

CITY OF LOS ANGELES

CALIFORNIA



**NORTH HOLLYWOOD
NORTH EAST
NEIGHBORHOOD COUNCIL**

P. O. Box 16478
North Hollywood, CA
91615-6478

Email:
NoHoNorthEastNC@gmail.com

L.A. DONE TELEPHONE:
(818) 756-9628

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
May 14, 2009

Strathern St. Elem. Sch. Auditorium, 7939 St. Clair Ave., North Hollywood, CA 91605

CALL TO ORDER: Pres. Randal Luse called the meeting to order at 7:10 PM and led the pledge of allegiance. Sec. Freedner then took roll. Present were: Dr. Wung Chang, Florence Dorick, J. Eric Freedner, Al Henriquez, Loretta Luse, Randal Luse, Philip Manson, Inez Morin, and Sarah Ramsawack, constituting a quorum. (Ernie Moscoso, Judy Harris-Brice and Katie Pelych arrived later in the evening.)

APPROVAL OF APRIL MINUTES: Mr. Henriquez moved to accept last month's minutes. Ms. Ramsawack asked if anyone had updated information on the whereabouts of the cell phone and Mr. Luse replied, he didn't know. Also, Ms. Ramsawack noted that her vote was "No" rather than "yes" for the budget proposal last month to increase that quarter's spending to \$25,000, as that could only be done with DONE approval. Ms. Dorick said she didn't remember voting "no" for the three spending proposals that were reported that way in the minutes. Mr. Freedner and Mr. Moscoso (who had just arrived) explained that the "no" was by consensus as the Board decided which budget items it even wanted vote on. Each of those items can be brought back for discussion and Board action at a later date. He suggested adding the three items (umbrellas for Strathern Street School, security cameras for Arminta Street School and funding for the Valley Regional Congress) back onto our Agenda for discussion and possible action next month. Second: Ms. Ramsawack. Vote: 10 – Yes, 0 – No.

COMMENTS FROM GOV'T REPRESENTATIVES: Joaquin Macias of Councilperson Greuel's office announced the DWP Committee Meeting on 5/20 regarding the trunk line construction, which is to start at the end of May. Work is scheduled to begin at Belleaire and Vanowen and Route 170/Vanowen, there will be single-lane traffic either direction. He's been talking with Sarah and Inez re: Valley Plaza Park Nature Center. The Council office will put in a walking track and workout stations; estimated cost is \$110,000 – 130,000, and he thinks the Council Office can find funding for it. The light poles are a key component of the project. Dept. of Rec. &

Parks will try to level out gopher holes in the areas. The equipment will cost \$30,000, plus \$20,000 for installation.

Ms. Ramsawack asked what the cost of the lighting would be and Mr. Macias replied, \$850 per pole; per Rec & Parks, 5-6 poles are recommended. Mr. Freedner asked why put in lights if the park closes at dusk; also, who is liable for upkeep and any accidents that might occur there. Mr. Macias replied, Rec & Parks assumes liability; with lighting people may be able to use the park until 8 PM or so. DWP will contribute to illuminating the pedestrian walkway across the freeway.

Ms. Morin asked if we could use a dirt walkway rather than more expensive granite, to which Mr. Macias replied the granite is the best material and mere dirt is not recommended.

Regarding the Q-Star cameras, he knows crime went down around Laurel Plaza Library and Whitsett Park after their installation. And there will be a Special Election to fill Ms. Greuel's Council seat, candidacy period is July 5-11; campaign period until September 22 which is the special election. And Dec. 8, the runoff, if needed.

LAPD Officer Esther Vasquez presented a letter to Ms. Morin regarding the Q-Star cameras – she has requested a laptop and she will monitor it. Burglaries and theft remain the same and are constant in her area. (Ms. Harris-Brice arrives) There is a CCAP meeting at Cal Sate L.A. for which two NC representatives are invited and a donation is requested, 6/6.

Barry Stone of DONE announced the Valley Regional Congress at Panorama High School, 5/30, all day. And the business cards are to be sorted, he'll bring them to our next NC meeting.

