

# CITY OF LOS ANGELES

CALIFORNIA

## BOARD OF NEIGHBORHOOD COMMISSIONERS

**KAREN MACK**  
PRESIDENT

**LEONARD SHAFFER**  
VICE PRESIDENT

**JOY ATKINSON**  
**LYDIA GRANT**  
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## MINUTES

### BOARD OF NEIGHBORHOOD COMMISSIONERS

### REGULAR MEETING

**TUESDAY, APRIL 1, 2014 – 6:00 P.M.**

**CHEREMOYA AVENUE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL  
AUDITORIUM  
6017 FRANKLIN AVENUE  
LOS ANGELES, CA 90028**

#### COMMISSIONERS PRESENT

Karen Mack, President  
Leonard Shaffer, Vice President  
Lydia Grant  
Eli Lipmen  
Victor Medina  
Olivia Rubio

#### ABSENT

Joy Atkinson

#### DEPARTMENT STAFF PRESENT

Grayce Liu, General Manager  
Joseph Hari, Senior Project Coordinator  
Glenn Bailey, Citywide Elections Coordinator

#### CITY ATTORNEY REPRESENTATIVE

Carmen Hawkins, Deputy City Attorney

1. Introduction (5 minutes)

**ACTION: President Mack gave the introduction.**

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

**ACTION:** President Mack called the meeting to order at 6:15 p.m. Commission roll was called by Joseph Hari.

3. Approval of the Minutes of the Regular Meeting of March 17, 2014. (Click on the link to view a copy of the document.) (3 minutes)  
[http://empowerla.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/03/03-17-14\\_draft\\_REGULAR-COMMISSION-MEETING-MINUTES.pdf](http://empowerla.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/03/03-17-14_draft_REGULAR-COMMISSION-MEETING-MINUTES.pdf)

**ACTION:** Commissioner Shaffer moved approval of the Minutes of the Regular meeting of March 17, 2014, as written. Commissioner Rubio seconded the Motion.

**VOTE:** Ayes – 5 (Grant, Mack, Medina, Rubio, and Shaffer)  
Nays – 0  
Abstention - 1 (Lipmen)

**Motion passes.**

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 comments received from:**

**David Carrera – Board member of Central Hollywood Neighborhood Council for six years. I Chair the PLUM Committee and been involved in the Neighborhood Council about 10 years before that. Sadly, I am only going to be a board member for a few more days. An outside group came in and took over all our five open seats. The group doesn't work, doesn't live, doesn't own property. I understand what happened probably wasn't illegal, but it was unethical, it was wrong, not democratic, it violates the spirit of Neighborhood Councils and it is blight on the Neighborhood Council system.**

**Jay Handal, C4C (Council for Councils) – here to talk about the C4C program and the grievance filed against C4C. Asked the Commission to agendize C4C at their next Commission meeting.**

**Pete Nicholas, Rampart Village Neighborhood Council stakeholder – spoke regarding two issues not getting dropped, 1) fraudulent group Filipino town neighborhood council and allegations of fraud and financial misdoings. 2) discussing the common border issue and stakeholders with Neighborhood Councils.**

**Joseph Riser – spoke regarding subdivision being placed on the back burner. Request the Commission to take ownership and push it forward and see if it could be heard in E&N.**

**Marlene Savage – Del Rey stakeholder – spoke regarding C4C program progression. Request the Commission to put this on a future agenda.**

**Ivan Spiegel – Venice Neighborhood Council, the C4C program is still sitting. C4C volunteers are not allowed to help Neighborhood Councils due to a grievance filed by City employees. I'd like to second what Jay said. We'd like you to step in, we'd like you to put this on your agenda for your next meeting to do a review and possibly set some**

**policies about volunteering in the Neighborhood Council system like every other Department in the City allows. Why are we different? We need the help too.**

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

**ACTION: No representative present.**

6. Discussion with various Central 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. This agenda item was taken out of order after agenda item no. 13. Charles Lindenblatt, Mid City West Community Council, presented an unofficial response to the survey.**

7. Discussion and motion to retroactively amend (2nd Supplemental Agreement) the Olympic Park Neighborhood Council contract with the Los Angeles Neighborhood Initiative (LANI) to extend the terms of the contract from January 1, 2014 to December 31, 2014. (Click on the link to view a copy of the document.) (Click on the link to view a copy of the document.) (10 minutes)

[http://empowerla.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/03/OPNC\\_LANI\\_Memo\\_Commission\\_Request\\_LOA\\_Approval\\_Amendment-Two-032814.pdf](http://empowerla.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/03/OPNC_LANI_Memo_Commission_Request_LOA_Approval_Amendment-Two-032814.pdf)

