

CITY OF LOS ANGELES

CALIFORNIA



**NORTH HOLLYWOOD
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NEIGHBORHOOD COUNCIL**

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BOARD MEMBERS of NHNENC:

Randal Luse – Pres.	Ernie Moscoso – V-Pres.
Jeff Brooks–Treas.	J. Eric Freedner–Sec.
Wung Chang	Donald Corton
Florence Dorick	Judy Harris-Brice
Al Henriquez	Loretta Luse
Inez T. Morin	Philip Manson
Katie Pelych	Sarah Ramsawack

**MINUTES of the MONTHLY MEETING of the
BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

October 9, 2008

Park Plaza Apts. Recreation room, 6755 Rhodes Avenue, North Hollywood, CA

CALL TO ORDER: President Randal Luse called the meeting to order at 7:04 PM and led the pledge of allegiance. Sec. J. Eric Freedner took roll; present were: Dr. Wung Chang, Donald Corton, Florence Dorick, J. Eric Freedner, Al Henriquez, Loretta Luse, Randal Luse, and Sarah Ramsawack, constituting a quorum. (Ernie Moscoso and Judy Brice-Harris arrived later in the evening and Katie Pelych was elected to the Board.)

APPROVAL OF SEPT. MINUTES: Mr. Corton moved approval of last month's Minutes, Mrs. Luse seconded, and the motion passed unanimously, 8-0.

COMMENTS FROM GOVERNMENT REPRESENTATIVES: Eric Menjivar distributed a list of Q-Star camera locations, 9 so far, and said a future press conference will be held at Troost Avenue and Sylvan. One camera would be at Whitsett and Vanowen, the other to be decided. Child & Safety Fair, Sat. 10AM – 2 PM at Valley Plaza Park. Children's Day on 11/22. 9-4 PM at Woodley Park. And Studio City Crime && Safety Expo, 10/10. 10-2 PM at 4024 Radford Avenue.

Ms. Ramsawack made strong objections as to placement of the Q-Star cameras. In January '08 we agreed to participate *if* 2 cameras were placed in our NC area, and it seemed to her they were not. Mr. Menjivar explained that one camera is within our area and their office is discussing with the LAPD where to place the other camera. (Ms. Harris-Brice arrives.)

Ms. Ramsawack said that a camera was needed at Laurel Canyon and Vantage, south of Strathern as stressed repeatedly with police office, and "more information would be very much in order." Mr. Menjivar replied that he'll bring more locations and stats to our next meeting. (Mr. Moscoso arrives.)

Ms. Ramsawack then read some of Grayce Liu's emailed comments, in Ms. Liu's absence this evening. She also requested that Mr. Freedner enter the City Attorney opinion as to liability into the minutes.

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

Sheldon Walter spoke about Prop R on the November ballot – it lists some projects but the San Fernando Valley seems to have been left out. Supervisor Antonovich is opposed to the measure which would raise sales taxes by ½%. And perhaps a busway along the coastline is needed.

Karl Kunak reminded the Board that \$5,000 was allocated for security cameras at Arminta St. School, and only 2 have been installed. Due to recent break-ins, he's asking for 3 more cameras, the project labor and materials is \$1,338.52.

PAY-BY-WEIGHT TRASH FEE: There seems to have been no developments in this plan and the Board by consensus decided to take no action, with the thought that if it comes up as an issue in the future, it could be brought back onto the agenda.

OUTREACH COMMITTEE REPORT: Ms. Ramsawack did not call a meeting this past month but found out Poly High print shop might produce newsletters at 3 cents per page. Of greater concern: she got a bill today from Dr. Soda, and has become quite upset when Mr. Miceli called about payment for his foods, 6 weeks after the event. She immediately wrote him her own personal check, but feels now we have a "stained reputation" with the vendors.

TREASURER'S REPORT/ACTION REGARDING AUDIT AND FINANCE: Mr. Brooks was absent. Mr. Freedner was upset about our continuing lack of cooperation with the audit. Documents for the last quarter apparently were turned in, but prior documents have not been, and DONE now has pulled our funding until their submission. He suggested a motion whereby all NC funding projects, especially those with recurring payments such as the pressure washer, be halted pending outcome of the audit.

