

BOARD OF NEIGHBORHOOD  
COMMISSIONERS

CITY OF LOS ANGELES  
CALIFORNIA



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PRESIDENT  
**LEONARD SHAFFER**  
VICE PRESIDENT  
**JOY ATKINSON**  
**LYDIA GRANT**  
**ELI LIPMEN**  
**VICTOR MEDINA**  
**OLIVIA RUBIO**

JANET LINDO Executive  
Administrative Assistant  
TELEPHONE: (213) 978-1551



**ERIC GARCETTI**  
MAYOR

20<sup>th</sup> FLOOR, CITY HALL  
200 NORTH SPRING STREET  
LOS ANGELES, CA 90012

TELEPHONE: (213) 978-1551  
TOLL-FREE: 3-1-1  
FAX: (213) 978-1751  
E-MAIL: [EmpowerLA@lacity.org](mailto:EmpowerLA@lacity.org)

**GRAYCE LIU**  
GENERAL MANAGER

[www.EmpowerLA.org](http://www.EmpowerLA.org)

**MINUTES**

**BOARD OF NEIGHBORHOOD COMMISSIONERS**

**REGULAR MEETING**

**MONDAY, AUGUST 18, 2014 – 1:00 P.M.**

**CITY HALL, 10TH FLOOR CONFERENCE CENTER  
ROOM 1050, 200 NORTH SPRING STREET LOS  
ANGELES, CA 90012**

**COMMISSIONERS PRESENT**

Karen Mack, President  
Leonard Shaffer, Vice President  
Joy Atkinson  
Lydia Grant  
Eli Lipmen  
Victor Medina

**ABSENT**

Olivia Rubio

**DEPARTMENT STAFF PRESENT**

Grayce Liu, General Manager  
Janet Lindo, Executive Administrative Assistant

**CITY ATTORNEY REPRESENTATIVE**

Alois Phillips, 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 1:05 p.m. Commission roll was called by Janet Lindo. Commissioner Lipmen arrived at 1:15 p.m.

3. Approval of the Minutes of the Special Meeting of August 7, 2014. (Click on the link to view a copy of the document.) (3 minutes)  
[http://empowerla.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/08/08-07-14\\_draft\\_COMMISSION-MINUTES.pdf](http://empowerla.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/08/08-07-14_draft_COMMISSION-MINUTES.pdf)

Commissioner Shaffer moved approval of the Minutes of the Special meeting of August 7, 2014, as written. Commissioner Grant seconded the Motion.

**VOTE:** Ayes – 5 (Atkinson, Grant, Mack, Medina, and Shaffer)  
Nays – 0  
Abstention – 0  
Absent – 2 (Lipmen and Rubio)

**TOTAL – Ayes** 5 **Nays** 0 **Abstention** 0 **Absent** 2 **Motion Carries** X **Fails**

4. Verbal update from a representative of the Office of the Mayor Eric Garcetti, Deputy Mayor Peter Marx. (15 minutes)

**ACTION:** None. Deputy Mayor Peter Marx shared his thoughts and ideas and answered questions from the Commission regarding technology.

**Public comment received from:**

Pete Nicholas, Rampart Village Neighborhood Council, rather than reinventing the wheel and then modifying it and then getting a new webmaster at 95 locations it would be best if the Department's and City's resources were spent developing a website out of a box with modules that could be adopted by people so that individual Neighborhood Councils wouldn't have to be searching for and selecting a webmaster from those people that are approved.

Ankur Patel, treasurer for Northridge East Neighborhood Council for a little while, let me give you some specific numbers in terms of how much maybe some of these Neighborhood Councils are paying, One and One we do our web hosting there, it comes out to about \$200 a year, we're paying quarterly about \$50, we got the Google email so that's another issue that you definitely want to consider when you're putting this website package together. We're paying Google \$66 a month, it comes out to \$800 a year for phone service and email and that's probably too much. We have our individual webmaster. We're paying Aaron Devandry, he lives in Colorado, but he also manages multiple different websites for the Neighborhood Councils. I'm not even sure how many, maybe 10. He charges some Neighborhood Councils \$200. He's got a whole system. I don't think he's doing that great of a job. We got another Neighborhood Council board member who also does it through the Wordpress function. I go back to the website out of the box, definitely a lot of the key things that you want. I hope the RFQ goes out soon.

