

**SYLMAR NEIGHBORHOOD COUNCIL
EXECUTIVE OFFICERS**

PRESIDENT: Quyen Vo-Ramirez
VICE-PRESIDENTS: Hiral Bhakta
and Don Neal
TREASURER: Randall Kelly
PUBLIC RELATIONS: Nick Krall



SYLMAR NEIGHBORHOOD COUNCIL
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Minutes of the
**SYLMAR NEIGHBORHOOD COUNCIL (SNC)
TOWN HALL MEETING
Tuesday, June 28, 2011**

at the Sylmar Recreation Center, 13109 Borden Ave, Sylmar, CA 91342

1. Call to Order and Pledge of Allegiance

President Quyen Vo-Ramirez called the meeting to order at 6:40 p.m. The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Randall Kelly. Roll Call was taken. Board Members present: Ricardo Benitez, Hiral Bhakta, Randall Kelly, Don Neal, George Ortega, Chris Shows and Quyen Vo-Ramirez. Board Members absent: Cheri Blose (unexcused), Rosemary Jenkins (excused), Nick Krall (excused), Martin Laufer (unexcused), Liz Meher (unexcused), Richard Perry (unexcused), Jeanne Rowe (excused), Enrique Segura (excused) and Roy Smith (unexcused). Seven of the 16 Board Members were present at the beginning of the Meeting. Also attending: 17 Stakeholders and Guests.

2. Community Announcements (Sakaida Mining Project, Farmer's Market at Mission College, Horse Trails, Sylmar Olive Festival, Community Garden, etc.).

Mr. Benitez described work with the City Planning Dept. to create horse trails in addition to the existing trail near Olive View Dr.; he'll coordinate with Corral 12. Mr. Neal announced that planning has begun for the September 2012 Sylmar Olive Festival at El Cariso Park; volunteers are needed. There'll be a carnival, equestrian events, a VIP Dinner and more. Stakeholder Benjamin Williams described legal opposition to an Alliance Charter School proposed to be built across from L.A. Mission College.

3. Status of Sylmar HS's charter petition to become an affiliated charter school.

Mr. Neal said "the Sylmar High School [SHS] Charter petition is dead at this point." He described that the School is "up for public choice . . . outside groups, private groups, internal groups, even community groups can write a plan for the School . . . the Public School Choice (PSC) Design team proposal is in its very preliminary stages." He described different kinds of Charter and Pilot Schools and alliances. He believed "there's been a disconnect between the High School and the community" and asserted that low test scores at SHS have "been driving" a community effort to improve the School. He's "pushing for outreach to our community" and "an early college program where the [students] actually take college classes while in school." He described examples of students "doing it on their own" despite a challenge of "time blocks" of the High School and L.A. Mission College not matching. Mr. Neal urged the community "to support that plan" by contacting government and education

leaders. Mr. Kelly said that Mr. Neal is saying “he’s asking the community to come together . . . and say `this is what we want for Sylmar’ . . . we’re not picking one group over another.”

4 and 5. Public Comment/Questions and Closing Remarks

There was extensive discussion regarding how best to facilitate and organize the education of SHS students and what kinds of education to provide for them. Mr. Neal said “a community Charter [School] should include teachers, parents, community leaders, Mission College,” CSUN, College of the Canyons and others. Ms. Vo-Ramirez and Mr. Neal described challenges in getting community information that is not LAUSD-generated to SHS students and parents through the School. Mr. Bhakta stressed the importance of better communication “to make sure that Sylmar High School will be connected with the community.” Stakeholder Michael noted that “the students themselves” are willing to volunteer. Mr. Neal encouraged a Stakeholder to tell SHS that if they would provide a Spanish-language translator more parents would be involved.

The Meeting ended at 7:56 p.m.

Minutes written by DL.