “gets maximum exposure.” Mr. Laufer suggested an “Another beautification project by the Sylmar Neighborhood Council” banner.

**MOTION PASSED** without any objections.

At this time, Mr. Figueras presented Ms. Bernard with a Certificate of Appreciation.

11. **Discussion and possible action** to support the Sylmar Recreation Center for the Halloween Festival October 31, 2009.

Paul Landavazo, Youth Programs Director, Sylmar Recreation Center (818.367.5656; Paul.Landavazo@lacity.org), explained that the Center is seeking funding and volunteers from 1:00 – 5:00 October 31<sup>st</sup>, and that many Board

Members helped last year. Mr. Kelly added that the Center has “four to five times the number of kids that come out for their Halloween Party than any other Park in the area.”

**MOTION** (by Mr. Krall, seconded by Mr. Reyes): to support the Sylmar Recreation Center for the Halloween Festival October 31, 2009 in financial support of \$1,000 towards candy and supplies for the event.

**DISCUSSION:** Mr. Laufer was concerned that many allocations have been proposed in this Meeting. Mr. Kelly confirmed that “right now, [the NC is] financially sound . . . [the NC] can support the majority of these” [allocations]. Mr. Landavazo added that, last year, the Center spent \$2,500 and “cleared out” local grocery stores. Ms. Blose believed that \$1,000 is “a lot to spend on candy” and there’re other donors available. Mr. Landavazo clarified that the Center has committed \$150 and local “supermarkets” are not donating at this time. Stakeholder Barry Sylvan opined that the Center “should get local stores to support” the event. Ms. Bernard stated that she “finds this offensive and insulting . . . to give away candy . . . [it’s] inappropriate at this time”; she recommended to “lease out a facility . . . [and] give the money back to the City” to help fund a job. Stakeholder Rosemary Jenkins expressed that “to have a good, safe supervised place, such as [the Center] . . . This is such a wonderful tradition here . . . This is something that the NC is about, to help the neighborhood” and “by this time of year, most donation budgets have already been assigned.” Mr. Krall commented that “this is a safety event . . . [it’s a] really big, once-a-year . . . outreach.”

**MOTION to CALL FOR THE QUESTION** (by Mr. Donnelly); there were no objections.

Mr. Kelly added that “there’ll be more people served by this event than any other event this year.” Mr. Cabrera suggested that Famsa may be willing to donate.

**MOTION PASSED** by a Roll Call vote, with 10 in favor and six opposed (Benitez, Blose, Cabrera, Gonzalez, Laufer, Sandstrom)

**12. Discussion and possible action** to support the Los Angeles Police Department in the 5th Annual Officer Appreciation Day, September 24, 2009, in financial support in the amount of \$500 toward paper supplies for event.

It was stated that “the money is needed to reimburse” for event expenses. Mr. Kelly noted that the NC “can’t reimburse for an event that’s already taken place.” Ms. Vo-Ramirez declared that “the Item is dead; there is no Motion.”

**13. Discussion and possible action** to support the Logan’s Run for Autism Awareness

**MOTION** (by Ms. Rowe, seconded by Mr. Krall): to support the Logan’s Run for Autism Awareness on October 10, 2009 in Hansen Dam, with financial support up to \$500, as presented by Norma Herrera of Jay Nolan Services.

**DISCUSSION:** Ms. Herrera, of Jay Nolan Services (JNS), introduced herself and said that Lydia Cardoza could not attend this Meeting. She explained that JNS is a “non-profit in the Sylmar area . . . [They] service more than 40 people . . . to live in their own homes.” Mr. Kelly clarified that [the NC] “can’t donate to anything [or “specific people”]; [the NC] can support” events and needs to know what the money is for. He was concerned that the event and the organization are not in Sylmar. Ms. Herrera added that the 7:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m. event is “open to the general public” and everyone is invited; it’s a 1K, 5K and 10K Run and Roll (for wheelchairs), followed by a Community Festival; NC outreach opportunities are available. Ms. Sandstrom was concerned that there’s not enough time to print outreach materials and that it’s “not right that they’re coming to [the NC] two weeks before” the event. Ms. Vo-Ramirez added that “this event is different” because it’s not in Sylmar.

