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MINUTES

BOARD OF NEIGHBORHOOD COMMISSIONERS

SPECIAL MEETING

TUESDAY, JANUARY 11, 2011 – 6:00 P.M.

SATICOY ELEMENTARY SCHOOL – AUDITORIUM  
7850 ETHEL AVENUE  
NORTH HOLLYWOOD, CA 91605

**COMMISSIONERS PRESENT**

Albert Abrams, President  
Daniel Gatica, Vice President  
Esther Cepeda-Hatch  
Linda Lucks  
Karen Mack

**ABSENT**

Carlene Davis  
John Kim

**DEPARTMENT STAFF PRESENT**

Jeff Brill, Senior Management Analyst II  
Leyla Campos, Senior Project Coordinator  
Amelia Herrera-Robles, Neighborhood Empowerment Analyst  
Melvin Cañas, Neighborhood Empowerment Analyst  
Janet Lindo, Executive Administrative Assistant

**CITY ATTORNEY REPRESENTATIVE**

Darren Martinez, Deputy City Attorney  
Rita Hernandez-Venegas, Deputy City Attorney  
Carmen Hawkins, Deputy City Attorney

1. Introduction (5 minutes)

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

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

**ACTION:** President Abrams called the meeting to order at 6:23 p.m. Quorum was established at 6:38 p.m. Commissioner roll call by Executive Administrative Assistant, Janet Lindo.

3. Approval of the Minutes of the Regular Meeting of December 7, 2010. (3 minutes)

**ACTION: Commissioner Lucks moved that the Minutes of the Regular Meeting of December 7, 2010, be approved as written. The Motion was seconded by Commissioner Cepeda-Hatch. Vote: Ayes - 4, 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 were received by:

Glenn Bailey – Wants wave files of Commission meetings uploaded to the Department's website and concern about compliance with Commission policies.

Rina Fernandez – Concerns regarding crime and parking issues.

J. Gallardo – Problems with property.

Richard Hopp - Public Records Act Request letter.

Amanda Hernandez – Concerns about street potholes and graffiti.

Leighton Merritt – Concerned about speed limit on Willard Street, picking of trash cans on trash day, asking for an increase in police patrol due to crime.

Ron Schillaci – Wants to be more informed about Neighborhood Council agendas and business.

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

**ACTION:** Angelica Ayala, Representative for the Office of Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa, provided information regarding:

- LA River Day of Service - tentative for March or April. If anybody or any group is interested in doing some type of project, please contact Ms. Ayala in the Mayor's Office. The Mayor's Office is welcoming any suggestion or any projects. There is some funding available.
- Citizenship Workshop – a free citizenship workshop will be held on Saturday, February 19, 2011, at Panorama High School. The workshop is to inform individuals about the process for becoming a citizen. There will be attorneys and other individuals available to provide free services.
- African American Heritage Month - a children's poster and creative writing competition is underway.

6. Discussion and verbal update from a representative of Councilmember Paul Krekorian, Chair of Education and Neighborhoods Committee, Council District 2, regarding the recently released report, "Perspectives on Neighborhood Empowerment – Summary Report of Community Input from Town Hall Meetings". [http://done.lacity.org/dnn/Portals/0/documents/LEARN/About\\_the\\_commission/Agenda\\_Item\\_No.\\_6\\_Perspectives\\_on\\_Neighborhood\\_Empowerment\\_Report.pdf](http://done.lacity.org/dnn/Portals/0/documents/LEARN/About_the_commission/Agenda_Item_No._6_Perspectives_on_Neighborhood_Empowerment_Report.pdf). (10 minutes)

**ACTION:** Areen Ibranossian, Deputy Chief of Staff to Councilmember Paul Krekorian, CD 2, gave the Commissioners a quick overview of the recently released report, "Perspectives on Neighborhood Empowerment – Summary Report of Community Input from Town Hall Meetings".

**Question:** President Albert Abrams

The Report is missing the discussion on potential restructuring of the Department of Neighborhood Empowerment. What is the process and status?

**Overview/Response:** Areen Ibranossian

Approximately one year ago the Mayor's Office proposed consolidating the Department of Neighborhood Empowerment with the Community Development Department. That idea met with significant opposition, not just from Neighborhood Councils, stakeholders and board members, but from the community as a whole.

The commitment that Councilman Krekorian made in spearheading the rejection of that proposal was to reach out to the community and solicit input and feedback on: 1) What is not working, with not just the Department, but the Neighborhood Council movement as a whole, 2) What is working, so that we could build upon what is working and have a better more efficient system given our limited budget constraints.

