

WESTLAKE NORTH NEIGHBORHOOD COUNCIL  
(WNNC)

Regular Board Meeting Minutes

Thursday January 11<sup>th</sup>, 2017 at 5 p.m.

|                |                          |           |
|----------------|--------------------------|-----------|
| President      | Sandra Villalobos        | Bus. Rep. |
| Vice President | Jennifer Virgen          |           |
| Treasurer      | Rocky Valenzuela         | CBO       |
| Secretary      | Randy Waller             | At Large  |
|                | Harold “Mac” McCarthy    | At Large  |
|                | Vacant                   | At Large  |
|                | Ivonnenanette Machado    | At Large  |
|                | Katherine Ugalde         | Bus. Rep  |
|                | Aurora Pineda            | CBO Rep.  |
|                | Margarita Alvarez Gomez  | CBO Rep.  |
|                | Alejandra Cooper         | Res. Rep  |
|                | Karina Rodriguez         | Res. Rep  |
|                | Consuelo Morales         | Sen. Rep  |
|                | Alicia Lopez             | Youth Rep |
|                | Ventura Mendez Florencia | Youth Rep |

WWNC Board of Directors

**I. BOARD MEETING CALLED TO ORDER AT 5:54**

- A. The following people were present at the Regular Board Meeting: Sandra Villalobos, Rocky Valenzuela, Harold “Mac” McCarthy, Ivonnenanette Machado, Katherine Ugalde, Aurora Pineda, Margarita Alvarez Gomez, Karina Rodriguez, Consuelo Morales, Alicia Lopez, and Ventura Mendez Florencia.
- B. The following people were absent at the Regular Board Meeting: Jennifer Virgen, Randy Waller, and Alejandra Cooper.
- C. Quorum was met with 11 people present at the meeting.

**II. COMMUNITY/GOVERNMENT REPORTS & ANNOUNCEMENTS**

- A. Deputy City Attorney Andrew Said was present from the City Attorney Office. He introduced himself and described his history of working as a City Attorney, prosecuting for the CAO since March 2002. About 1 ½ years ago, he became neighborhood prosecutor for the Rampart division, and explained that neighborhood prosecutors are called upon to be “problem solvers” in addition to filing and prosecuting cases. Said explained that they’re called upon to look at “problem people” and “problem locations”.

- i. “Problem people” means a person at the epicenter of a problem: they can be a gang leader, drug dealer, or simply a person who ends up being in the middle of a lot of problems because of their situation. For example, someone could be mentally ill, but cases involving that person tend to fall through the cracks because the offenses that person commits are minor in the eyes of the court, but they still cause trouble for the neighborhood.
- ii. His office also focuses on vacant buildings as problem locations, and Said said that they always need to know about vacant buildings in the neighborhood so they can bring them to the attention of the Department of Building and Safety. He explained that the DBS sometimes has more power than the police do when it comes to vacant buildings; for example, if a vacant building is left open to the public, they can put pressure on the owner to clean it up.
  - a. Some empty, ugly buildings in the area are technically in compliance with code, but if they’re open to the public the DBS can serve notice that the owner has to do certain things like erect fences to keep the building closed off from the public. If the owner fails to do these things, the city will have to do it and then bill the owner for it, which is usually way more expensive for the owner than just doing it on their own as a way of pressuring owners to do it themselves.
  - b. Other problem locations can involve situations where a building is owned by someone who passes away, and there’s dispute about who inherits the building, or where a building is inherited by someone who lives outside the country.
- iii. Said explained that the board or stakeholders can come to him with any quality of life issue like homelessness or gangs. His office acts as a community liaison to the police department, and he works directly with them.
- iv. Said went on to describe the situation in MacArthur Park, saying that there’s a lot more activities being offered there, including free yoga open to everyone every second Saturday in the park. They’re looking to bring more activities into the park now that the park is safer thanks to increased police deployment, with 10 officers deployed full-time in the area. Daniel Morales from the Park Advisory Board was talking about organizing traditional South American house games to be played in the park.
  - a. Sandra thanked the Park Advisory Board for the MacArthur Park meeting which she attended, and with new activities coming in to Macarthur Park and the Westlake North Neighborhood Council board revising bylaws, she would like to discuss in the future how they can connect.
- v. Said also explained that the Rampart Division Senior Lead Officers who were supposed to attend this regular board meeting were in all-day training regarding the new marijuana laws going into effect in California. The LAPD is very strict about overtime, and as a result they were not allowed to attend the meeting following the hours they accumulated during all-day training.