[http://empowerla.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/03/OPNC\\_LANI\\_Memo\\_Commission\\_Request\\_LOA\\_Approval\\_Amendment-Two-032814.pdf](http://empowerla.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/03/OPNC_LANI_Memo_Commission_Request_LOA_Approval_Amendment-Two-032814.pdf)

<http://empowerla.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/03/OPNC-LANI-LofA-Amendment-2-Final-032814.pdf>

[http://empowerla.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/03/OPNC\\_LANI\\_LOA\\_STANDARD-PROVISIONS\\_REV-3-09-FINAL.pdf](http://empowerla.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/03/OPNC_LANI_LOA_STANDARD-PROVISIONS_REV-3-09-FINAL.pdf)

[http://empowerla.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/03/OPNC\\_LANI\\_BONC-Resolution-Approval-Letter-of-Agreement-Amendment-2-032814.pdf](http://empowerla.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/03/OPNC_LANI_BONC-Resolution-Approval-Letter-of-Agreement-Amendment-2-032814.pdf)

[http://empowerla.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/03/OPNC\\_LANI\\_Exhibit-A\\_LOA\\_supp.pdf](http://empowerla.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/03/OPNC_LANI_Exhibit-A_LOA_supp.pdf)

**ACTION: This agenda item was taken out of order after agenda item no. 5. President Mack left the room, recusing herself because she is the Board President for Los Angeles Neighborhood Initiative (LANI).**

Vice President Shaffer moved to retroactively amend (2nd Supplemental Agreement) the Olympic Park Neighborhood Council contract with the Los Angeles Neighborhood Initiative (LANI) to extend the terms of the contract from January 1, 2014 to December 31, 2014.

**WHEREAS, the Commission has the responsibility for approving contracts under Charter section 902 subdivision (b);**

**WHEREAS, the Commission delegated a portion of its authority to approve contracts to the General Manager of the Department of Neighborhood Empowerment (the**

“Department”) if the contract’s duration is less than one year and valued at \$20,000 or less and the proposed contracts exceeds the authority granted to the General Manager; WHEREAS, the OPNC is authorized by the Los Angeles Administrative Code sections 22.801(p) and 22.817 to make a grant of their public funds to a nonprofit corporation (excluding religious institutions) organized under 26 United States Code (U.S.C) section 501(c)(3) or to a public school for neighborhood purposes; and WHEREAS, the CONTRACTOR is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization founded in 1994 to serve as a liaison between communities and local government to plan and implement public improvement projects; and WHEREAS, the CONTRACTOR has been hired by the Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA) to design and construct a median enhancement project along San Vicente Boulevard from Fairfax Avenue to Pico Boulevard, to include landscaping; and WHEREAS, the OPNC wishes to further enhance the median section between La Brea Avenue and Pico Boulevard, which is within the boundaries of the OPNC, with additional plantings and landscaping; and WHEREAS, the full enhancements will create a vibrant and attractive area and can facilitate increased safety and improved health by encouraging community members to use the medians, which are currently overgrown with weeds and other unattractive landscape elements; and WHEREAS, the proposed design and landscape elements have been discussed and are supported by community stakeholders; and WHEREAS, at the February 7, 2011 and December 5, 2011 OPNC meetings, the Governing Board found that the funds expended under this grant will serve a public purpose by providing green space to improve and beautify the neighborhood; and WHEREAS, at the February 7, 2011 and December 5, 2011 OPNC meetings the Governing Board by Motion approved the grant of their public funds in the sum of \$30,000 to the Los Angeles Neighborhood Initiative for median enhancements along San Vicente Boulevard between La Brea Avenue and Pico Boulevard; and WHEREAS, the CONTRACTOR warrants and represents that funds provided by the OPNC pursuant to this Agreement will only be used for the activities described in paragraph 2 of the Agreement and these funds have been disbursed to the CONTRACTOR on October 12, 2012 via City Check Number 300313673. WHEREAS, the OPNC and the Contractor request a second extension of the time needed to complete this project from December 31, 2013 to December 31, 2014. NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Board of Neighborhood Commissioners APPROVE and AUTHORIZE the Department of Neighborhood Empowerment to execute the following OPNC-LANI Letter of Agreement - Amendment

Commissioner Grant seconded the Motion.

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

Motion passes unanimously.

8. Discussion with Board of Public Works Commission President, Kevin James, on his plans, how he intends to partner with Neighborhood Councils and his approach to leadership in moving his agenda forward. (40 minutes)

This agenda item was moved out of order before agenda item no.6.

Commissioner James began by sharing his form of leadership is to empower others. He cautioned that in doing so one should not abandon those things about which you feel strongly. We should not be afraid to listen to others and if convinced of what they have to say not to be afraid to change. He cautioned that we should not change just for the sake of change but only if we believe it's proper to do so. Commissioner James then gave some concrete examples of how he had gone about solving some of the problems he has encountered since his appointment.