**MOTION to CALL FOR THE QUESTION** (by Mr. Donnelly); there were no objections.

**MOTION FAILED** with 10 opposed, none in favor and five abstentions.

At this time, Ms. Bernard stated that the number of Board Members who’ve taken the conflict-of-interest [DONE Ethics Training] exam is seven; she believed that, because of this, there’s no quorum for this Meeting. Ms. Vo-Ramirez noted that what Ms. Bernard said was “out of order” because it was “not on the Agenda.” Ms. Herrera-Robles stated that she was “notifying Board Members . . . If [they] haven’t taken the Training by October 25<sup>th</sup>, they can attend [General and Special Board Meetings], but they can’t vote.”

**14. Discussion and possible action** to support the San Fernando Valley Veteran’s Day Parade. Presentation by Dan Rosales of the San Fernando Valley Veteran’s Day Parade Committee.

**MOTION** (by Ms. Rowe, seconded by Ms. Sandstrom): to support the San Fernando Valley Veteran’s Day Parade with financial support up \$2,500, toward T-shirts that will be given to the Veterans in Goodie Bags on the day of the Parade on November 11, 2009. The Sylmar Neighborhood Council may submit a float for the Veteran’s Parade.

**DISCUSSION:** Mr. Kelly noted that the NC supported this last year, but can’t allocate funds for T-shirts “only given to a select group of people.” He recommended Tabling this to get more information from Mr. Rosales. Ms. Rowe agreed to withdraw the Motion.

Ms. Vo-Ramirez declared and it was agreed to **TABLE** this Item to the next General Board Meeting.

**15. Discussion and possible action** to approve the following recommendations from the Land Use Committee:

- a. 13725 Foothill Boulevard, Conditional Use Permit (CUP) to allow sale of a full line of alcoholic beverages for on-site consumption at an existing restaurant. Ms. Vo-Ramirez suggested and Mr. Ortega agreed to withdraw this Item. [See above Item 7, Land Use Committee report.]
- b. Southern California Edison (SCE) Easement between Hubbard Street and Sayre Street, proposed no application, no entitlement, for an RV storage business at the former Mission College parking lot. Mr. Ortega distributed a map of the project area and reported that there was a “very strong community reaction” to SCE proposals for the property and that the applicant did not show up to the Committee Meeting, so the Committee voted to deny recommending the proposals. Ms. Blöse described some of the issue’s history and suggested that the NC “write a letter of severe opposition . . . to put an RV Park there would be ludicrous.”

**MOTION** (by Ms. Blöse, seconded by Ms. Sandstrom): for the SNC to write a letter, to the developer of a proposed RV storage business at the former Mission College parking lot, that the SNC is still opposed to the project.

**DISCUSSION:** Ms. Sandstrom described that the property had been set aside for another use, and that an RV Park would present safety issues and traffic problems. Roy Smith, of SCE, had “major problems with the amount of traffic” in that area.

**MOTION PASSED** without any objections.

Ms. Vo-Ramirez suggested and Ms. Blöse agreed to draft the letter and to ensure that it is posted on the SNC website [[www.SylmarNC.org](http://www.SylmarNC.org)].

**16. Discussion and review** of non-grievance submitted by Director Cheri Blöse as question and answer period. Recommendation by the City Attorney of the Neighborhood Council Division that Board Members may not Grieve a fellow Board Member. Notification of a Grievance filed by Barry Sylvan against Director George Ortega.

Ms. Vo-Ramirez explained that “it’s public record . . . [Mr.] Sylvan has Grieved [Mr.] Ortega . . . The Secretary will put a Grievance Panel together.” She added that a letter was received from the City Attorney saying that Board Members cannot Grieve [file a Grievance] against [a fellow] Board Member. Ms. Herrera-Robles indicated that she spoke with Ms. Blöse, who would like Land Use Committee functioning clarified in writing. Also, the SNC Executive Board met last Saturday and “agreed to incorporate a Bylaws review in the [General Board] Meetings.”