Mr. Henriquez generally concurred - as a Board, we need to take action. Maybe the audit task is too much for one individual, we should meet to help Jeff. So far only Jeff knows what's missing and it may be a big burden for one individual.

Ms. Ramsawack noted we all received a packet from NC Funding and could examine and question it, and had a special meeting to discuss it. Strathern Elementary has no cable service--we were told we were paying for it; similarly, Strathern never received the tables that show up as eBay purchases. As for "vehicle rental" and cleaning walls at Arminta, LAUSD owns all the cleaning equipment used there and was never paid by our Council. The school says they never got gasoline from us either. All of this makes her "very concerned." Also, Camellia School's reading garden was funded from other sources, and our money apparently was used to erect an iron fence. Mr. Freedner and the rest of the Board expressed surprise at hearing that, as it was not discussed before the Board voted funding.

Mr. Freedner replied, that's why he wants to make the motion, to stop these ongoing projects before DONE cuts off all our money, and to find out just what we purchased. Also it demonstrates to DONE that we are just as concerned about these matters as they. Ms. Dorick and Mr. Henriquez agreed, with Ms. Dorick wondering if Jeff had a lack of paperwork or just trouble "putting things together" to submit. And Mrs. Luse also agreed with Mr. Freedner to freeze funding, suggesting formation of an Ad Hoc Committee to meet also with Grayce Liu, Man-Qin He and Jeff Brooks. And Mr. Moscoso noted that Jeff had said on numerous occasions that he'd comply promptly with the audit requests.

Ms. Ramsawack felt like she's been "betrayed" by the lack of action. And Mr. Freedner added that DONE first started the audit, so they must have had suspicions about the purchases. Mr. Kunak noted that sometimes payments are approved by DONE but "take forever" to actually be made.

Mr. Moscoso noted, "We're under the eye, we're not making any expenditures." Everything seems on hold, so make an ad hoc committee, charge them with a mission and get information. He knows nothing about "rules of treasury," but always assumed if DONE cuts a check the expenditure must be OK.

Mr. Kunak protested that if the Board halted funding, additional cameras for Arminta Street School could not be considered but Mr. Henriquez replied, "There are more important issues that this funding." We will honor past promises but it's not "business as usual" now.

Dr. Chang was very proud when he joined but the pride lasted less than a month, now every time he opens his computer and reads emails, he feels funny and loses interest. One friend contacted him and said he didn't know why he joined that "funny council" and another person recently told him to get out of it. It should be simple, get receipts for payments and send them in as requested.

Messrs. Freedner, Henriquez, and Moscoso took turns drafting motions; it was decided that it might be better to make two motions, one concerning funding and one about the ad hoc committee. Mr. Moscoso then restated the motion: that we freeze all funding as of today until our next monthly meeting. Mr. Corton seconded. Ms. Ramsawack suggested that in the future we might appoint an assistant treasurer or someone with oversight as to spending. Vote: 10 – Yes (unanimous).

Mr. Freedner then moved: that the NHNENC form an ad hoc committee consisting of Mrs. Luse, Ms. Dorick and himself to meet, within 10 days, to get such financial records as are needed to comply with the NC funding audit, and to further establish a course of action.

Second: Mr. Luse. Vote: 10 – Yes (unanimous).

CANDIDATES FOR BOARD SEATS: Mr. Moscoso noted that Katie Pelych was interested in returning to the Board. Mrs. Luse thereupon nominated Ms. Pelych, Mr. Corton seconded and by a vote of 10 – Yes, 0 – No, Ms. Pelych was elected.

MOVING NC MEETING PLACE: Mr. Luse tried to get hold of Strathern Street School, and they have not responded yet. We can perhaps pursue legally maintaining this facility – the schools have cutoff times and our meetings often go until 10 PM. Also Camellia School asked for payment of expenses and their auditorium had no air conditioning when we last met there. The churches may not have air conditioning and the fire department never gave a commitment of availability of their meeting room. Park Plaza has a 9 PM cutoff.

Mr. Kunak had forwarded an application to Mr. Freedner regarding use of Arminta Street School. No food is allowed in the library but snacks are allowed in the auditorium, which could be used until 10 PM. He knows of no charge unless the School Board levies one.