To accomplish that goal, Councilman Krekorian set out on a very lengthy and time consuming process of reaching out to Neighborhood Councils. He went to many regional meetings like the Valley Alliance of Neighborhood Councils, Northeast Alliance, Los Angeles Neighborhood Council Regional Alliance, as well as holding two town hall events that were five hours in length each that consisted of breakout sessions covering four topics:

- Funding Program
- Neighborhood Council Elections
- Roll of the Department of Neighborhood Empowerment
- Training requirements

In each one of these breakout sessions participants were asked a series of questions to solicit feedback on those topics. Each session lasted about 45 minutes. The report that you are referring to, that our office released last month, is a culmination of that effort of going to meetings, listening to stakeholders, as well as the town hall forums that were held.

There have been a lot of questions on what was included in the report and what was not. We made a very conscious decision to not give any weight or judgment to any of the ideas expressed. The reason for that, we felt that it was not our job to determine what ideas were good or what ideas were bad. What ideas were relevant and what ideas were not. We wanted to present a report that demonstrated what the community and stakeholders felt. That decision

does come with consequences because there is not a lot of reference to say this idea maybe has more support amongst members as oppose to something else. However, we felt that we could overcome that by doing more outreach, coming to meetings like this and answering any questions that we may have.

To Commissioner Abrams' specific question as to some of the aspects that were left out of the report, during these town hall forums numerous groups and individuals made presentations on their own ideas to solve some of the problems. Some of these presentations were lengthy; some of them were very short. To include them in, when you looked at it on paper, it was very easy to see which ideas had meat on the bones and which did not. It became a little problematic for us because it almost seemed like we were favoring one idea over another. So we made a conscious decision to exclude those ideas from the report overall to avoid any criticism of favoritism.

**Question:** President Albert Abrams

Can you speak to this one particular idea which is to create regionality to the Department rather than it being focus at City Hall, because that one involves this Commission in a very significant way. We just want to know where is your thinking. Is it going to be nine months from now, a year from now, when will your proposal be coming?

**Response:** Areen Ibranossian

Councilman Krekorian has publicly stated his support for a regional system. The next steps over the next month, along with the numerous ideas heard at these town halls and various meetings, will be to take the contents of the report that was put out about a month ago, put it into a survey format, put it online, print it out, distribute it, and distribute the link so that everybody knows. The community will be asked to not just comment, but to rate every single idea presented in that report along with the other ideas presented at the town hall forums. This will provide the context that was spoken about earlier. Once that is finished, in roughly a month, we will go through that process. We will take a look at the most highly rated ideas and start looking at what the cost will be to implement those ideas and how much planning it would take.

I have a feeling that the regional concept will probably garner a significant amount of support, as will some of the other ideas that have been thrown out there. It is too early to say what Councilman Krekorian's own proposal is because he is still weighing out all the options that have been presented. We are still in the feedback phase at this point. I would be reluctant to give specifics.

Commissioner Linda Lucks - Commission Representative for the Westside. Would like to set up a meeting with Councilman Krekorian, to meet with the Westside representatives, there are 11 Neighborhood Councils and Community Councils that are City certified and there are two others that are ad hoc, but are very influential on the Westside. The Westside Regional Alliance of Councils is pretty new so they have not been as vocal yet as some of the others.

**Question:** Commissioner Mack

Is the idea to finalize the results of the process during this budget cycle or the next?

**Response:** Areen Ibranossian

The budget is probably the most fundamental component of any reform we undertake. The goal is to have something on the table to discuss in Committee by March, which would be before the budget is released. We are in constant negotiations and contact with the Mayor's Office and the City Administrative Office on potential budgetary solutions. It is very difficult to do any type of reform under these constraints, but we are trying to be very innovative and look at all the options on the table. The goal is to have something on the table before your Commission and before Educations and Neighborhoods Committee by March so that we have through the budget to come to resolution and then the remaining months of the fiscal year will be for planning and implementation of whatever reforms we all agree on.

Public comment: None

7. General Manager's Report (5 minutes)

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

**ACTION:** None. The General Manager was absent. Jeff Brill, Senior Management Analyst II, Department of Neighborhood Empowerment, responded to the below issues for staff to research and report back to the Commission at the next meeting:

Commissioner Lucks

1. Report of Neighborhood Councils behind on their monthly financial report.
2. Report of Neighborhood Councils following the recently adopted Agenda Posting Policy.
3. Neighborhood Council Ethics training not reflected accurately on the Department's website.