Ms. Herrera-Robles distributed copies of an “[SNC] Bylaw[s] Overview, Fall 2009,” which includes the NC Code of Conduct and its purpose, and selected Bylaws

sections regarding Committee formation, structure and responsibilities. She reviewed the Code of Conduct, and Board Members and Ms. Bernard each read aloud one of the 17 Codes. She reminded that this is what Board Members have agreed to. She then reviewed Bylaws page 11, Article 4, Section 2, "Committees," and reminded that "diversity is key . . . We learn from one another . . . The Board is representative of the people who live and work here . . . in Committee structure [too]. Ms. Herrera-Robles also reminded that the Bylaws say [on page 11, Article 4, Section 2) b) "Ad Hoc"] that "If an Ad Hoc committee consists of Stakeholder members, the committee must" post Agendas per the Brown Act. The President appoints Committee Members.

At this time, Ms. Arellano arrived.

Ms. Herrera-Robles continued, "maximum Committee size is determined by the [Committee] Chair" and there "must be an annual Committee Meeting." She clarified ad hoc Committee structure and posting requirements [see Bylaws page 12, Article 4, Section 2) c) 1) "Composition."]. There can be a Co-Chair [see Bylaws page 12, Article 4, Section 2) c) 2) "Chairs, Co-Chairs and Vice-Chairs."]. "Committee composition has to be reviewed "bi-annually"" [every two years] [see Bylaws page 12, Article 4, Section 2) d) 2)]. "Each Committee is supposed to have a Purpose and Mission Statement" [see Bylaws page 12, Article 4, Section 2) e) 1)]. "Each [Committee] Chair . . . [must] submit [the Committee's] Motions to the Vice President of Administration within 10 days per the Public Records Act" [see Bylaws page 12, Article 4, Section 2) e) 3)].

Ms. Herrera-Robles reminded Board Members that "anything [Board Members] write, [they're] writing for the public to see . . . [Board Members] are subject to the Public Records Act . . . Be cognizant of that . . . what you write [is public record] . . . Keep good records . . . All Meetings must comply with the Brown Act . . ." Board Members are subject to removal [see Bylaws page 12, Article 4, Section 2) g) "Removal"]. She encouraged the NC to figure out what works best, not to be punitive, but to keep people accountable, and to call her for more information.

**17. Discussion and possible action** regarding and in accordance with the Sylmar Neighborhood Council Bylaws, Article 3, Section 2. Committees.

Ms. Vo-Ramirez believed and it was agreed that this Item was addressed in Item 16.

**18. Board Member Comments**

Mr. Kelly reminded about the Halloween Festival at the Recreation Center on Saturday, October 31<sup>st</sup>, 1:00 – 5:00; costume judging and candy giving volunteers are sought. Mr. Donnelly reported that the SNC Webmaster agreed to work on a month-to-month basis until her contract renewal is agendized. Ms. Blose reported that Corral 12 is having a Cart Horse Show at Stetson Ranch, Sunday, October 11<sup>th</sup>, 9:00 a.m. to around 3:45 p.m.; also, some tree watering is being done and more is planned. Ms. Arellano thanked the Board for allowing her to attend late. Ms. Vo-Ramirez reminded everyone to water the tree they planted at Stetson Ranch

because there's no irrigation available and she thanked Ms. Herrera-Robles for her great dedication and service. (Applause.)

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

Ms. Vo-Ramirez encouraged Board Members to submit items for the next [General Board Meeting] Agenda. Ms. Herrera-Robles reported that L.A. County is organizing dates and locations of free H1N1 (Swine) Flue vaccination locations and will advise the NC about it. Ms. Sandstrom recommended verifying whether you need to receive the vaccination. Mr. Sylvan announced that he'll contribute to the Halloween event and encouraged others to also contribute. Ms. Vo-Ramirez announced that the next General Board Meeting will be held on Thursday, October 22nd at 6:30 p.m. at the Sylmar Recreation Center [13109 Borden Ave., Large Gym.]

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

Ms. Vo-Ramirez **ADJOURNED** the Meeting without objection at 8:58 p.m.

Minutes written by DL.