

CITY OF LOS ANGELES

CALIFORNIA

BOARD OF NEIGHBORHOOD COMMISSIONERS

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ELI LIPMEN
VICTOR MEDINA
OLIVIA RUBIO

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



ERIC GARCETTI
MAYOR



20th 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

GRAYCE LIU
GENERAL MANAGER

www.EmpowerLA.org

MINUTES

BOARD OF NEIGHBORHOOD COMMISSIONERS

SPECIAL MEETING

MONDAY, JANUARY 12, 2015 – 1:00 P.M.

CITY HALL, 10TH FLOOR CONFERENCE CENTER
ROOM 1070, 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
Leyla Campos, Senior Project Coordinator
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 1:06 p.m. Commission roll was called by Janet Lindo. Commissioner Lipmen arrived at 1:30 p.m. Commissioner Atkinson arrived at 2:11 p.m.

3. Approval of the Minutes of the Regular Meeting of December 15, 2014. (Click on the link to view a copy of the document.) (3 minutes)
http://empowerla.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/12/12-15-14_draft_COMMISSION-MEETING-MINUTES.pdf

Commissioner Medina moved approval of the Minutes of the Regular Meetings of December 15, 2014, as written. Commissioner Grant seconded the Motion.

VOTE:

| | | |
|------------|----------|--------------------------------|
| Ayes | <u>4</u> | (Grant, Mack, Medina, Shaffer) |
| Nays | <u>0</u> | |
| Abstention | <u>0</u> | |
| Absent | <u>3</u> | (Atkinson, Lipmen, Rubio) |
| TOTAL | <u>7</u> | |

Motion Carries X

Fails _____

4. Verbal updates from representatives of the Mayor and Los Angeles City Council. (10 minutes)

ACTION: No representative present.

5. Verbal updates from Chief Legislative Analyst, Sharon Tso. (20 minutes)

ACTION: This agenda item was taken out of order after agenda item no. 9. Chief Legislative Analyst, Sharon Tso, provided verbal updates to the Commission.

Public comment received from:

Glenn Bailey, a member of Neighborhood Council Budget Advocates, we were given two dates by the CAO's office for January 28th or January 29th in the afternoon. We also were aware that the Commission was looking at scheduling its retreat on the 29th. We have the CAO and have not heard back from the Mayor's office yet. It does sounds like from everything that I'm hearing it's the Mayor's Office to move this immediate situation forward.

Jay Handal, speaking as the Co-Chair of the Budget Advocates on this particular item, I'm just asking in public now because we've been attempting to get a meeting among the CAO, the CLA, and the Mayor's Office for weeks and weeks and weeks. I tend to come to these meeting and first I get to see Miguel and I get to see her and I get to see someone else and that's not my idea of getting everybody in the room to stop the finger pointing. We're at a critical juncture with this Neighborhood Council system whether anyone wants to admit it or not. We're talking about doing some fantastic things as far as elections and moving forward and we're going to be doing them with very few people. I am publicly asking the representative of the CAO office here to get in touch

with the gentlemen right behind her (Glenn Bailey) within the next 24 hours and with Rick Cole and with Miguel Santana and his staff and get a meeting together.

Jim McQuiston, I just wanna to say don't get your hopes up too much. Where we're really down a lot and we do need temporary positions is in Street Services and also in the Planning Department. All of those need about 300 high level positions.

6. 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:

Glenn Bailey, NC Board alternates and the communication that is sent by the Department to the Board members. It's very important that any communication relating to any other issues that is of interest or concern to the board be communicated with all such members.

Bruce Kuyper, stakeholder, Bel-Air Beverly Crest Neighborhood Council, concerned about a complaint he submitted to the Bel-Air Beverly Crest Neighborhood Council.

Pete Nicholas, Rampart Village Neighborhood Council, I want to encourage the Department and the Board to establish an escrow account into which each of the Neighborhood Councils can contribute money in an off election year toward the next year's election expenses.

7. General Manager's Report. (10 minutes)
 1. Briefing on Departmental activities.
 2. Staffing, budget and other operational matters.
 3. Elections including a discussion of Neighborhood Council board selections

ACTION: General Manager, Grayce Liu, gave her report.