B. Mario Hernandez, Field Representative for EmpowerLA began by explaining that any board members with conflicts of interest on any agenda item should recuse themselves by stating that they are recusing themselves, and the reason for recusal. He explained the reason for this is if a board member does vote on something they have a conflict of interest on, that item is usually an NPG, and would not be able to come back before the board for further voting until there is a whole new board sitting.

- i. Last day to submit for an event approval is May 20<sup>th</sup>
- ii. Last day to submit a check payment request is June 1<sup>st</sup>
- iii. Last day board members will have access to their WNNC credit cards is June 20<sup>th</sup>.

- iv. The Neighborhood Council Funding Program has also updated their training video, 12 minutes long with a 16-question quiz at the end. If board members have already taken their funding training, they don't have to take it again, but non-financial board members who need to take their funding training have to do so with the new video.
  - v. The Board of Neighborhood Commissioners will be discussing how to define or further define a stakeholder in a future meeting. They've also created a Funding Equity Work Group, which will be holding their first meeting January 31<sup>st</sup> at the Controller's conference room on the 3<sup>rd</sup> floor of City Hall from 6:30 to 8:30.
  - vi. Lastly, EmpowerLA is conducting neighborhood council election outreach for feedback on neighborhood council election processes, so look for the link on the website if you have any comments.
- C. Harold brought up a previously discussed Community Impact Statement matter with Mario, and Mario said he would email the appropriate form to him.
- i. Harold explained that in order for the board to submit a CIS online so we don't have to go through a third party, the board needs access to the website system. Before they do that, they need to designate 2 people for access, and Harold said they had done that at some point, but couldn't find the record of it in previous agendas or minutes. So he suggested they should put it back on the agenda for next meeting, vote for a couple people, submit, and get approval for access online so going forward they don't need to request to have CIS's uploaded. Harold then distributed a screenshot of what the screen looks like when inputting a CIS for the board's reference..

### **III. COMMUNITY PRESENTATIONS**

- A. Representatives from BlueLA and the Levitt Pavilion Summer Concert Series were not present for their planned presentations.
- B. Clean Street Award Reception
  - i. Sandra said that the Westlake North Neighborhood Council had received an award as part of the Clean Streets LA Challenge totaling \$2,500 along with recognition for their work in the challenge. The reception for the Clean Streets LA Challenge will be on Saturday, January 27<sup>th</sup>, and an invitation has been sent out to all board members; Sandra urged them all to RSVP with their planned attendance. The reception was originally going to be on the 20<sup>th</sup> but was moved to the 27<sup>th</sup> due to a conflict, and as a result Sandra will not be able to attend. Other board members said that they had not received email invitations regarding the reception, and Sandra said she would forward the invitations. She explained that as she saw it, it was the first real award that they had received operating officially as the Westlake North Neighborhood Council, and thus it was important for them to be present and recognized. She also said that the check for their \$2,500 award would be coming in February.
- C. Lindsay De May representing Enrich LA was not present.
- D. Representatives from Hunter Photography were not present.

### **IV. GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT**

- A. No requests were public comment were received, and public comment was closed.
- B. Members from the Neighborhood Council Sustainability Alliance Emily Beierle-O'Brien and Isai Reyez asked a question: they'd been told that they were going to be able to give a

presentation on a state-funded low-income weatherization initiative, but didn't see their item on the agenda.

