

Sylmar Neighborhood Council
Senior Committee Meeting – Minutes
Chair-Penelope McMillan

Monday, August 5, 2019 – 6:30 PM
Sylmar Neighborhood Council Office
13521 Hubbard St., Sylmar, CA 91342
Minutes by Marti Marshall

1. **Call to Order 6:38 pm**
2. **Welcome and Housekeeping.**
3. **Introduction and appointment of committee members.**
Penny McMillan, Hector Cabrera, Marti Marshall

Penny: Tonight's task will be to go through committee Mission Statement and set Priorities, make a plan going forward.

Penny as part of introduction presented some areas of interest from data collected so far:

Population 60+: 15,810, up 28% since 2010 census, a number soon to rise even more

Services: Sylmar seniors are assigned to a Pacoima Senior Center (one of 16 in city)

Few Specific Services Offered in Sylmar:

Lunch meal program at Olive Manor on Bromont Ave. Few seen attending.

El Cariso Park (county)– website claims 3 classes plus a \$5 potluck lunch

The main city park in Sylmar, Sylmar Recreation Ctr., has no senior class or program

81% of Sylmar seniors polled want better communication of services available

56% say improved transportation services a priority

4. **Review and Discussion** of the Senior Committee's mission, goals, and vision. The proposed Mission Statement was divided into sections, to:
 - a) Identify needs – keep seniors informed of available services
 - b) Communicate need for services, including center in Sylmar to
 - a. Government Officials
 - b. Non-Profits
 - c. Public Agencies
 - c) Encourage participation of Senior Stakeholders

Maria - when you go online at Parks and Rec to find classes, sometimes there are bad links, classes listed don't take place, etc.

Bonnie: suggests we verify what services really exist. Therefore, should add to Mission Statement: Act as a watchdog group to hold officials accountable for services that are accessible to Sylmar seniors

The Mission Statement of Senior Committee will add "d" and now read:

This committee will address issues impacting the increasing number older adults in Sylmar. Its purposes include:

- a) establishing and maintaining an ongoing dialogue with older adults in order to identify their needs, concerns, and to keep them informed of available services;
- b) communicating with government officials, non-profit and public agencies on the need for increased services for seniors in Sylmar, including a locally based senior center;
- c) working to encourage continued active participation of senior stakeholders in the Sylmar community
- d) acting as a watchdog group to hold government officials, non-profits and public agencies accountable for services that are accessible to Sylmar seniors

5. **Review and discussion** of information on Sylmar’s senior population numbers, government funding, services currently available to seniors in Sylmar, and results of a preliminary poll on the priorities of Sylmar seniors.

This section of the meeting involved discussion of handouts on the results of a preliminary poll (“What do Sylmar Seniors Want”), a “snapshot” of information gathered to date on services available—or not—in Sylmar, and wall displays showing comparisons—actually a wide disparity among program offerings—of different senior centers in the SF Valley and Santa Clarita. It was also noted that Mission College offers no special courses or program for seniors, compared to the large Encore Program at Pierce College. Penny reported that the city receives about \$20 million in federal and state funds for senior services, and the county about \$30 million.

6. **Discussion and possible action** on a First Hundred Days Action Plan (by end of December) for the committee. (New numbering because Agenda was mis-numbered with two #5s)

A. Priority: Identify Needs, issues of concern

Hector found as he interviewed people, that seniors did not have access (transportation) to senior services, nutritional programs, etc.

Maria - Suicide rates in Santa Clarita are highest among 50+ men

Suggestions for outreach:

Hector – will meet with St Didacus (Father Bob) to find out what we can use and how we reach people. Going to churches a good source for outreach – by September

Bonnie – Clinics in Sylmar another good source to survey needs (i.e., Polk & Foothill) (where they get Social Security, Medicare, etc), Supermarkets, NE Valley

Suggestions how to make information on services for seniors available in Sylmar:

Hector: When visited Monica Rodriguez CD7 office in Sylmar, did not see any resources for seniors there

Bonnie – can use small table boards instead of billboards at locations. Sheila Kuehl has a resource booklet on information (get SNC to sponsor/pay for it) – create something like that.

Maria offered to locate a resource guide already in use at a Reseda center.

Post info for seniors in the Sylmar Library

B. Priority: Communicate Need for Services

When have a list of needs ready (based on survey) then go to elected officials to get them to help.

Bonnie – write letters on SNC letterhead (with information individualized for the appropriate agency) with recommendations for seniors and ask elected officials what they can do for us. Make them accountable. Request a reply by a certain date and make public their responses-- Deadline October

Christian – Get 1000 Stakeholders to sign a **petition**. Also meet with Supervisor Kuehl about underperforming senior programs at El Cariso.

Community Center in Veterans Park – maybe can use that? (Park is in Supervisor Katherine Barger’s district)

Mission College may be able to get grant funding for Senior Programs, similar to the Encore course offerings at Pierce College

Audits of senior programs should show the actual participation in them

C. **Priority Actions:** 1. Do a **Survey:** Want a Senior Center in Sylmar? What activities would you like to have? Legal, Computer, Physical activities, etc.

2. Circulate a Petition for a senior center in Sylmar: Target: 1000 Signatures:

We the undersigned Sylmar Stakeholders* want to have access to a one-stop senior center based in Sylmar. Include a * Definition of Stakeholder on Petition

7. **Public comment** on subject matters within the committee’s jurisdiction.

Everyone introduced themselves.

Les announced a town hall on affordable housing tomorrow at noon, 18200 Rinaldi Place

8. **Future agenda items.** Please mail the committee chair, Penelope McMillan, at penelope.mcmillan@sylmarnc.org

9. **Adjournment: 8:02 pm**