

# CITY OF LOS ANGELES

CALIFORNIA

## BOARD OF NEIGHBORHOOD COMMISSIONERS

**KAREN MACK**  
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**LEONARD SHAFFER**  
VICE PRESIDENT

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## BOARD OF NEIGHBORHOOD COMMISSIONERS

### REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

**TUESDAY, MARCH 4, 2014 – 6:00 P.M.**

**DEARBORN ELEMENTARY CHARTER ACADEMY**  
**9240 WISH AVENUE**  
**NORTHRIDGE, CA 91325**

#### COMMISSIONERS PRESENT

Karen Mack, President  
Leonard Shaffer, Vice President  
Joy Atkinson  
Lydia Grant  
Victor Medina  
Olivia Rubio

#### DEPARTMENT STAFF PRESENT

Leyla Campos, Senior Project Coordinator  
Joseph Hari, Senior Project Coordinator  
Glenn Bailey, Citywide Elections Coordinator

#### CITY ATTORNEY REPRESENTATIVE

Alois Phillips, Deputy City Attorney

1. Introduction (5 minutes)

**ACTION: Vice President Shaffer gave the introduction.**

2. Call to Order and Commission roll call. (1 minute)

**ACTION: Vice President Shaffer called the meeting to order at 6:20 p.m. A quorum was not established. Commissioner Rubio arrived at 6:27 p.m. Vice President Shaffer called for quorum at 6:30 p.m. Commission roll was called by Joseph Hari (Commissioners Shaffer, Grant, Medina, and Rubio, were present). Commissioner Atkinson arrived at 6:34 p.m. President Mack arrived at 6:46 p.m. Vice President Shaffer turned chairing of the meeting over to President Mack at 7:02 p.m.**

3. Approval of the Minutes of the Special Meeting of February 24, 2014. (Click on the link to view a copy of the document.) (3 minutes)

[http://empowerla.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/02/02-24-14\\_draft-MINUTES\\_SPECIAL-COMMISSION-MEETING2.pdf](http://empowerla.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/02/02-24-14_draft-MINUTES_SPECIAL-COMMISSION-MEETING2.pdf)

**ACTION:** This agenda item was taken out of order after agenda item no. 4. Commissioner Shaffer moved approval of the Minutes of the Special meeting of February 24, 2014. Commissioner Rubio seconded the Motion.

**VOTE:** Ayes – 5 (Atkinson, Grant, Medina, Rubio, and Shaffer)  
Nays – 0

Motion passes unanimously.

Public comment received from:

**Anita Goldbaum – disagrees with General Manager, Grayce Liu’s, statements regarding the harassment issue as noted in the Commission Special Meeting minutes of February 24, 2014.**

**Robin Tyler - disagrees with General Manager, Grayce Liu’s, statements regarding the harassment issue as noted in the Commission Special Meeting minutes of February 24, 2014.**

4. General Public Comments - Comments from the public on non-agenda items within the Board’s subject matter jurisdiction. This agenda item will last a total of 15 minutes and no individual speaker will be allowed more than three minutes. (15 minutes)

**Public comment received from: this agenda item was taken out of order before agenda item numbers 2 and 3 due to a lack of quorum.**

**Debra Francisco – disagrees with General Manager, Grayce Liu’s, statements regarding the harassment issue as noted in the Commission Special Meeting minutes of February 24, 2014.**

**William Kuzmin – filed a complaint with the District Attorney Department of Public Integrity against the Neighborhood Council for failure to comply with the Brown Act website posting requirements for legislative bodies and for failure to comply with DONE agenda posting requirements.**

5. Verbal update from a representative of the Office of the Mayor Eric Garcetti. (10 minutes)

**ACTION: No representative present.**

6. General Manager’s Report. (10 minutes)
  1. Briefing on Departmental activities.
  2. Staffing, budget and other operational matters.
  3. Neighborhood Council 2014 Elections

**ACTION: Leyla Campos, Senior Project Coordinator, and Glenn Bailey, Citywide Elections Coordinator, gave the General Manager’s report.**

- **Field duties:**
- **Recently Field Division was split between Leyla Campos and Joseph Hari.**