- I. Harold said that he thought their presentation could be addressed under the previously discussed CIS agenda item or under his report as Neighborhood Council Sustainability Liason.
- ii. Sandra asked if Harold wanted to amend the agenda. Mario recommended that since the item was not on the agenda as published, the best thing to do would be to reopen public comment, then give them a two-minute public comment window.
- iii. Ivonne motioned to reopen public comment. Rocky seconded. The motion was voted on and unanimously approved.
- iv. Public comment was reopened, and Emily Beierle-O'Brien talked about the Low-Income Weatherization Program. They were partnered with the Neighborhood Council Sustainability Alliance and the state of California to administer weather stripping, insulation, and replacement of HVAC systems for low-income single-family dwellings. She explained that people who participate in certain other assistance programs like Medi-Cal already qualify automatically, and that roughly 89% to 90% of this neighborhood council's jurisdiction qualify by mailing address for the program.
  - a. Isai Reyez, also representing the Low-Income Weatherization Program, explained that in the Westlake North area homes accumulate a lot of pollution as a result of congestion on the 110 and 101 freeways, and so weatherization, insulation, etc. improves not only the energy efficiency of homes, but the air quality as well. Air quality on average is 8-10 times worse inside a dwelling than outside in Los Angeles, because pollution enters a home and is trapped because most HVAC systems aren't equipped to move polluted air out of a home.
  - b. The two explained that they would love to be able to post information on the WNNC social media accounts and engage through the outreach committee to get brochures and information out to communities. The money allocated for the program must be used by May 2018 or it will not be available.
  - c. Ivonne raised a question: a lot of tenants get harassed by management companies or landlords regarding improvements to their apartments or dwellings; how would a tenant still be able to receive the benefit of the program? They explained that their program is for single-family dwellings, but it can be used by renters if the manager agrees. There is another program for multi-family homes.
  - d. Ivonne then clarified that as a tenant, someone would have to get consent of owner of building or manager to implement the program's benefits? Emily explained that they would, but built into contract that managers and landlords sign to receive the program's benefits is that they can't raise rent on the property for two years after the weatherization is finished. Sustainable homes go for more on the market, and the program doesn't want people kicked out and rents jacked up as a result. Isai also added that if you are a homeowner for single- to quad-plex units, you can get free solar upgrades as well. They're working on determining if there are any issues such as mold or roof issues with properties benefitting from the program, and raising funds to address this so that it doesn't hamper progress.
  - e. Ivonne asked if the program also offered to put in solar trash cans in low-income neighborhoods, and Isai replied that that fell under the domain of Public Works, so their program did not. Emily clarified that the only free solar projects their initiative covered were solar water heaters and photovoltaic systems.
  - f. Rocky asked if the program was solely low-income or offered income-based benefits as well. They explained that it was solely low-income, but very

forgiving compared to a lot of other low-income programs. In addition, participants don't have to prove their low-income status if they are already part of other assistance programs like food stamps or Medi-Cal.

- g. Emily and Isai requested that the outreach committee help get flyers and brochures out to where the community congregates, and to high-traffic areas of the community, and Karina agreed and received brochures and flyers from them. Sandra added that she was sure the rest of the board would help disseminate the information as well.

- C. Gregory from Stand LA introduced himself, and said that he was also supposed to give a presentation as part of the agenda, but could instead simply give a public comment. He explained that he represented Stand Together Against Neighborhood Drilling, a coalition that does work around LA and is affiliated with around 20 other religious, political, and environmental groups in the city. There are drill sites all around LA that are negatively impacting the health of people living near those sites, leading to asthma, headaches, nosebleeds, and skin irritation among other effects. Stand LA is asking the city to create a 2,500-foot safety barrier around apartments, schools, convalescent homes, and other affected buildings.
  - i. Harold commented that it was agendized as the CIS item in the agenda under 6.d. but was mislabeled. He had initially set up a CIS to use for today's meeting, and upon further research and discussion, realized it was not a CIS item, but was for the purposes of writing a letter in support of further ordinance that continues the efforts of the CIS item that had already been approved last year.
  - ii. Sandra asked if the board could move forward with it as an agenda item, and Mario recommended that they table the item until next time because it was not agendized properly. He explained that if the board was being asked to approve a letter, that action is different from what is written and presented in the agenda
  - iii. Harold asked Greg from Stand LA if the issue was time-sensitive. Greg replied that the city was conducting its own study presently to be released in February, so Stand LA preferred to get more letters in from neighborhood councils before the study comes out. However, letters to the city after the study is released in February are still okay. Greg confirmed that it would be satisfactory if the board put the issue in their agenda for February.
  - iv. Harold moved to table the item until the next agenda and rewrite it so it reads correctly. Rocky seconded.
  - v. Greg said that he could follow up with the coalition, pinpoint the history of the board's proposal, and then give a brief overview and updates next meeting.
  - vi. Sandra called for the vote to agendize the topic for next meeting that was previously motioned by Harold and seconded by Rocky. There was a unanimous vote in favor.