5. 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:**

**Jason Ackerman, Encino, Neighborhood Council, I was lucky enough to be designated as the person to go to Budget Day this weekend. I was trying my best to live tweet the event. I noticed the Department of Neighborhood Empowerment was using #LA Budget, but I didn't know that and there was no indication anywhere unless you were checking the Department's Twitter account. What I would propose for next year is a much shorter and much more publicized hashtag perhaps like NCBD15, nice short hashtag, you can get a lot of information. Also, it would be nice if there's a list of the speakers with their Twitter handles for better tweeting. If we're gonna talk about social media integration we're also gonna talk about social media best practices for our major Neighborhood Council events and coming up with some coherent protocols for making sure that everyone is on the same page. When you do these kind of things and you have a hashtag put it on the program. The Twitter account should be on the program as well. I'd like to see the presentations presented this weekend online, but I'd like to see them live ahead of time, so I can link them for people who are at home who want to follow along.**

6. General Manager's Report. (10 minutes)
  1. Briefing on Departmental activities.
  2. Staffing, budget and other operational matters.

**ACTION: General Manager, Grayce Liu, gave her General Manager's report.**

- We had a great Budget Day,
- NC Funding checking account - 70 Neighborhood Councils have their cards and are active, 10 are waiting to pick up their cards, 4 are waiting for the card delivery from Union Bank, 5 of them we're waiting for them to finish their bank documents, 6 either for lack of an appointed 2nd signatory or treasurer or they are in exhaustive efforts, are being held at this point,
- Any Neighborhood Council who doesn't have access to their account we are paying their bills for them as they notify us and let us know that we have to do that for them,
- We're trying to get everybody up and running by the end of this month,
- One of the changes that we've been making is that every month now we are going to bring every Neighborhood Council account up to \$4,000, which was their initial seed money to begin with. If they are already at \$4,000 we won't touch that account,
- We're also making adjustments to the forms as folks are telling us things that are confusing or might need more clarification,
- Field – we are working with City Attorney to provide more ethics and open government trainings. There will be another round of regionals after the Congress.
- We're still working on updating everybody's roster. We still have 25 Neighborhood Councils that have not given us their most updated roster. We are following up with them.

- We are also following up with those Neighborhood Councils who haven't turned in their budget package in terms of their strategic plan, the performance metrics for this current fiscal year,
- We are working on finishing some reports for Education & Neighborhoods for their September meeting. Hopefully, we'll have the final election report to them and there're some other reports we owe them from before in regards to equity and organizations that work with Neighborhood Councils,
- Community Impact Statements – I know Commissioner Mack that you wrote Committee President Parks about the changes in community impact statement, he did contact me and after reviewing the original council file that allowed for Neighborhood Councils to do community impact statements, he stated that he thought that the City Clerk already had the power to make the change and that it didn't have to go to City Council. I am following up with City Clerk to make sure that is indeed the case and if that is the case Councilmember Parks said that he would just have it done at that level as opposed to taking it to City Council for an agreement that may not be necessary.

**Public comment received from:**

**Pete Nicholas – re CIS, I wanted to suggest a review, a possible finesse or fine tuning of the process for appointing people to CIS. In my Neighborhood Council we appointed three or more people to be CIS representatives to our local NEA. I am one of those people and so far I haven't received the email that contains the initial password and the address and the connection to the training package and I was wondering if in the Department's experience the process is currently moving smoothly or if after all the elections and reappointments there's been something bogged down or if something's happening at City Clerk or if NEAs haven't been forwarding nominations as they come in or if they are being consolidated and massaged or if there is any reason that the Department knows, we're in our second month and so far the people that my NC have appointed haven't received their packet.**

7. Commission Committee Reports. (45 minutes)
  1. Ad Hoc Committee re ability of the Board of Neighborhood Commissioners to implement citywide policies (Members: Shaffer-Chair, Grant, and Medina)
  2. Ad Hoc Committee re Leadership Development for Neighborhood Councils (Members: Rubio-Chair, Medina, and Shaffer)
  3. Ad Hoc Committee re Website development (Members: Grant and Lipmen)