Commissioner Abrams

Focus on updating the Neighborhood Councils board members database.

8. **PUBLIC HEARING** and determination regarding the Application for Neighborhood Council Certification submitted by North Hollywood West Neighborhood Council (File No. 10-111). (120 minutes)

**ACTION:** **Commissioner Lucks moved that the Commission ADOPT** the findings of the Department contained in the Findings Report, dated January 11, 2011, and the Evaluation of Certification Application ("Report") prepared by the Department's Field Operations Division, dated January 11, 2011. In adopting the Department's recommendation and findings, the Board made the following determinations:

1. **ADOPT** the findings contained herein in the Department of Neighborhood Empowerment's Evaluation of the Certification Application report dated January 11, 2011, for the North Hollywood West Neighborhood Council.
2. **FIND** that the boundaries meet the criteria set forth in the Plan and Administrative Code, including that the boundaries contain a minimum population size of 20,000 stakeholders, the boundaries follow historic and contemporary community and neighborhood borders, and that the area is geographically compact and contiguous as follows:

- NORTH: Roscoe Boulevard
  - SOUTH: Vanowen Street
  - EAST: Whitsett Avenue, including the Whitsett Sports Complex, Valley Plaza Park, and Valley Plaza Library
  - WEST: Tujunga Wash
3. **FIND** that a permissible boundary overlap exists with North Hollywood Northeast Neighborhood Council under Article III (2)(ii) of the Plan where the southeastern boundary of North Hollywood West includes the Valley Plaza Park, Valley Plaza Library and Whitsett Sports Complex and these sites are considered libraries, parks, landmarks or facilities with historical significance that are allowed to overlap under the Plan.
  4. **FIND** the applicant has complied with Article III of the Plan for a Citywide System of Neighborhood Councils and section 22.810. (b) of the Administrative Code.
  5. **FIND** that though the applicant has satisfied the outreach criteria including the collection of four hundred eighty nine (489) original unique signatures as set forth in the Plan, there should be additional efforts to continue ongoing outreach.
  6. **FIND** that the applicant has submitted proposed bylaws that satisfy the governing structure requirement set forth in the Plan.
  7. **FIND** that based on the reports presented by the Department to the Board and any additional evidence presented during the public hearing that the Applicant satisfies the criteria set forth in the Plan and Ordinance.
  8. **CERTIFY** the applicant as a Los Angeles City Neighborhood Council, thereby approving the application.

In adopting the Department's recommendation and findings, the Board found that the Applicant's boundary description, outreach efforts, submission of by-laws, its system of financial accountability, statement of ethics compliance and contact information complied with the requirements of the Plan and Administrative Code for the reasons set forth in the Department's report and recommendation.

By this determination, the Commission hereby conveys the status of ***Certified Neighborhood Council to the North Hollywood West Neighborhood Council.***

**The motion was seconded by Vice President Gatica.**

**Vote: Ayes: President Abrams, Vice President Gatica, Commissioners Cepeda-Hatch, Lucks, and Mack.**

**Nays: None**

**Motion carries.**

Public Comments were received from the following in favor of the certification of North Hollywood West Neighborhood Council:

Agnes Ambrosino, Susan Arlin, Ramon Canales, Jim Crawford, Marie Crawford, Mshak Ghazarian (CD 2) read letter submitted by Councilmember Krekorian, David Hechter, Greg Howie, Cliff Jacobs, Dale Kaufman, Sandy Kaufman, Lorraine Matza, Eric Menjirar, Frank Miceli, Ernie Moscoso, Marcos Sancez (Office of Felipe Fuentes), Michele Wong

Richard Hopp – For the formation – Commission committed Brown Act Violation.

9. Discussion and possible adoption of an amendment to the Commission's Rules of Order, Rule No. 3, which will list the dates, times, and places for the Commission's 2011 public meetings. (10 minutes)

**ACTION: Commissioner Cepeda-Hatch moved for the Commission to adopt the amendment to the Commission's Rules of Order, Rule No. 3, which will list the dates, times, and places for the Commission's 2011 public meetings.**

**The motion was seconded by Vice President Gatica.**

**Vote: Ayes - 5, Nays – 0**

**Motion passes unanimously.**

10. Commission Business - Comments 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 were received from Vice President Gatica.

11. 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.

12. Adjourn

**ACTION:** Commissioner Gatica moved that the meeting be adjourned at 9:15 p.m. The Motion was seconded by Commissioner Cepeda-Hatch.

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