- **Funding – sent out a Monthly Expenditure Report letter to Neighborhood Councils who were two or more months behind on their Monthly Expenditure Report.**
- **We have updated our funding forms. Neighborhood Councils will have the next several weeks to weigh in on the forms.**
- **Staffing – out of our 26 authorized authorities for the fiscal year we have six vacancies.**
- **Code of Conduct – currently we have 646 Neighborhood Council board members who've completed the Code of Conduct online. We have another hundred or so paper documents.**
- **Neighborhood Council websites RFQ – we have 12 submissions, 9 companies, we are finalizing the review on that.**
- **RFP online elections vendor – we are hoping to finalize that vendor this month.**
- **Department website and newsletter– we will be re-launching our newsletter this week with a new design.**
- **Bylaws – there's a May 1st deadline for bylaws adjustment.**

- On February 3rd we will be certifying the 96th Neighborhood Council I South LA, Zapata King Neighborhood Council.
- I came upon a Wikipedia entry for the Los Angeles Neighborhood Councils which I was very thrilled about.

Public comment received from:

Glenn Bailey, maybe we need a secondary distribution list for alternates. If there is only give Neighborhood Councils that wouldn't be that much to create the secondary and use them when necessary. There are at least three Neighborhood Councils that have less than a majority, less than a quorum of board members who are able to vote for funding matters for having taken their ethics and their funding training (Coastal San Pedro, Voices 90037, and Northridge South).

Pete Nicholas, the majority of people in my Neighborhood Council had as their first language Spanish. There are many people that are completely disenfranchised when things are only in English. The Board and the Department, in my opinion, have not been sufficiently sensitive to the issue of bilingualism.

8. Discussion of current Neighborhood Council board selection process and possible changes. (10 minutes)

ACTION: None.

Public comment received from:

Glenn Bailey, one Neighborhood Council, Chatsworth, did a wonderful job 690 voters. There were a few Neighborhood Councils that did not go so well. A couple of Neighborhood Councils didn't provide the information to the Department to get it posted on the website. I couldn't even find it on their own website. There's gotta be some minimum communication, some minimum oversight.

Jay Handal, it's really great to talk about Nation Builder and Nextdoor, but the real bottom line is we as a system are not touching our stakeholders. That's the bottom line. Nextdoor is an opt in and it doesn't go very far and it hasn't really gone as far as it could and should. What I found in my district and I think was pretty evident in the eastside that if you don't reach out and touch anyone you get no candidates, you get no voters. If you spend the money we get, to reach out and actually touch people you get candidates, you get voters.

Jim McQuiston, I should be notified by three different Neighborhood Councils because I have property in three different Neighborhood Council areas. I don't think I have heard from a single one since the Neighborhood Council started unless I actually physically do it myself and run somebody down. The only thing we're supposed to be doing is monitoring the delivery of services in your area and no one wants to do that.

9. Verbal updates from representatives of the Los Angeles Neighborhood Council Budget Advocates. Neighborhood Council Budget Advocates provide input to the

City on the City's Budget. Additional information regarding the Budget Advocates is available at <http://ncbala.com/> (10 minutes)

ACTION: None.

Public comment received from:

Jim McQuiston, the last meeting I attended of this Commission I had to leave early. As you've probably have heard Mr. Parks often call me the only guy in the city that knows the entire budget in the city and I'm very, very cognizant of the fact that if you want to have something in the city you have to find something that has to be cut so you use their money to do what you want and believe me that is really what we have to do.

10. Commission Committee Reports. (30 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)
 4. Ad Hoc Committee re Website development (Members: Grant and Lipmen)
 5. Ad Hoc Committee re staffing challenges in the Department (Members: Grant-Chair, Atkinson, and Medina)
 6. Congress Update

ACTION: None.

11. Discussion by the Commission identifying outstanding policy recommendations from the Regional Panels, e.g., subdivision of Neighborhood Councils, prioritization of the policies that should be addressed by City Council and possible action drafting a letter on these policies and their priorities to the Education and Neighborhoods Committee and City Council. (Click on the link to view a copy of the document.) (10 minutes)

http://empowerla.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/01/Working-Group-17-motions_.pdf

ACTION: None.

Public comment received from:

Glenn Bailey, if the question is which of these are being decided at higher levels, I just want to comment on that issue first. Number one and number twelve both dealing with Neighborhood Council elections I think that's already been addressed by the ordinance that was passed before our last cycle. However number one is that the Department be in charge and the ordinance put it jointly between the Department and the City Clerk. You need to reconcile that if you're going to pursue this recommendation. Number 10 dealing with the grievance procedure this still has to require City Council action. I think it should be bolded. Number 15, I think they can be done by the Department without changing the Administrative Code.

General Jeff, Chair of the Skid Row Neighborhood Council Formation Committee, here to speak with you about the working group conditions, number nine, items b and c.

Based on the language that actually exist currently it implies that there is a supportive environment, if you will. There is a concern that if there is a hostile environment that the newly forming Neighborhood Council would be subjected to the wrath, if you will, of the older Neighborhood Council now in regards to Skid Row we are currently exercising our right to start the Skid Row Neighborhood Council process and so there is a concern that there is a need for an option, if you will, instead of it just being limited to the current Neighborhood Council and the stakeholders having the say so in the vote of the Skid Row Neighborhood Council we feel that there should be an option where the vote would be limited to the stakeholders of the actual Neighborhood Council that is being newly formed. This alleviates any potentially retaliatory efforts.