**ACTION: None.**

8. Discussion and review of nominations and possible selection of the 2014 EmpowerLA award recipients. (20 minutes).
  1. Submitted Nominations  
[http://empowerla.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/08/EmpowerLA-ELA-Awards\\_nominations-20141.pdf](http://empowerla.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/08/EmpowerLA-ELA-Awards_nominations-20141.pdf)
  2. The Board of Neighborhood Commissioners' Ad Hoc EmpowerLA Awards Committee recommends the following motion:

Resolved, the Board of Neighborhood Commissioners adopts the following as recipients of the 2014 EmpowerLA Awards:

- a. Harbor Region: Harbor City Neighborhood Council – Pedestrian Safety
- b. South Region: Empowerment Congress West Neighborhood Development Council – EC West Election “alfresco”
- c. West Region: Venice Neighborhood Council – Venice Outreach for Candidates
- d. Central Region: Los Feliz Neighborhood Council - Connectivity
- e. East Region: Arroyo Seco Neighborhood Council – ASNC Outreach
- f. South Valley: Valley Village Neighborhood Council – Thriving Retail Sector
- g. North Valley: Sun Valley Area Neighborhood Council – Neighborhood Pride Day

**ACTION:** Commissioner Atkinson moved that the Board ratify these seven Neighborhood Councils for the EmpowerLA Awards for 2014. Commissioner Medina seconded the motion.

**VOTE:** Ayes – 6 (Atkinson, Grant, Lipmen, Mack, Medina, and Shaffer)  
Nays – 0  
Abstention – 0  
Absent – 1 (Rubio)

**TOTAL – Ayes 6 Nays 0 Abstention 0 Absent 1 Motion Carries X Fails**

9. Discussion and possible action by the Commission to review and amend Commission Policy Number 2014-01 regarding Neighborhood Council Posting Requirements. (20 minutes)

**ACTION:** Commissioner Shaffer moved that the Commission adopt Policy Number 2014-01.1 as set out in the paperwork for agenda item number 9. (See attachment, see below or click on the link to view a copy of the document.)

[http://empowerla.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/09/NC-Posting-Policy\\_Draft\\_08-18-14.pdf](http://empowerla.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/09/NC-Posting-Policy_Draft_08-18-14.pdf)

## RESOLUTION

Be it resolved that the Board of Neighborhood Commissioners creates the following policy:

### NEIGHBORHOOD COUNCIL AGENDA POSTING REQUIREMENTS

WHEREAS, the Board of Neighborhood Commissioners established Working Groups comprised of current and past Neighborhood Council members and Neighborhood Council stakeholders to recommend changes to the Plan for a Citywide System of Neighborhood Councils;

**the Working Groups recognized stakeholders are increasingly using the internet and that it allows Neighborhood Councils to communicate with their stakeholders efficiently and inexpensively;**

**WHEREAS, the Working Groups recognized that any change in the physical posting policy should be accompanied by increased use of other media for outreach;**

**WHEREAS, the Working Groups recommended that the posting requirements for Neighborhood Councils be changed to require only one physical Brown Act compliant posting while maintaining the Board of Neighborhood Commissioners other outreach requirements;**

**WHEREAS, Section 902 (b) Article IX of the new Charter provides that the Board of Neighborhood Commissioners “shall be responsible for policy setting and policy oversight...and the promulgation of rules and regulations but not be responsible for day to-day management”.**

**WHEREAS, this policy supersedes all other posting policies previously adopted by the Board of Neighborhood Commissioners; including the August 3, 2010, Commission Policy on “Neighborhood Council Agenda Posting Requirements” (Policy No. 2010-02), which was also revised at the December 17, 2012, Commission meeting, and the May 6, 2014, Commission Policy on “Neighborhood Council Agenda Posting Requirements” (Policy No. 2014-01), which was also revised at the July 21, 2014, Commission meeting.**

**NOW, THEREFORE, IT IS RESOLVED that the Board of Neighborhood Commissioners establishes this policy regarding the posting of agendas for Neighborhood Councils.**