He spoke about the challenges caused by the size of the city bureaucracy and the time it may take to get something done. That, he said was not reason not to pursue your goals. One of the problem solvers he found most beneficial was to get all of the agencies into one room to work things out. This is something we can all consider when looking at how to solve problems in our neighborhoods especially where multiple city agencies might be involved.

Commissioner James spoke favorably about partnering with Neighborhood Councils and encouraged all Neighborhood Councils to appoint liaison to Public Works; someone who could communicate directly with the Department. Utilizing Neighborhood Council volunteers as sources of information about their neighborhoods can help get things done. As an example he cited the Neighborhood Blitz program; allowing Neighborhood Council volunteers to gather information about streets that need attention saves the city time and money and results in better results.

Public comment received from:

George Abraham – Director, Beachwood Canyon Neighborhood Association, concerned about the rehabilitation of concrete Beachwood Drive.

Pete Nicholas - one of the things I've learned is that the systems don't seem to adequately and reliably respond, they don't seem to collect historical data and there doesn't seem to be any attention to indexing so it's available. I would just recommend that we develop a system so that every issue, in whatever department, bureau handles it, that every issue is recorded and that it be searchable by 1) location and 2) by the eldest to the newest so that we can look at it.

Nina Sorkin – thank you for this opportunity to ask you about the outreach. Often it's the squeaky wheel that gets the grease. Will there be equity in terms of street repair or will it be the squeaky wheel? I'm talking about, you indicated there were fourteen months of outreach and I don't know whether it reached all areas of Los Angeles City or whether it was those who are really are well-connected and know how to access City Hall.

Jim Van Dusen – I echo what George said. I want to add another piece to the puzzle that we are a major international destination with visitors roughly one half to two million people a year coming to the Hollywood Hills. We are also a major source of revenue for the City because we have the Hollywood sign.

1. Briefing on Departmental activities.
2. Staffing, budget and other operational matters.
3. Neighborhood Council 2014 Elections

**General Manager, Grayce Liu, gave the General Manager's Report.**

- **Welcome new Commissioner, Eli Lipmen.**
- **Funding deadlines: April 15 – contracts, May 15 – Demand Warrants, Neighborhood Purposes Grant, auto-deducts, June 13 – Purchased cards will be shut down.**
- **Department budget – we still working with Mayor's Office in terms of our vacancies.**
- **Councils for Councils – we are working with EAA and our staff and Councils for Councils in order to have a meeting hopefully next week to resolve this matter.**
- **Field Updates – Joe Hari - once the elections are completed and the five-day window afterward has gone so that they're certified, we at their next regular meeting will conduct a training.**
- **Exhaustive Efforts - LA-32 Neighborhood Council, MacArthur Park Neighborhood Council, and Olympic Park Neighborhood Council. All three, once the elections are through and with the new board it looks like they will be taken off of Exhaustive Efforts cause they'll have quorum, they'll have the new members and we will be able to start fresh.**
- **Elections - Stephen Box – just finished Region 5 and on Thursday we've got Region 6 and we will be halfway through. Region 5 was up 45%.**
- **In Friday's newsletter there will be a breakdown of the statistics and also a bit more of the analysis on the Community Interest Stakeholders.**
- **Overall some Regions have been as low as 3% Community Interest voters and some have been as high as 15% as a Region.**
- **New board members have to take the funding training and ethics training, which are both online, before they can vote on funding items.**
- **Checking account contracts are sitting with the CAO's office and Mayor's Office for review. My hope is to move the contracts forward this week before City Council.**

**Public comment received from:**

**Nina Sorkin – I'm trying to remain positive, but the reality is Joseph had indicated that five days after an election it's certified. What happens when there is a challenge? How soon after is that resolved? I don't want to be negative but I also want to see if that can be a reality.**

10. Commission Committee Reports. (15 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.**

11. Discussion and possible action by the Commission to adopt the Commission's strategic plan which was drafted at the Commission's January 27<sup>th</sup> retreat. (10 minutes) (Click on the link to view a copy of the document.)

