

Northridge West Neighborhood Council
Joint ECM and Whole Board Meeting Minutes
Thursday, August 27, 2020

- I. Meeting call to order at 7:17pm
 - A. Present: Rana Sharif, Abigail Bailes, Kelly Sooter, Joel Lowell, Yi Ding, Bill Fox, Gail Lapaz, Jennifer Krowne, Kathleen Edwards
 - B. Stakeholders: about 35 people
- II. Comments by stakeholders on non-agenda items
 - A. Stakeholder shared about the importance of animal shelters and Abby invited her to come to the next Government Affairs and Public Safety Joint Meeting.
- III. Approval of July 31st minutes
 - A. Kelly made the motion, Abby seconded. The Executive Committee voted on III. Motion passed unanimously.
- IV. Presidential comments
- V. Introduction of vacancy applicants
 - A. Jay Frosting: lives close to the fire station with his wife and two dogs. He works in the TV industry. He hopes to be more useful to the neighborhood and thinks neighborhood should help each other stay safe, healthy, educated, prosperous. Kathleen asked his nearest cross street, how Jay heard about NWNC, and his involvement with community organizations. Jay responded Reseda and Lasson and that he heard about the board through the newsletter and this would be his first time involving in community organizations. Carl Peterson questioned if this was unusual to ask about involvement with community organizations since some board member is judgmental about such involvement. Kelly asked how many years Jay has been a resident. Jay responded his family moved into Northridge in 2014.
 - B. Curt Darling: referred by the President of the Porter Ranch Planning Commission (he believed). He works in the entertainment industry and lives in the area with his wife, son and a dog for over 7 years. He has a little bit of experience with public service, helping a buddhism center find a property in Silver Lake and getting involved on the board of his first home in 2011 through which he helped acquire a space for the community. Kathleen asked his nearest cross street and how he heard about NWNC. Curt responded Celtic and Reseda and explained again his relationship with the President of the Porter Ranch Planning Commission.
- VI. Discussion and update regarding [the Neighborhood Council Agenda Posting Requirements](#).
 - A. Abby pointed out some inconsistency between what was in the bylaw and what was in the document and made the recommendation to edit the bylaw.
 - B. Rana clarified that the posting time with NC support did not count, but our website posting and physical posting were important to follow the requirements.
 - C. Abby asked if there was a deadline Kristina would need the agenda by. Kelly commented that Kristina has been very responsive during weekdays but would

not be able to work on the weekends. Kelly would double check with Kristina if there is any 24 window rule or some other suggestions.

VII. Discussion and update regarding [Role of NCs](#) item tabled from August General Board Meeting

- A. Stakeholder Renay Grace Rodriguez commented that the bylaw is very clear about facilitating communication between the community and the city. Renay emphasized this important role and said sometimes this platform is the only forum stakeholders might have to express opinions on any given issue, so when a stakeholder goes through the process to ask for an item to be on the agenda, it merits a discussion. Having a discussion is well within the parameter of the neighborhood council and should definitely be considered. The item should not be something the neighborhood council shy away from in the very least, because that is the rule and purpose, and actually [the policy includes that there should not be any discrimination based on any kind of political affiliation-it is specifically stated in the bylaws](#). So any discussion involving “we are not gonna hear from certain people because we think they are being influenced by forces outside of the community” is absolutely beyond the policy in the bylaws. She asked that the board takes this into consideration.
- B. Abby clarified that the NWNC’s advisory role is to communicate with the City Council and the Mayor.
- C. Carl added that neighborhood council represents more than people who live in the area, but also stakeholders who have relationships with the area. A stakeholder could be a member of more than one neighborhood council, not necessarily living within the borders of the NCs. Kathleen added the board should be responsible for stakeholders of our boundaries and the board should stay neutral, unbiased, and nonpolitical.
- D. Chase Nelson identified himself as a member of WVPA, a stakeholder of NWNC’s community, and a resident of CD 12. He wanted to push back about the idea of “nonpolitical” and firmly believed that even the air we breathe and the land we live on are governed by politics. He was gracious NWNC taking this leadership role but commented that because of this, NWNC is getting involved in the politics of the community. Politics is not a dirty word. It governs everything we do. Nobody should be scared of it. He pointed out that refuse or deny the political component in our roles as neighborhood council members is false.
- E. Pilar Schiavo: neighborhood councils operate in a way where people who live and work in the area are stakeholders. One of the core roles of neighborhood council members is to encourage and support stakeholder involvement. It really seems like that there is an effort by a couple of board members to squash and silence stakeholders. I am a stakeholder working and volunteering with CSUN students and professors. There are all kinds of ways we are involved in the community. Not to mentioned that we are all united by CD 12. There has been some pretty outrageous accusations of me without proof or justification coming from a board member that really shocked me with the level of unprofessionalism. You just talked about the advisory role of neighborhood councils to the City

Council and the Mayor. What part of that is not political? You are literally talking to them about the laws and rules that govern our lives. We all have a stake in that.