**POLICY NUMBER: 2014-01.1**

**Neighborhood Councils are required to post meeting agendas for Board and Committee meetings as follows:**

- 1. Neighborhood Councils shall post at least one Brown Act compliant agenda for all Board and Committee meetings.**
- 2. Neighborhood Councils shall post agendas of all Board and Committee meetings on their web site or, on a page made available to them on the EmpowerLA web site. Such postings shall be Brown Act time compliant.**
- 3. Neighborhood Councils shall submit a copy of all regular and special Board and Committee agendas to the Department of Neighborhood Empowerment (Department) to be posted through the Early Notification System (ENS). The agenda for regular meetings shall be submitted to the Department not less than 72 hours in advance of the meeting and the agenda for special meetings shall be submitted to the Department not less than 24 hours in advance of the meeting. As soon as feasible, the Department will submit the agenda for**

**posting to the ENS system. Accordingly, posting the notices of meetings to the ENS system will not be required to comply with the Brown Act's time limits for posting agendas.**

- 4. Neighborhood Councils that maintain an email list of stakeholders may email either a copy of the agenda for all Board and Committee meetings or an announcement of the meeting with a link to the agenda. Distribution to the email list shall occur at the time meeting information is disseminated to the board or committee members.**
- 5. Neighborhood Councils shall inform the Department of (a) the physical location of their posting site, (b) the address of their web site, if any and (c) confirm with the Department whether they use a stakeholder database to distribute their agendas. Neighborhood Councils shall be required to submit this information on a form approved by the Department.**
- 6. Neighborhood Councils that do not maintain a web site or, a page on the EmpowerLA web site, if available, shall continue to comply with the five (5) to seven (7) physical locations posting requirements imposed during their certification process; one (1) of the posting locations shall be Brown Act compliant; the remaining posting locations shall be within the Neighborhood Council boundaries and shall comply with Brown Act time limits for posting.**
- 7. This Posting Policy does not restrict or prevent a Neighborhood Council from posting any additional notices of its meetings beyond the notices required under this policy in any other locations or within any timeframes determined by the Neighborhood Council in its discretion.**
- 8. These posting requirements shall be appended to and become a part of the bylaws of all current and future Neighborhood Councils and any violation of this policy may become the subject of a grievance.**
- 9. If a Neighborhood Council is notified by the Department prior to any Board or Committee meeting that a confirmed violation of this policy has been reported the Neighborhood Council shall repost in accordance with this Policy. If the scheduled meeting cannot be reposted in compliance with this Policy, the Neighborhood Council shall cancel the meeting and make reasonable efforts to inform its stakeholders. If it becomes necessary to cancel Board or Committee meetings Neighborhood Councils are encouraged to contact the City Attorney for further guidance.**
- 10. If a Neighborhood Council is found to be in violation of this Policy three (3) times within the current fiscal year the Board and any non-Board member committee chairs shall be required to take additional training as may be determined by the Department. If after receiving additional training the Neighborhood Council is again found to be in violation of this policy during**

the current fiscal year, then exhaustive efforts to remedy this matter, including loss of funding may be taken by the Department pursuant to Article VI section 4 and Article X section 3 of the Plan for a Citywide system of Neighborhood Councils.

Commissioner Medina seconded the motion.

**VOTE:** Ayes – 6 (Atkinson, Grant, Lipmen, Mack, Medina, and Shaffer)  
Nays – 0  
Abstention – 0  
Absent – 1 (Rubio)

**TOTAL – Ayes 6 Nays 0 Abstention 0 Absent 1 Motion Carries X Fails**

Commissioner Lipmen proposed an amendment to add physically prior to post on item no. 1 of the posting requirements.

Commissioner Medina seconded the amended motion.

**VOTE:** Ayes – 6 (Atkinson, Grant, Lipmen, Mack, Medina, and Shaffer)  
Nays – 0  
Abstention – 0  
Absent – 1 (Rubio)

**TOTAL – Ayes 6 Nays 0 Abstention 0 Absent 1 Motion Carries X Fails**

Public comment received from:

Pete Nicholas – in looking at item 8 of the new policy I think it would be good as you vote just to clarify the fact the issue that you'll be posting the policy to the bylaws and not all the resolution including the whereases. I want to be sure that we're clear we're only posting the policy. Despite the linguistic redundancy it was my suggestion that item 1 read, Neighborhood Councils shall physically post and I think that clarification is a minor redundancy. I think it clarifies it for people that aren't familiar with the Brown Act.