## V. **AGENDIZED FOR DISCUSSION & VOTE**

- A. Vote on MPG's
  - i. Note: "MPG's" on agenda was a misspelling of "MER's", Monthly Expenditure Reports. There was confusion over whether they were voting on pending NPG's, and Rocky explained that they were merely voting to approve monthly expenditure reports from October, November, and December, and that there was some budget reallocation needed.
  - ii. Mario recommended reagendizing, since it would be improper to amend an agenda after it's been published. Harold said that his understanding was that the board came up with a remedy last month where the "treasury report" entry on the agenda would cover MER approval and the "secretary report" entry on the agenda would cover minutes approval. Mario said that any time the board is going to take action on something, it has to be

agendized specifically as a possible discussion to vote approve. To give a report would just be that, reporting on the state of the account.

- iii. Sandra recognized the need to submit the MER's because it affects the actual use of the council's funds. She suggested that calling a special meeting to vote just specifically on the MER's would solve the problem right now. She asked if she can get a commitment, whenever Mario's available, when can the board meet to vote on Rocky's MER's?
- iv. Harold asked why the board didn't just vote on it today? He said there was always a risk someone might not like it and call us on it, but risk is minimal. The board's full intent was that this was a necessary remedy to cover the MER's affecting the council's funds. Rocky reiterated that the problem was it's a misspelling on the published agenda.
- v. Ivonne said that since the agenda is posted online, pursuant to the training she took, to be done right proper procedure has to be followed to allow transparency for the public. Especially since not enough copies of the MER's were made for everyone to see.
- vi. Sandra asked where in the agenda she had the opportunity to be frustrated, to which Mario suggested during the board member comments. Sandra then determined that Rocky would possibly be available Wednesday, and asked board members to check their calendars to see if they were free to meet on Wednesday at 6PM. Mario added that they could still proceed with voting on the MER's without Rocky as long as Mario was there. Sandra agreed to send out an email to the board members soliciting available times for the special MER meeting.

## **VI. BOARD ITEMS**

- A. Secretary Report
  - i. Secretary not present, out ill.
- B. Treasury Report
  - ii. Rocky said that the substance of the treasury report had already been covered in the previous discussion of the budget and MER approval.
- C. Discussion and Possible Action to Fill Board Vacancies
  - i. Sandra said the item would be removed, as they now have a full 15-member board. She has personally sent the necessary corrections to the person who handles the Neighborhood Council board rosters, and agreed to copy Mario on the corrections.
- D. Discussion and Possible Action on (Council File #17-0447)
  - i. Harold said that the item had already been discussed in the previous public comment discussion about Stand LA and submitting a letter of support to them.

## **VII. COMMITTEE REPORTS**

- A. Bylaws Committee (Margarita Alvarez Gomez & Harold "Mac" McCarthy)
  - i. Nothing to report; Mario reminded the board that the deadline for submitting bylaw revisions is April 17<sup>th</sup>. However, depending on the type of revisions they were submitting, they may need to be put on the agenda for the Board of Neighborhood Commissioners, and so there may be part of a slew of other neighborhood councils amending their bylaws. Therefore, early submission is preferable.
- B. Beautification/Planning and Land Use (Sandra Villalobos & Harold "Mac" McCarthy)
  - i. Sandra talked about how they had received their very first land use request as a board regarding a proposed Burger King to be constructed where a Kentucky Fried Chicken used to be on Loma in front of the Rampart police station. Info and a package had been

- submitted to the board, and Sandra said they would be contacted, invited to speak to the board, and they would see what happens.
- ii. Beautification had nothing to report; however, Harold commented that next month, maybe they should reassess committee assignments and spread some of the members out across committees. Sandra agreed, saying that some of the board were on multiple committees, some were on none, and all of the board should take a committee. Interested parties should speak to her, and she would send an email to all of the board next week asking whether they were available to take on committees.
  - iii. Ivonne volunteered to be on the Crime Prevention/Public Safety Committee; Sandra asked if she no longer wanted to be the Homeless Liaison, and both agreed to discuss further while moving the meeting forward.
- C. Outreach Committee (Sandra Villalobos & Karina Rodriguez)
- i. Sandra announced that on February 28<sup>th</sup>, 2017 there would be free CPR training at Central City Neighborhood Partners with 27 community members (all women) signed up and participating so far. The board was not sponsoring or giving money to the event, as it will be paid for by the Red Cross, but Sandra thought it would be nice to have table at the event for outreach purposes.
  - ii. Karina and Sandra have been working with Peace Over Violence to do a self-defense class for women and girls in March. Again, the board would not be providing money, but they should have a table at the event for outreach purposes. Peace over Violence was also working with Para los Ninos to provide classes for teenagers and boys that same day to teach them not to sexually harass women and girls.
- D. Budget and Finance Committee
- i. Rocky explained that he already went through the substance of the report in previous budget discussions during the meeting. Budget reallocation needed to be voted on if the board wanted to get things purchased that were approved previously.
- E. Crime Prevention
- i. Rocky said that he had been hoping the board would have a report from the Rampart police division, but the scheduled officers were unable to attend.
- F. Youth/Education Committee (Ventura Mendez Florencio)
- i. Nothing to report.