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

Sheldon Walter said it's important to get Public Works Projects going, including a rail line from North Hollywood to Sunland and Sylmar, but no action has been seen yet. Perhaps peoples laid off in other work can find work in transportation. He went through the Great Depression as a youth and knows it is no fun.

Jose Dominguez reports he's been doing things for the schools, trying to get donations of backpacks, shoes, etc. for the children who would otherwise not be able to afford them. But someone donated phys ed equipment to schools and gave credit to someone else, and put another person's name on the goods. He has put a stop to these efforts pending outcome of this dispute. It's not right that someone else gets credit for his hard and good work.

Karl Kunak announced the Community Recycling meeting for 5/31 at Sun Valley Middle School. Their present yard is "the dirtiest facility in Sun Valley." Also he's been working with the S. F. Rescue Mission, donating clothes for the homeless. He asks that the NC consider offering \$1,000 for gas chits for the truck. Also, socks are particularly needed and everyone should patronize their thrift store.

NC CELL PHONE: Ms. Morin has been trying to reach someone with the City to speak to about this. Mr. Henriquez noted that we don't really know who had the phone last or where it is, and Mr. Stone noted that we should just document it on the inventory form. Only the City can supply phone service by wireless internet service now.

EFFECTIVENESS OF Q-STAR CAMERAS, OWNERSHIP AND MAINTENANCE:

Mr. Moscoso asked if any new information has been obtained. Ms. Ramsawack replied that she has been investigating diligently, about 700 cameras are out in the field. Most of those use 35mm film rolls and a truck and crew have to come and insert new film. Our new ones, Model 880, are digital. Graffiti Control installs them. Whoever buys cameras becomes their owners. There is a \$200 basic charge to move the cameras to different locations. She discussed the praise the cameras got from use in other cities and suggested we ask Officer Vasquez to maintain a chart showing effectiveness. Ms. Harris-Brice reported speaking with Officer Ahedo, he was going to bring some photos but is not here tonight. (Ms. Pelych arrives)

Mr. Freedner countered that none of this is the information he requested, namely the number of persons photographed or apprehended by camera use. There ought to be statistics for the other 2 cameras we bought. The City purposely seems not to want to divulge such facts. And, just because our NC purchases the cameras, we should not be considered their owners. Specifically, we were not informed of any \$200 moving charges before we voted on the cameras and perhaps we should reconsider our purchase in light of this information. Being responsible for moving and maintenance seems to be an impermissible contract.

Ms. Ramsawack replied that she will again ask Officer Vasquez but performance records don't seem to be available. This has been a tremendous learning experience for her. The other 2 Q-Stars are owned by the Office of Beautification under DPW. That office no longer handles removal charges. She sees no harm in being aware that we might have to pay to move a camera, although the 2 others have not been moved yet. It shows our devotion to our community.

Mr. Stone said that LAPD will be the owners of the Q-Stars, NC's cannot "own" anything, and an acknowledgement letter needs to show responsibility. The City needs to receive and take ownership of the Q-Star cameras. Mr. Macias reported that by "anecdotal evidence" a lot of graffiti was evident before the cameras, much decreased now. Laurel Grove originally had a 550 model camera, the performance of which is not necessarily representative of an 880 camera. The Office of Beautification has taken over the program and the laptops are theirs but the LAPD monitors them. The OOB will pa for moving every 6 months per Maria Sheets of that department.

Mr. Kunak noted that SVANC had purchased some Q-Star 880 cameras for Sun Valley and also dummy cameras were deployed there. For those there was no charge to move them about.

Ms. Ramsawack asked if any of the agreements concerning ownership and maintenance were in writing and Mr. Macias replied, he hasn't seen it, no. Mr. Stone said the General Manager has to sign off on the purchase since it's over \$20,000.

Mr. Moscoso, in closing this discussion, noted, "It's a perfect example of when we rush in to something, we circumvented our own way of doing things." We need to follow our process and make sure we know all the details and what's in store before we vote on a spending proposal.