10. Discussion and possible action regarding a proposed policy requiring Neighborhood Council board members to take the required training within a certain amount of time from being seated, e.g., 90 days. This policy may also include a mechanism for enforcement, including but not limited to, prohibiting persons from voting (without impacting quorum) and/or removal from the Neighborhood Council board. (40 minutes)

**ACTION: None.**

Public comment received from:

Pete Nicholas – I want to commend and agree with the previous speaker. On item 2 where is says sexuality or sexual choice I think the currently fashionable, state of the



art term is sexual orientation or gender expression. I support the policy. I think the policy is wise and inclusive.

Ray Regalado, Northwest San Pedro Neighborhood Council, speaking today as a member of the LA County Human Relations Commission, on the attachment on Neighborhood Council Code of Conduct, number 2, there's a couple of terms that I think need to be either added or changed. I see the term gender is not there. I'm not sure exactly about the term sexuality, but another place where there may be some difficulty with community members is sexual choice. You may want to look at that particular term.

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.
  5. Update on 2014 LA Congress of Neighborhoods

**ACTION: None.**

**Public comment received from:**

**Pete Nicholas – Congress - one of the things in my opinion that we've suffered from in the past is there haven't been any graphics of the city in a large format that broke down City Council districts, Neighborhood Councils, regional Neighborhood Councils, the senatorial districts, assembly districts, breaks down the districts. I know it's expensive to do. Whatever degree is possible I would like to recommend that you have two or three large size maps that which the newbies can be pointed and can be explained some of the things.**

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:**

**Pete Nicholas – I want to again stress, be sure the language doesn't get lost that there is a difference between gender and gender expression. Somebody may have been born male, they may or may not be transitioning, but they may express themselves in public as female and so it's important that the term gender expression, maybe even gender or gender expression, but gender expression is the state of the art term and I don't want that to get lost. Most wide circulation publications and most house organs have the facility to have op-ed pieces, opinions and editorials and I would encourage you to explore the possibility within your newsletter instead of having something written by**

committee and approved by committee that board members may wish to write something under their own bi-line. I don't think that the board has to agree or adopt a position of an item written by a board member, but I don't think board members lose their individual perspective. The boards newsletter can include a calendar. Item 9, bylaws- I would recommend to the Department that in the FAQs that go out in the announcement it says we're going to change your by-laws to include the current provision, however, please notify us of the one or two or three or seven locations that you want included in your amended bylaws so that without having to go through a special bylaws change process the Department can just receive the vote of the council and then include those locations in those bylaws because every set of bylaws except those amended after the elections has to be amended.

Ray Regalado, representing the Los Angeles County Human Relations Commission, I want to make you aware of a program that is available to all residents of Los Angeles County and the fact that it is something our Neighborhood Councils can utilize as a tool and also lends to the conversation about harassment and bullying. In 1986 the State of California developed the Dispute Resolution Act and in that Act a portion of all civil suits that go before the courts a portion of the filing fee is put aside for dispute resolution programs in State of California communities. For the County of Los Angeles these monies come back to us and we invest them right back into communities in the county by having local community organizations of which the Los Angeles City Attorney's Office is one of our contract agency so that they could train and put community mediators out on the street. We have 12 contract agencies they perform three types of dispute resolutions. Our Department has offered to put as a training session at the Neighborhood Congress the information about the dispute resolution program.

13. Adjourn

**ACTION:** Commissioner Shaffer moved that the meeting be adjourned at 4:00 p.m. Commissioner Lipmen seconded the motion.

**VOTE:** Ayes – 6 (Atkinson, Grant, Lipmen, Mack, Medina, and Shaffer)  
Nays – 0  
Abstention – 0  
Absent – 1

**TOTAL – Ayes 6 Nays 0 Abstention 0 Absent 1 Motion Carries X Fails**

**####**

**RESOLUTION**

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Board of Neighborhood Commissioners  
Resolution: Policy No. 2014-01.1 (Revised August 18, 2014)  
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Board of Neighborhood Commissioners  
Resolution: Policy No. 2014-01.1 (Revised August 18, 2014)  
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Moved by:

Member, Board of Neighborhood Commissioners

Seconded by:

Member, Board of Neighborhood Commissioners

Witnessed by:

Staff, Department of Neighborhood Empowerment

**VOTES:**

AYES: \_\_\_\_\_

NAYS: \_\_\_\_\_

DATE: \_\_\_\_\_