- F. Olivia Naturman identified herself as a member of the West Hill Neighborhood Council and a volunteer of the WVPA. She commented on the uniqueness about NCs being how the boundaries do not confine, for example, the homeless people in the area and it is important to remember that we are united by CD12. She encouraged the board to listen to diverse opinions and welcome all stakeholders to comment.
 - G. Andrew Krowne clarified as a former board member the difference between being political and being biased. Neighborhood council is the bridge between the community and the City. He believed NWNC held it very well to be unbiased and a good example is with the Orange Line. As long as NWNC makes sure to bring in different opinions as a conduit of different information, he thinks NWNC is satisfying the role. As long as NWNC is providing both sides of the opinions/arguments, it is doing a service to the stakeholders and he appreciated it very much.
 - H. Gail shared that she had been on the board for a long time and she never felt many things were political. She suggested we should reach out to more people since many stakeholders are not aware of our existence.
 - I. Kathleen commented that the board was supposed to be advocates for our stakeholders with the interests and things that matter to them and emphasized that the board was not supposed to be a platform for large outside organizations.
 - J. Rana urged all board members, again, to take a look at [the Los Angeles City Charter Section 900 about the role of NCs](#).
- VIII. Discussion regarding Item IV from the August 23, 2020 Joint Government Affairs and Public Safety Committee Meeting. Agenda item reads:
- A. Discussion about the purpose of Neighborhood Councils, by laws and procedure to determine which issues are appropriate and relevant to NWNC's purpose. There have been concerns raised by Board Members about intimidation, threats and invasion of privacy, as well as the influence of political advocacy groups on our neighborhood council
 - B. Rana emphasized the importance of keeping in mind the language the board suggest as the board was trying to create an inclusive environment to bring in more stakeholders.
 - C. Kathleen asked if there was any clarification from the City Attorney. Rana shared that the City Attorney had not responded and Semee would follow up with us about this matter and any board member should reach out to her if there was any question or concern.
- IX. Discussion and feedback regarding [the August 14, 2020 Legislative Report: Summary of Motions Introduced and relevant Council Files](#).
- A. Rana encouraged all board members and stakeholders to take a look at the report and welcomed any opinions and to consider submitting community impact statements to Council Files

- B. Abby added that routinely the Government Affairs Committee would review the report and anyone could comment it at the committee meeting
 - C. Kathleen shared that stakeholders did not have to go through the neighborhood councils and individuals could just log in and offer feedback
- X. Discussion and update regarding City Clerk's review of Northridge Beautification Foundation's NPGs
- A. Rana will report back with more information before the General Board Meeting
- XI. Discussion and update regarding Bylaws Committee update of approved Bylaws changes (amendment approved June 30, 2020)
- A. Rana would follow with the Bylaws Committee chair about the minor edit but the board would need to make the change next spring
 - B. Andrew commented that NWNC could check if the board could do a standing rule instead of a change to the bylaws to expedite the change. Rana appreciated the suggestion and responded that the board would need to align the bylaws to what BONC stipulates but there was no immediate consequence of this at the moment. She would defer to the Bylaws Committee to consider this recommendation.
- XII. Discussion and possible motion to submit a statement in writing to Los Angeles City Attorney, Los Angeles City Council President Nury Martinez, and Los Angeles City Ethics Commission requesting an inquiry and public statement clarifying Councilmember John Lee's participation and involvement in the events surrounding the indictment of former Councilmember Mitch Englander (tabled from August General Board Meeting).
- XIII. Discussion and possible motion to submit a letter to the Los Angeles City Ethics Commission and the Mayor of Los Angeles, Eric Garcetti requesting a statement clarifying whether or not there are any ethics issues concerning Councilmember John Lee.
- XIV. Discussion and possible motion to request the City Council create a new Council File on the issue of ethics concerns raised in Item XII
- A. Rana commented that the board received a critical mass of comments (over 90 people) from previous meetings so she would like to be mindful of the time people took to invite more feedback for the Executive Committee to make a decision
 - B. Abby asked if the board heard back from the City Attorney and Rana said no and her understanding is that the board could make a recommendation to the Ethics Committee. Abby suggested the board wait until the board heard back, and Rana commented that the board did not hear anything about not being able to proceed and that the board could still proceed with XIII and XIV if that is the decision of the Executive Committee. Kathleen suggested the board table this motion considering that two other neighborhood councils had received notice of this action being improper and the Mayor confirmed this judgment.
 - C. Katherine Tattersfield identified herself as a member with WVPA and a resident in Chatsworth and a CSUN alumni. She shared that she interacted with board member Kathleen who stated she had pertinent documents of John Lee being Staffer B which is related to these motions. Katherine emailed Kathleen several

times as Kathleen offered to provide these documents but got no reply. Katherine was sure Kathleen received these emails as Kathleen now blocked her on twitter which was not the case before she sent out the last email. Katherine said that either this board member was withholding pertinent information or these documents did not exist. Rana interjected, sharing that this is an issue the board is looking into further.