- (Leyla oversees the Valley areas- North and South and also the Eastside) has three staff members (Amber Meshack – South Valley, Melvin Canas – North Valley, and Lisette Covarrubias, stationed in the Valley but servicing the groups on the Eastside)
- Joseph Hari will oversee the areas in South LA, Harbor, the West and the Central area. He has three staff members (Barry Stone – Central Area, Thomas Soong – Westside and Harbor, Taneda Larios – South LA)
- Completed move to Valley office
- Leyla is leading the training program
- The team is working diligently to get a 90 minute basic training module ready to go for the first seating of the board for the upcoming elections. We are asking the Neighborhood Councils to give us the first agenda and put us on there for 90 minutes
- Exhaustive Efforts - MacArthur Park Neighborhood Council, North Hills West Neighborhood Council (they will be released fairly soon) and LA-32 Neighborhood Council. We are working to try to help them have a successful election
- Joseph Hari reported that Olympic Park Neighborhood Council (Central Region) is also in exhaustive efforts

#### **Neighborhood Council Elections:**

- Had the first Neighborhood Council elections for this two-year cycle this past Saturday
- Porter Ranch Neighborhood Council tripled their turnout with 730 voters
- At this point there were 1,182 voters within the five Neighborhood Councils that went to election for Region 2, which is the North West Valley
- Commissioner Grant, representative for the North Valley. She spent the day from 7:30 am to 9:30 pm until the last ballot was counted. We did the cycle of visiting each of the polling places as they were getting ready to open, during the course of the day as they were voting, as they closed and were counting ballots, and we ended up at the very end one of the Councils we had to take the ballots to Van Nuys City Hall to count them
- This Saturday we have the next Region 1 coming up which is the North East Valley. There are nine Neighborhood Councils and then we move from there to Region 3 which is the South West Valley, eight Neighborhood Councils on Sunday March 16 and then Region 4 to finish out the Valley, South East Valley which will be nine Neighborhood Councils and that's a Thursday, March 20
- We did have staffing by volunteer poll workers. We have a poll manager and assistant poll manager which are people who are either IEAs (Independent Election Administrators) not from the region we're doing the elections and then some Department staff folks who are assistant poll managers. The rest of the people helping are volunteer poll workers
- Will be doing a poll work training for the Central and East regions later in March for Regions 5, 6, 7, and 8. The date has not been set

#### **7. Commission Committee Reports. (60 minutes)**

1. Ad Hoc Committee re Outreach (Members: Atkinson-Chair, Mack, and Rubio)

2. Ad Hoc Committee re ability of the Board of Neighborhood Commissioners to implement citywide policies (Members: Shaffer-Chair, Grant, and Medina)
3. Ad Hoc Committee re Leadership Development for Neighborhood Councils (members: Rubio-Chair, Medina, and Shaffer)

**ACTION: None.**

**Public comment received from:**

**William Kuzmin – stakeholder Granada Hills South Neighborhood Council, the best you can do for the stakeholders and outreach is simply to get the Department of Neighborhood Empowerment to enforce the resolutions that you have recommended and then the Neighborhood Councils will do the outreach to the stakeholders that the stakeholders deserve.**

8. Discussion with various North Valley area Neighborhood Council representatives who wish to report concerns, operations, and best practices. Neighborhood Council representatives should complete their questionnaire in advance of the meeting. This matter will last a maximum of 20 minutes and the time will be divided among those representatives wishing to speak. (Click on the link to view a copy of the document.) (20 minutes)  
[http://empowerla.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/01/BEST-PRACTICES-QUESTIONNAIRE\\_01-31-14.pdf](http://empowerla.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/01/BEST-PRACTICES-QUESTIONNAIRE_01-31-14.pdf)

**ACTION: None.**

**Public comment received from:**

**Cindy Cleghorn – Sunland-Tujunga Neighborhood Council, it's been wonderful to work with the Region 1 election team. It's exciting to have 240 candidates from this region running. We have 37 candidates running. We have our challenges with some of the candidates running. Seeking your assistance in the future with trying to help Neighborhood Councils with their accomplishments. We seriously need the support and guidance. In any way you have influence with regards to funding so that they can do more I'm sure they would appreciate that.**

**Sergio Ibarra – President, Arleta Neighborhood Council, we're changing history in our Neighborhood Council. I want to work hand in hand with our partners in Pacoima because we're brother and sister communities. We want to provide them the training to be successful. We will hold a boot camp to teach them roles and responsibilities of what it means to be a Neighborhood Council member and also ethics and the funding training. We want to set them up for success on day one when they walk in the door.**

9. Previously, the Commission established Regional Standing Committees to provide recommendations to the Commission regarding improvements to the Citywide System of Neighborhood Councils. The Regional Standing Committees, also known as the Neighborhood Council (NC) Plan Review Committees, have forwarded their recommendations to the Commission for review and action. Discussion and POSSIBLE ACTION by the Commission on the recommendations of the Regional Standing Committees and the Commission's positions with respect to the recommendations, including but not limited to drafting a communication or Resolution to the City regarding: (30 minutes) (Click on the links to view copies of the documents.)