Mr. Henriquez asked which facilities had a secure storage area for our PA equipment and a laptop. And Mr. Freedner expressed concern that we have had financial ties with all three schools, and even tonight, Arminta has sent a request for more funding; there may be a conflict of interest if we meet at one, and then a funding request is brought to us. It would then be hard to say “no” to such a request.

Ms. Dorick asked about parking at any of the facilities. Mr. Kunak said there was parking along Strathern Street if Arminta School were used.

Mr. Moscoso suggested we have a report next month on the various alternatives.

DECEMBER BOARD MEETINGS: Mr. Moscoso wondered if we should act on this proposal or not. But Ms. Ramsawack noted we skipped December last year and it always seems people are very busy with the holidays. She therefore moved: that NHNENC not meet in December of each year, that is, that we hold 11 regular meetings per year. Second: Mrs. Luce.

Messrs. Luse and Freedner suggested that sometimes, perhaps some circumstances might arrive and a December meeting would become necessary. Mr. Moscoso replied that the President could always call a special meeting. Vote: 9 – Yes, 1 – No. (Dr. Chang)

STUDY OF THE BROWN ACT: Mr. Henriquez said that when he attended orientation a few months ago, the City didn't want to talk about the Brown Act. Mr. Moscoso remembered attending a class on the Brown Act taught by a City Attorney. Its complications could go on forever. Ms. Ramsawack replied that it wouldn't hurt us to all become more familiar with the Brown Act. Ms. Luse suggested getting “experts” (DONE or the City Attorney to come to a meeting and answer any questions we might have. Mr. Kunak thought it was required within 90 days after election to attend a course in the Brown Act. Ms. Ramsawack said it seemed we were all afraid to talk to one another, she wanted to ask a question by email, anyone could give feedback, but she was told she was “breaking the Brown Act.” After further discussion, Mr. Freedner said that his communication was meant as a warning only, there is quite a difference between merely suggesting some communication should stop and actual prosecution for some Brown Act violation. The Board agreed by

consensus that every member was free to study the Act as they wished, and also individual communication was generally OK, just not serial messages.

CHANGING NC BOUNDARIES: Mr. Moscoso pointed out that the only way to get into the streets between Whitsett and the 170 Freeway was to enter from Whitsett. It sure seems like that should be “our” territory but we should ask Grayce Liu how to do it; why would we need to establish an ad hoc committee? Ms. Ramsawack replied that we might need to amend our By-laws before the NHNWNC group becomes certified. Mr. Freedner pointed out that under the expanded stakeholder definitions now in place, everyone in that area who participates in Ms. Ramsawack’s Neighborhood Watch group is one of our stakeholders, just that the Watch group should keep rosters of who regularly attends and those people were stakeholders and could vote in our elections. But as to those who were not active in the Watch group, they probably wouldn’t participate in the NC either. Mr. Henriquez felt that we need to clearly understand how to effect a boundary change before forming a committee to do it, or amend By-laws.

BOARD COMMENTS: Mr. Henriquez again asked for a copy of the By-laws and suggested that if Jamie McDonald-Adlof had them in electronic format, perhaps she could send them to him, or to Mr. Freedner. Mr. Brooks had promised him a copy last month but he never got them.

Ms. Ramsawack didn’t know the East Valley was the “dumping ground” of Los Angeles when she moved here, and suggests that Board members take a tour of the new Sun Valley Recycling Park on Saturday. Also, she would like to receive notice of land-use issues in our area.

Ms. Dorick said the “gang tax” would be on eh ballot, and suggested voting against it.

Mr. Moscoso reported 18th Street Gang members were writing on walls in his area, he called the police and the Council office but never heard anything more, it is embarrassing to him in that he understands what the average person goes through in trying to stop graffiti.

Mr. Freedner noted that he had personally suffered great economic losses in the past weeks, and that the City and State are also in serious trouble – for example the Disability Fund is running low. They may need to take out loans and it’s very probable that bond ratings will drop. By these comments in the Minutes, he wants to make our City Council aware of our concern, although there does not seem to be an easy way out of it.

Ms. Ramsawack announced the last 2008 Strathern Neighborhood Watch meeting, 6:30 PM next Wednesday night.

ADJOURNMENT: Ms. Pelych moved to adjourn, Mr. Luse seconded, and by unanimous vote (10-0), the meeting ended at 9:54 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

J. ERIC FREEDNER
Secretary