Pete Nicholas, I think that we might be focusing too much on the Chair Person of E&N. We know that Councilmember Parks a lame duck. We know that there will be a new one in the summer. Councilmember O'Farrell has become known as Mr. L.A. River, but when he ran he ran as a person who came out of the Silver Lake Neighborhood Council process. I would recommend to you that when you send these recommendations you send them to all members of the E&N Committee plus Council President Herb Wesson. I recommend that a couple of you get in touch with O'Farrell and start establishing relationships.

Ronal Ziff, Vice President, Sherman Oaks Neighborhood Council, and its Land Use Chair. I want to talk about item two which talks about various types of training for board members and make a suggestion that it be expanded beyond what you see here. One of the most important functions of a Neighborhood Council is land use and in our land use committee the majority of the members are not board members, they are stakeholders and it is important that they too have the training. There are three portions of this training that I think are highly significant, ethics, any training that can be given them on land use, and the third is ADA compliance.

12. Discussion and possible action scheduling a board retreat. (10 minutes)

ACTION: None.

13. Discussion and possible action relation to the distribution of January Commission Newsletter. (15 minutes)

ACTION: None.

14. Discussion and possible action amending the Commission's Code of Conduct Policy (Policy No. 2014-2: http://empowerla.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/03/Neighborhood-Council-Board-Member-Code-of-Conduct-Policy_2014-2_Adopted-09-15-14.pdf.) Possible action includes but is not limited to extending the deadline for signing the code of conduct policy, establishing alternative mechanisms or training in lieu of signing the code of conduct and/or establishing consequences for failing to comply with the policy. (Click on the link to view a copy of the document.) (10 minutes)

http://empowerla.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/01/Code-of-Conduct-Policy_draft_revised_01-07-15.pdf

ACTION: Commissioner Shaffer moved agenda item 14 and its attachment which is the policy draft revised January 15, 2015. Commissioner Grant seconded the motion.

VOTE:

| | |
|-------------------|---|
| Ayes | <u> 4 </u> (Atkinson, Grant, Mack, Shaffer) |
| Nays | <u> 0 </u> |
| Abstention | <u> 0 </u> |
| Opposition | <u> 1 </u> (Lipmen) |
| Absent | <u> 2 </u> (Medina, Rubio) |
| TOTAL | <u> 7 </u> |

Motion Carries X
Fails

Public comments received from:

Glenn Bailey, speaking as an individual. I am perfectly supportive of this revised policy. What's happen is that a lot of people have refused to sign it and now we have to jump start this whole thing again. I pulled up the EmpowerLA webpage and there is no column, four months after you adopted this policy there is no column like they have for ethics and funding training for code of conduct.

Jay Handal, speaking as an individual in great pain. As a Commission how about you put together a little format that when you're gonna make a motion on something you look at it from the very beginning to the very end and you coordinate it with the Department because certainly more often than not you pass policies that either have uppers or lowers but there's never a full set of teeth and the problem is you pass stuff to fix stuff and all you do is screw up stuff worst and you run around in circles. You guys are creating a circle of pain. As far as this policy goes it was a disaster in the beginning. Get your act together when you're doing these things.

Ann Job, Sylmar Neighborhood Council, speaking for myself. We have not yet taken this up at our board meeting. It will be on the agenda in January. I will refuse to sign this and I am delighted that the option of the training is now a part of this if you vote so that the training will be allowed. I feel like the Sylmar Neighborhood Council is responsible for the conduct of our board members.

Patricia Ran, Sylmar Neighborhood Council, speaking for myself. Since I joined the Council I have been up to date on all my training at all times and was always able to vote. When this code of conduct came up I've decided that I can't sign it in that the requirement if you don't sign it you're going to kick me off the board. I was elected to the board. I have to take my training so that I can vote and I can do that but I was elected by my stakeholders. They can take me off the board. I won't be signing it.

Ronald Ziff, the Sherman Oaks Neighborhood Council voted unanimously at our November meeting to ask this board to reconsider the civility policy as it was written and its implementation as it was intended. We saw a number of problems with it and felt it was other and better ways of handling any bullying and harassment. Training is one of them. We support this as it is intended now.

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15. 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.

16. 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)

ACTION: None received.

17. Adjourn

ACTION: Commissioner Medina left the meeting at 3:30 p.m. Commissioner Shaffer moved that the meeting be adjourned at 4:27 p.m. Commissioner Grant seconded the motion.

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