[http://empowerla.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/03/BONC-Retreat-Notes\\_01-27-14.pdf](http://empowerla.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/03/BONC-Retreat-Notes_01-27-14.pdf)

<http://empowerla.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/03/Final-Plan-20141.pdf>

**ACTION: Vice President Shaffer moved to adopt the Commission's strategic plan which was drafted at the Commission's January 27<sup>th</sup> retreat. Commissioner Grant seconded the Motion.**

**VOTE: Ayes – 6 (Grant, Lipmen, Mack, Medina, Rubio and Shaffer)  
Nays – 0**

**Motion passes unanimously.**

12. Previously, the Commission adopted the Neighborhood Council Plan Review Committee's recommendation on the Brown Act and posting policies which stated:

Reaffirm support for the Brown Act for Neighborhood Councils and its single accessible 24 hour posting requirement, and reaffirm current board policies regarding electronic mail and website posting, with only one physical posting site as opposed to many. The email requirement shall specify that agendas be sent to "NCSupport" with the intent that the Department will post them to the City's agenda system.

AND

Neighborhood Councils that do not have a website must post in at least five (5) physical locations.

Discussion and possible action by the Commission including but not limited to reviewing Commission Policy Number 2010-02 (Revised December 17, 2012 and signed January 14, 2013) regarding Neighborhood Council Posting Requirements, and adopting new policy which incorporates adopted Plan Review Committee recommendation. (Click on the link to view a copy of the document.) (20 minutes)

[http://empowerla.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/03/Posting-Policy\\_revised.pdf](http://empowerla.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/03/Posting-Policy_revised.pdf)

[http://empowerla.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/10/Neighborhood-Council-Agenda-Posting-Requirements\\_REV-12-17-12.pdf](http://empowerla.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/10/Neighborhood-Council-Agenda-Posting-Requirements_REV-12-17-12.pdf)

**ACTION: None.**

**Public comment received from:**

**Glenn Bailey – member, Plan Review Committee, totally agree with Commissioner Lipmen's comment about adding the word at least to one Brown Act compliant agenda. Regarding Early Notification System (ENS), they post whatever the Department forwards. They post board and committee agendas regularly, day in, day out. On number 4 I would say to change that from excluding to make it including cause that's what's happening now. I can report to you that slightly less than half of the Neighborhood Councils are actually using Early Notification Service even though it's**

been the Department's policy for over three years to submit it. To me that is an issue of enforcement. We should also include in this policy that we actually move our stakeholders to sign up at LACity.org for the Neighborhood Council of their choice on Early Notification System.

**Charles Lindenblatt – against changing this policy.**

13. The Commission's Regional Plan Committees recommended that the Department of Neighborhood Empowerment look at establishing rules and guidelines for Board selections so that they are more uniform and more open to the public. Accordingly, the Department will provide a verbal report regarding existing selection procedures used to select Neighborhood Board members. Discussion by the Commission on the verbal report. (20 minutes)

**ACTION: None. This agenda item was taken out of order after agenda item no. 9.**

**Public comment received from:**

**Glenn Bailey – what happened in 2012 is that we had one of the Neighborhood Councils change their start time with very short notice and the word didn't get out to all the candidates and it was to an earlier time so they were showing up after the selection actually started. Another Neighborhood Council, we, meaning those people trying to find out in the community, couldn't find out when it was going to be scheduled. Nobody knew, it was a very last minute thing and the results showed. The other basic issue is the amount of Department support. Maybe we need to have a selection manual so there actual procedures. There should be some Department support in terms publicizing on the web pages. Publicizing the date and time, how far in advance it is going to be, publishing the results and publicizing when the seating is going to be.**

**Pete Nicholas – there was some discussion about including documents relating to selection and election in bylaws. The bylaws do not provide anything about election and selection. Those are determined both by the incumbent board before the selection or election.**

14. 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.**

15. 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:**

**Pete Nicholas – we know that DONE recently underwent some reorganization where NEAs were split up, some to the Valley some to the City Hall. I would encourage DONE to develop a process so that people whose NC is on the south side don't have an NEA in the Valley. Lastly, in discussing the problem with the fraudulent Filipino town and the existing Greater Echo Park Elysian my intentions were to try to get the Department to make a commitment to making a public release of information before the election. This came up last month, it came up today in public comment before the Deputy City Attorney arrived and what you've done is you've allowed the completion of a meeting without anybody making another commitment to release the information before the election.**

**Bill Zide, Chair, Hollywood Studio District Neighborhood Council – I was encouraged by Lydia Grant to come and voice a few thoughts. Is our time and effort serving our stakeholders? BONC and DONE don't seem relevant for most of our stakeholders and often they represent an impeding bureaucracy rather than anything else for many of our board members. How do we actually get more things done? Ideally the NCs should have the right to approve BONC and DONE actions and policies in a real way.**

16. Adjourn

**ACTION: Commissioner Shaffer moved that the meeting be adjourned at 9:30 p.m. Commissioner Lipmen seconded the motion.**

**VOTE: Ayes – 6 (Grant, Lipmen, Mack, Medina, Rubio and Shaffer)  
Nays – 0**

**Motion passes unanimously**

**####**