

CITY OF LOS ANGELES
CALIFORNIA

DEPARTMENT OF
NEIGHBORHOOD EMPOWERMENT

BOARD OF NEIGHBORHOOD
COMMISSIONERS

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VICE PRESIDENT

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MINUTES

BOARD OF NEIGHBORHOOD COMMISSIONERS

REGULAR MEETING

MONDAY, MARCH 19, 2012 – 1:00 P.M.

**CITY HALL, 10TH FLOOR CONFERENCE CENTER
ROOM 1070, 200 NORTH SPRING STREET
LOS ANGELES, CA 90012**

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT

Daniel Gatica, President
Carlene Davis
Douglas Epperhart
Linda Lucks
Karen Mack
Paul Park
Leonard Shaffer

DEPARTMENT STAFF PRESENT

BongHwan (BH) Kim, General Manager
Grayce Liu, Senior Project Coordinator
Janet Lindo, Executive Administrative Assistant

CITY ATTORNEY REPRESENTATIVE

Darren Martinez, Deputy City Attorney

1. Introduction (5 minutes)

ACTION: President Gatica gave the introduction

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

ACTION: President Gatica, called the meeting to order at 1:05 p.m. Commission roll was called by Janet Lindo, Executive Administrative Assistant.

3. Approval of the Minutes of the Regular Meeting of March 6, 2012. (3 minutes)

ACTION: Commissioner Lucks moved that the Minutes of the Regular Meeting of March 6, 2012, be approved as written. Commissioner Shaffer requested a correction be made to the Minutes on page two; add an "l" to "Seige", to read "Seigel". Commissioner Epperhart seconded the Motion.

Vote: Ayes – 7

Nays – 0

Motion passes unanimously.

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 two minutes. (15 minutes)

ACTION: Public comments received from: **Glenn Bailey and Wendi Riser.**

5. Verbal update from a representative of the Office of the Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa, Neighborhood and Community Services. (10 minutes)

ACTION: None.

6. General Manager's Report (10 minutes)

1. Briefing on Departmental activities.
2. Staffing, budget and other operational matters.

ACTION: None.

7. Verbal update from the Office of the City Clerk regarding the results of the 2011-12 Neighborhood Council Election Alternatives Study. (15 minutes)

ACTION: None.

Public comment received from: Glenn Bailey and Ivan Spiegel.

8. Discussion regarding Neighborhood Council elections during the 2012 calendar year and whether Neighborhood Councils should be allowed the option to fore go elections during this election cycle and, instead, be granted the ability to conduct their next election in the 2014 calendar year. In addition, the Commission may take possible action approving a written communication to the Education and Neighborhoods Committee and City Council regarding its position on this matter. (30 minutes)

ACTION: Commissioner Epperhart moved that the written communication to the Education and Neighborhoods Committee and City Council be approved as written. Commissioner Lucks seconded the Motion. Commissioner Lucks moved that an amendment be made to the written communication to read as follows:

We, the Board of Neighborhood Commissioners (Commission), write to express our concern about a certain provision contained in a proposed ordinance addressing Neighborhood Council (NC) elections (Council File No. 11-1912). While we laud the City of Los Angeles' (City) commitment and efforts to ensuring that NC elections are conducted in a timely and fair manner, we are deeply concerned with a provision within the proposed ordinance that would allow NC's to opt out of conducting any elections until 2014.

The Commission believes that the consequences of this option are potentially disastrous. If the City were to allow NC boards to decide for themselves whether to hold an election for their seats, the City would essentially be creating a mechanism for self-interest to circumvent the democratic process. The uneven application of democratic elections within the NC system would not only disenfranchise affected stakeholders, it would impugn the integrity of the entire NC system.

The only reliable means of certifying and confirming that a decision to postpone an election is the will of the stakeholders, rather than the will of the NC board members, is to allow the stakeholders an opportunity to participate in an election-style vote on the issue. Unfortunately, this would end up being as time-consuming and costly as having the actual elections. We cannot see any reasonable means for implementing a fair opt-out option.