## **VIII. NEIGHBORHOOD COUNCIL ALLIANCES AND LIASON REPORTS**

- A. Animal Service Liaison
- i. Nothing to report.
- B. Department of Water and Power Liaison (Harold “Mac” McCarthy)
- i. Nothing to report.
- C. Film Liaison
- i. Nothing to report.
- D. Homeless Liaison (Ivonnenanette Machado)
- i. Ivonne attended a Civic Youth meeting last Monday and spoke to a homeless woman from Toluca Lake, who gave Ivonne her phone number. The homeless woman invited Ivonne to another civic meeting which Ivonne had unfortunately been unable to attend. Ivonne then talked about what she had learned at the meeting, and how through the Civic

Youth, the Koreatown Youth and Community Center had assisted homeless around Lafayette Park during an LAPD clearing of the area. KYCC had helped by giving out trash bags to the homeless for personal items that they would like to keep. Though there had been some resistance to the clearing, the area had been getting uninhabitable for community at large due to trash and residents are notified when mass throw-away events take place.

- E. Neighborhood Council Sustainability Liaison (Harold “Mac” McCarthy)
  - i. Substance of report had already been covered in previous discussions during Public Comment.
- D. Purposeful Aging Liaison (Margarita Alvarez Gomez)
  - ii. Nothing to report.

#### **IX. BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS/ANNOUNCEMENTS**

- A. Sandra began by explaining that it was already hard for her to cover putting together and making copies of agendas, minutes, and board documents on her own, and would be getting harder since she would now be spending part of the day four days out of the week working at USC. She explained that she needed support from the board members because the secretary, Harold, has a difficult time setting up the agendas and minutes as he should. She emphasized that she was not being negative about it, but needed more support from the board as a whole.
- B. Sandra said that she also needed support from the Outreach Committee. They were getting a lot of love as Westlake North Neighborhood Council thanks to their participation in local events such as the MacArthur Park meeting earlier that day. So she reiterated that once a month, if board members could ask if they could help make copies of the agendas and assignments, it would be amazing to work as a team together. That way, they wouldn’t have so many mistakes and conflicts, and she apologized to Harold for the confusion regarding the agenda.
- C. Margarita said that she could volunteer to do it, but would need commitment that agenda items would be sent to her in a timely manner, and that if there is an executive meeting to agenda items, the agenda is finalized that day with no additions. If the items were sent a week beforehand, she could commit to handling the all of the agenda. Sandra asked to confirm that if she could get the executive team to submit agenda items on the Thursday before regular board meetings, that Margarita would handle the agenda? Margarita agreed, but emphasized that the first time someone submitted an agenda item the day before a meeting was to take place, she would refuse to handle the agendas anymore.
- D. Sandra agreed to commit to that, and asked the executive team if they would commit as well. The members of the executive committee who were present agreed; Jennifer Virgen was not present.
- E. Harold suggested that if they started collecting emails from events we go to and previous events, the webmaster of the WNNC website Christina Smith can then email agendas and notifications to those emails to increase meeting attendance.
- F. Ivonne raised an issue she had raised previously regarding asking Veronica at CCNP for a quote to be able to print agendas and meeting documents at CCNP. Sandra said that they couldn’t print at CCNP or buy toner. Ivonne asked if they could buy it as a supply, but Mario explained that since the board didn’t own the copier, they could not. However, he said that the board’s purchase cards should be linked to Office Depot where they could get a special rate to make copies. He also volunteered to show them how to set up the agenda as one file to print.

#### **X. ADJOURNMENT**

A. Harold moved to adjourn, Rocky seconded. The board voted unanimously to adjourn the meeting.

**Meeting adjourned at 7:03 pm.**