PRESENTATION BY DEPT. OF SANITATION, ALTERNATIVE TECHNOLOGY:

After the slide show, Mr. Kunak asked if acreage in Sun Valley was being taken for this. Michael Zermeno of Sanitation replied 5-20 acres were needed with a buffer zone of ¼ mile. Dr. Chang commented that a budget was needed, tell the people the dollar amount of the project. Mr. Zermeno replied they are dealing with various vendors, the tipping fee may rise to three times what it currently is at Sunshine Canyon, but La Puente Landfill will close in 2013 and there is no other landfill nearby. Mr. Freedner noted that burning waste would release carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases, to which Mr. Zermeno replied that methane gas from landfills is 23% more potent than CO2 and lot escapes. Mr. Dean Hall asked if a ballot issue was anticipated, do people get to vote on this? Mr. Zermeno replied, no.

BY-LAWS REVISIONS: Mr. Henriquez presented the report of the By-Laws Committee and explained the required changes to the Stipulation. These will actually overlay the By-Laws as far as the elections are concerned. Mr. Freedner noted that the Board composition was slightly changed, by the transfer of one Community seat to one dedicated to a community stakeholder who declares a stake and affirms factual basis, per City mandate. Mr. Henriquez then moved: that the NC adopt and approve the 2010 NC Election Procedures Stipulation Language Worksheet. Second: Ms. Ramsawack. Vote: 12 - Yes, 0 – No.

ELECTION OF TREASURER: Mr. Henriquez nominated Ms. Morin, Interim Treasurer, for this position. After being assured she can retain Ms. Harris-Brice as her assistant, she accepted. Mr. Luse seconded. Vote: 12 – Yes, 0 – No.

VALLEY PLAZA PARK IMPROVEMENTS: Ms. Morin had passed around a diagram showing the proposed walkway and said the lighting would be placed along the granite walkway. Mr. Freedner suggested that we first contact stakeholders living near the park to let them know and get feedback. Ms. Dorick replied that homeless people are in the park now, the people might welcome the improvements. Ms. Morin suggested Ms. Ramsawack help with the outreach, and Mr. Freedner offered to help also. Ms. Ramsawack suggested we table this topic until we do community outreach on it.

Mr. Freedner asked where, specifically, the lights would be placed, how high they would be, hours of operation. After some discussion, Ms. Morin moved; that the NC approve expenditure of no greater than \$5,500 for the purchase of six light poles with lights for Valley Plaza Nature Center in North Hollywood. Second: Mr. Luse.

Ms. Ramsawack objected that people don't have a clear picture of what we're talking about, grassland tucked away in a corner of the park. The north side backs up to apartment buildings (supposedly 472 people) with a gate giving access to the park. She urged that we inform and survey the community first. Mr. Henriquez said Rec & Parks Department deals with the area, and 2 groups say the improvements are needed in the community. Mr. Freedner countered that nothing is in there now, if the project remains incomplete, what happens to the money budgeted for light poles? There is too much uncertainty in this right now.

Mr. Stone replied that we can't encumber City funds, they would be refunded to the NC if the project fails.

Vote: 10 – Yes 1 - Abstain (Ms. Ramsawack) 1 - No (Mr. Freedner)

FINANCIAL DISCLOSURE FORMS: Ms. Dorick attended the Valley Alliance of NC's on 4/16 in Sherman Oaks. Form 54 was adopted by the City Council in January. It consists of 4 pages of personal data that NC members must fill out. This is needed if a NC wants to open a City Council file – all must fill out Form 54 (and a second NC must also join). Also, ethics training is mandatory with consequences for non-compliance; everyone should take care of it, or you'll have nothing to say.

Mr. Stone replied that State law requires all NC board members to take ethics training but the City can't enforce it at this time. If Board members don't take the training, they won't be able to vote. Ms. Ramsawack said only 6 of our 13 members have taken the ethics training so far, so we wouldn't even have a voting quorum. Mr. Freedner noted that it's the same problem with all NC's, even worse several years ago when maybe one or two persons at each NC took the training.