Allowing NC Boards to opt-out of elections is not only bad policy, it subverts the basic rights of American citizens to choose their leaders and representatives on a regular basis.

The Board of Neighborhood Commissioners strongly urges the City Council to remove this provision from the ordinance.

Commissioner Shaffer seconded the amendment.

Commissioner Lucks withdrew her amendment to the written communication, with the only change to be to the last sentence to read, "The Board of Neighborhood Commissioners strongly urges the City Council to not include this provision in the ordinance."

Commissioner Parks seconded the Motion as amended.

Vote: Ayes – 7

Nays – 0

Motion passes unanimously.

Public comment received from: Glenn Bailey, Mike O’Gara, and Ivan Spiegel.

9. Discussion with the Department of Neighborhood Empowerment and the Office of the City Attorney regarding the Commission's policy denying boundary adjustment applications that create unincorporated areas within existing Neighborhood Councils. The "Limitations on Boundary Adjustment Petitions that seek to reduce a Neighborhood Council's Geographic Boundaries" is attached. (20 minutes)

ACTION: None.

Public comments received from: Martha Benedict, Mike O’Gara, Dr. Priscilla Reed, and Joseph Riser.

10. Discussion regarding the Commission's Rules of Order and the Commissions Operating Policies and Procedures, including a discussion on amending, creating, or refining the Commission's procedures on how its committees present motions or resolutions to the Commission.

ACTION: Commissioner Gatica, moved that an Ad Hoc Committee consisting of Commissioners Shaffer (Chair), Davis, and Lucks, be established for six months for the authority solely to report back to the Commission at a future date with respect to amendments to the standing rules and operating policies and procedures, and to report back

intermittently as they come forth with suggested changes or revisions.

Commissioner Epperhart seconded the Motion

Vote: Ayes – 7

Nays – 0

Motion passes unanimously.

11. Discussion and possible action by the Commission approving a resolution or letter to the Education and Neighborhoods Committee outlining the concerns facing the Neighborhood Council system. Currently, the Education and Neighborhoods Committee is holding hearings throughout the City requesting suggestions for improving the Neighborhood Council system, including issues regarding the funding program, elections, board member training, grievance, definition of stakeholder, the role of the Department of Neighborhood Empowerment (DONE) and the Board of Neighborhood Commissioners (BONC). (30 minutes)

ACTION: None.

Public comments received from: Glenn Bailey, Dr. Priscilla Reed, and Ivan Spiegel.

12. Update on the Commission adopted work plan. (30 minutes)

1. To establish a set of standards to guide Neighborhood Council operations and provide a uniform measure of competence for Neighborhood Council officers, board members and volunteers.

Subcommittee – Commissioners Park (Chair), Epperhart, Shaffer

2. To devise and implement a leadership development program to improve and extend the skills of Neighborhood Council officers, board members and other volunteers.

This item will be addressed once Item No. 1 is completed.

3. To devise and implement a citywide publicity and outreach campaign to raise awareness of Neighborhood Councils and encourage participation by stakeholders.

Subcommittee – Commissioners Mack (Chair), Park, Lucks

4. To review the Plan for a Citywide System of Neighborhood Councils (Plan) in its entirety and propose amendments to the Plan to eliminate inconsistencies, clarify vague or confusing language, and offer a complete and comprehensive directive for Neighborhood Councils. The desired outcome is a clear and comprehensive Plan that will be more accessible and useful for guiding Neighborhood Councils.

Subcommittee – Commissioners Epperhart (Chair), Gatica, Shaffer

ACTION: None.

13. Commission Business – Comment from Commissioners on subject matters within the Board's jurisdiction. (20 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: Comments received from Commissioners Epperhart and Lucks.

14. 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 two minutes. (15 minutes)

ACTION: None.

Public comments received from: Charles Herman-Wurmfeld

15. Adjourn

**ACTION: Commissioner Shaffer moved that the meeting be adjourned at 3:35 p.m.
Commissioner Mack seconded the Motion.**

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