[http://empowerla.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/01/Memo-re\\_Eight-Motions.pdf](http://empowerla.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/01/Memo-re_Eight-Motions.pdf)  
[http://empowerla.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/01/Attachment-A\\_survey-results.pdf](http://empowerla.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/01/Attachment-A_survey-results.pdf)  
[http://empowerla.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/01/Attachment-B\\_NC-Resolutions.pdf](http://empowerla.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/01/Attachment-B_NC-Resolutions.pdf)  
[http://empowerla.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/01/Survey\\_8-motions\\_text2.pdf](http://empowerla.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/01/Survey_8-motions_text2.pdf)

1) Training and Leadership Development

NC Plan Review Committees' Recommendation:

- a) Neighborhood Council board members be required to complete Ethics, Financial Policy, Sexual Harassment, and ADA Compliance training, and that the Department offer classes including, but not limited to leadership, City government basics, parliamentary procedures, land use, and candidate training.
- b) There be a citywide standard period of time from date of seating, not to exceed 90 days, that a Board member will have to pass the required training, and that this be enforced by the Neighborhood Council bylaws, which shall prohibit voting on any matter coming before the Neighborhood Council board. Inability of any board member(s) to vote for failure to timely complete training will not affect quorum.

Additional Commission proposals:

- c) That the Commission may amend the recommendation regarding training to include consequences for failure to complete the training within the allowed period of time. The ultimate consequence being the removal by action of the Department of any offending board member.
- d) That the Commission may amend the recommendation regarding training to include Workplace Violence/Bullying Prevention training.

**ACTION:**

**Mary Armenteros – I want to piggy back on what Robin has said. The least that the City should be able to do is to provide what they will not tolerate for their employees. They should not be tolerating that going on within a Neighborhood Council.**

**Glenn Bailey – referencing Encino Neighborhood Council, over the years bullying is also can be done by email. I think we have had some folks, I would say did email bullying. They were in positions of power and they treated other Neighborhood Council, their fellow Neighborhood Council board members with extreme disrespect. Whatever standards are done they should include bullying by email and that those should be actionable.**

**Cindy Cleghorn – I feel a victim of bullying severely and it's affecting my health and my family, tremendously. So I am hopeful that you'll be able to find some solution for it because this isn't how, as I said earlier, Neighborhood Councils were intended to be.**

**There are board members who refuse to adhere to any code of civility even during meetings, that's wrong. I never dreamed that it would get to this point. We're gonna lose good people and it makes it very difficult to get good people. They're not gonna stay to go through it and weather through it.**

**Debra Francisco – there should be mandatory classes for bullying for harassment, everyone should be able to sign a document that states that if they are in violation of that then they need to go on probation and they could be out of the council period. Everybody who is a NC member should treat everybody with dignity, respect and really strive for the open honest and transparent.**

**Anita Goldbaum – please address these issues without delay. You will continue to lose upstanding and honorable volunteer members of Neighborhood Councils who will not put up with behavior of harassment, of bullying, of sexism. It's time for you to act and to act now. You must complete training to be on a board.**

**Sergio Ibarra – this is an excellent proposal. One of the challenges that I face because I was actually having bullies come in from the public and also board members weren't get along. So what we did is we implemented our code of civility and it's on our agenda every single time and it's about changing the culture of the organization, but one of the challenges that I face also was trying to enforce the law against the board members. We didn't have a hammer to hammer them to get them to comply.**

**William Kuzmin – after hearing a lot of this conversation about bullying and harassment and board members not following the code of civility I gotta tell you that it's not just between board members. As a stakeholder who complains I've experienced seeing that same kind of harassment, name calling, slandering behind my back that I hear from other stakeholders when I'm not present in a room, where a meeting is taking place. It's not just for the board members that this needs to be done, it also needs to be done for the public stakeholders.**

**Robin Tyler – there needs to be added to this training something to do with sexism, racism, homophobia, and transphobia because we just need to learn how to treat each other.**

10. Previously, the Commission established Regional Standing Committees to provide recommendations to the Commission regarding improvements to the Citywide System of Neighborhood Councils. The Regional Standing Committees, also known as the Neighborhood Council (NC) Plan Review Committees, have forwarded their recommendations to the Commission for review and action. Discussion and possible action by the Commission on the recommendations of the Regional Standing Committees and the Commission's positions with respect to the recommendations, including but not limited to forming an ad hoc committee which will report back to the Commission and include the identification of policies which will satisfy the goal of the following recommendation: (30 minutes) (Click on the links to view copies of the documents.)  
[http://empowerla.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/01/Memo-re\\_Eight-Motions.pdf](http://empowerla.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/01/Memo-re_Eight-Motions.pdf)  
[http://empowerla.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/01/Attachment-A\\_survey-results.pdf](http://empowerla.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/01/Attachment-A_survey-results.pdf)