Ms. Dorick said that Al Abrams of the Alliance suggested that each Board write the City Council to ask replacement of Form 54 with Form 55. It appeared to Mr. Manson that only 1 page would have to be filled out by most people. But, Mr. Stone said, some NC members own more property within their NC areas. Ms. Dorick complained that she had spent a weekend on her computer taking the test, and later found out at a Saturday meeting that the City Attorney expounded on ethics and everyone who signed a roster passed the training.

Mr. Freedner noted that the Alliance of NC's is not an official City group, they are an advocacy group only, and while everyone is free to write such letters as they wish, he saw no reason for this NC to write an "official" letter concerning the disclosure forms. Ms. Ramsawack disagreed but Mr. Stone said nothing requires us to take action as a Board, if any Board member feels it's too instructive they, or the entire Board, can write to the City Council to express our concern.

PUBLIC POSTING LOCATIONS: Mr. Freedner reported that for the past 2 months, he's been unable to gain access to Park Plaza Apartments to post the Agenda. The front doors are now locked and residents use keys or buzzers to get in the side. And, if he cannot get in to post, no one else can gain access to find the Agenda. Plus it's not even within our boundaries. He suggested switching that posting locating to Strathern School instead. Ms. Ramsawack wonders if the U.N. Soccer League

location should also be replaced. Mr. Stone said he'd research how to change posting locations.

VARIANCE CHANGE FOR ARCHER'S TOW: Cindy Milholm, co-owner, addressed the Board – they moved in 3 years ago. Zoning was M2 but it was changed to MR2. The facility does not qualify because 3-4 houses are within 300', behind their lot. She's worked with the community and Councilman Cardenas' office, put in bamboo boundary, repainted over graffiti and put in climbing fig to hide the wall. Archer's has also helped with tree plantings, Little League, and National Night Out. And anyone in the community with concerns about their operations should talk to them.

Mr. Freedner noted that the property is not within our NC boundaries, although it is close by.

"Have you talked to the 3 nearby homeowners?" asked Mr. Moscoso, to which she replied, yes. Ms. Ramsawack felt it is quite all right to write a letter of support for the facility in return for the support Archer's has shown to the community over the years.

Mr. Manson asked how many vehicles were stored in the area and for how long – Ms. Milholm replied about 150-200 cars, most leave within 1 hour to 45 days, some longer. Mr. Henriquez asked if they were up against any time restrictions, and Ms. Milholm replied yes, the hearing is in two weeks. To which Mr. Henriquez replied he was surprised she hadn't come to us earlier. He would like to find out more about it, see a map or learn some history.

Ms. Milholm described the property as having people on-site 24 hours a day, protected by security cameras. Mr. Freedner asked specifically what the restrictions were – isn't the DWP power line property between Archer's and any houses? Ms. Milholm replied that the facility must be 300' feet from any residence (the City said the Freeway served as an adequate buffer to the west), they are too close to the houses, even with the power lines.

Mr. Moscoso moved: that our NC write and send a letter of support to Archer's Towing regarding the zoning variance request. Second: Ms. Dorick.

Mr. Freedner requested mention that the property was not in our NC area, and Mr. Moscoso suggested using the word "adjacent" to our NC. There being no further discussion, the vote was: 8 – Yes 3 – Abstain (Freedner, Morin, Henriquez)

Ms. Milholm suggested the letter could be emailed to Archer's.

ADJOURNMENT:

Mr. Moscoso suggested we table all Agenda items yet to be discussed, to next month.

Ms. Ramsawack requested to announce that the City Budget & Finance Committee met at 3:30 pm, with over 100 NC Board members attending, and all spoke in opposing of the \$11,200 proposed allotment for 2009-10 NC funding. It concluded with Councilman Rosendahl suggesting to try finding a way back to the Mayor's

original cut of \$45,000. A “compromise” of \$35,000 seems inevitable. It is better than the 80% cut suggested by Councilman Smith.

Due to the lateness of the hour, Mr. Freedner moved to adjourn. Mr. Manson seconded, and by unanimous vote, the meeting concluded at 10:08 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

J. ERIC FREEDNER
Secretary