[http://empowerla.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/01/Attachment-B\\_NC-Resolutions.pdf](http://empowerla.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/01/Attachment-B_NC-Resolutions.pdf)  
[http://empowerla.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/01/Survey\\_8-motions\\_text2.pdf](http://empowerla.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/01/Survey_8-motions_text2.pdf)

1) Review of delivery of City services

NC Plan Review Committees' Recommendation:

The Board of Neighborhood Commissioners, with the aid and advice of citywide Neighborhood Councils, will adopt policies establishing best practices for monitoring the delivery of City services.

**ACTION: Commissioner Shaffer moved to table this agenda item to the next regular Commission meeting. Commissioner Grant seconded the motion.**

**VOTE: Ayes – 4 (Atkinson, Grant, Mack, and Shaffer)  
Nays – 0**

**Motion passes unanimously.**

11. Commission Business - Comment from Commissioners on subject matters within the Board's jurisdiction. (15 minutes)
  1. Comment on Commissioners' own activities/brief announcements.
  2. Brief response to statements made or questions posed by persons exercising their general public comment rights/ask staff questions for clarification.
  3. Introduce new issues for consideration by the Commission at its next meeting and direct staff to place on the agenda.
  4. Ask staff to research issues and report back to the Commission at a future time.

**ACTION: None.**

12. General Public Comments - Comments from the public on non-agenda items within the Board's subject matter jurisdiction. This agenda item will last a total of 15 minutes and no individual speaker will be allowed more than three minutes. (15 minutes)

**Public comment received from:**

**Jason Ackerman – I really wish that there was some baseline effort by DONE to reach all the stakeholders and all the Neighborhood Councils to let them know about candidate filing deadlines and elections in addition to those efforts by the Neighborhood Councils themselves because not every outreach chair is perfect or perfectly organized. I know that Neighborhood Councils are not about the money as we are not paid, but when you do this job it can be a full-time job and if you're going to meetings that really can impact your ability to work a full-time job and I would really appreciate if there was some way we could get a small stipend for going to certain meetings on behalf of the Neighborhood Council so that way we could at least afford dinner, or transit fare to get there or gas money or anything. It's a very noble cash train being on a Neighborhood Council.**

**Sharon Brewer** – my comment has to do with the Department’s failure to provide the California Public Record Act Requests in a timely manner. I am still waiting for one that was done September 26, 2013, on funding issues for Reseda. I am still waiting for ones that was December 3 of 2013 that I was sent an email that said the City Attorney told them that even though the 14 day an 10 day would have been December 27 that they actually had until January 28, 2014, to get me the information. I’m still waiting and these have to do with funding issues for Reseda Neighborhood Council that have not taken and provided the documents that are required to the Department and it’s not acceptable that I’m trying to go and let them know what’s going on and I am not getting the public records request answered.

**Sergio Ibarra** – thank you for coming out here to the Valley, for all the great work that you are doing. We’re fighting the good fight in the trenches. I am hoping to really improve our operations. I know that I take a lot of examples from other Neighborhood Councils who are much further along in their development than us, but we’re working hand in hand with Pacoima to get us to where we need to be and the perfect example Sunland-Tujunga. We toured their office it’s incredible, they’re well organized. That’s where we wanna go. They’re a great example.

**William Kuzman** – this statement’s really simple, we need people on our Neighborhood Councils and DONE that have integrity and integrity is doing the right thing when no one is watching.

**Glen Wilson** – Northridge West Neighborhood Council, the last election in 2012 DONE was doing the paperwork for the Neighborhood Councils. This year we got stuck having to do the LAUSD paperwork on the elections which is a real headache. Filing candidate things should start in January not in December cause that kinda messed us up too and then this 90 minute basic training at our first meet is gonna be a real pain for us. We got too many people wanna put agenda items before that before our March 11 meeting.

13. Adjourn

**ACTION:** Commissioner Atkinson moved that the meeting be adjourned at 8:45 p.m. Commissioner Grant seconded the motion. **NOTE:** Commissioner Medina left for the evening at 8:05 p.m. Commissioner Rubio left for the evening at 8:09 p.m.

**VOTE:** Ayes – 4 (Atkinson, Grant, Mack, and Shaffer)  
Nays – 0

Motion passes unanimously

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