- D. Chase Nelson said that it didn't hurt to ask those questions whether or not our representative was involved in the corruption or not. The worst thing that could happen is that they don't get to us. He would love for him to be not involved in this since this is just the one last thing we have to fight against within our community, but he would urge the NWNC to take it to the government.
- E. Thomas Booth identified himself as a West Hills Neighborhood Council member and working in Chatsworth. He supported any ongoing probe into this overwhelming cloud/suspicion which would be good for us to know more and especially if there was an ethics issue, we should pursue.
- F. Pilar Schiavo pointed out that she did not understand the concern with not asking the question. It seemed to her that everyone, in a nonpolitical way, should support transparency and honesty in government. It is the least the neighborhood council could do.
- G. Geoff Williams identified himself as a constituent with CD 12 and echoed the sentiment that it is in the interest of everyone to find out. He thinks it is important to know whether our politicians are bought or paid for by developers or other influences.
- H. Olivia Powell encouraged the Executive Committee to support items 12-14. She would like to have clarity and transparency for people who are representing us and NWNC has the tie.
- I. Steve Randall shared that he was a long time member of another neighborhood council and was very familiar with the issue and the details. What bothers him is that none of the people who are pressing for a review of John Lee by the Ethics Committee have said anything about John Lee having done anything wrong. He indicated that as an employee if your boss tells you to do a thing you do it otherwise you lose your job. He thinks John has not done anything wrong since he took office and we should let him do his job.
- J. Carl Peterson pointed out that while Kathleen had complained about outside influences, she herself had posted some Facebook posts encouraging people to attend the meeting using antisemitism attacks. Kathleen said that was untrue.
- K. Myrl Schreibman commented that when an organization protested in front of the City Hall, that made it political and that he agreed with Steve whatever was done had been done and the board should look at what John is doing now and now politicize this.
- L. Kyle Miller said she did not support items XII-XIV and agreed with Steven, that the council seemed to be rushing to conduct these inquiries and that the board had more pressing issues to take care of.

- M. Kelly commented that the board did get a lot of feedback from stakeholders at the last General Board Meeting and addressed the issue of motivation. She shared that she was a long time Northridge resident and did not publicly endorse either of the candidates. She reviewed the indictment and listened carefully to the stakeholders. The board had over 31 stakeholders who voiced their point of view. She took a lot of notes and went back to the recording again to make sure her notes were right. Among the 31 stakeholders, 11 were NWNC self-identified stakeholders and 7 recommended yes to the motion. 10 neighborhood council members in CD 12 and 5 said yes. 4 general stakeholders with 2 said yes. The rest are special interest. To sum up, according to the last meeting, there were 20 that were in favor, 11 that opposed, which equal to 64% in favor of us moving forward. She is committed to represent our stakeholders' points of view. She does not support the partisan comment and finds that offensive and unfair. She does not support bullying and threatening behavior and recommends us to deal with it in a civil manner.
- N. Kathleen said she was not pro or against Lee but she thought the process needs to be clean. She took the same note and a lot of people who identified themselves as NWNC stakeholders Kathleen knew they were not. She is in favor of stakeholders having a voice but does not think that NWNC should be a platform for campaign managers or things like that. In addition, she mentioned that the issue was not brought by a stakeholder.
- O. Abby shared that she agreed the board should ask for clarification and send a letter but the board should be unbiased. Her recommendation would be to meet the needs of stakeholders and protect NWNC from any perceived bias by removing the name of John Lee and the word "inquiry" because the board are to be advisors and not to demand an investigation as well as by directing the letter to the City Council and the Mayor. She would like to defend Kathleen and said that having pictures up on social media is a tough position to be in and that people need to be respectful to make sure no one is mistreated.
- P. Joel shared that the comments seemed to suggest they were uniquely aware of an issue going on but he did not think that was the case. But there was already an FBI investigation and what the board is doing is completely unnecessary.
- Q. Bill commented that not a single one on our board had an idea of what exactly had happened and that there was an active FBI attorney general investigation going on. They are going to indict more people. He did not like how the board had become more political. There are things the board could not be dealing with. The board should deal with things the board can help.
- R. Jennifer thanked Kelly for the statistics and said that democracy relies on checks and balances and the board should make sure that people are doing their jobs. She understood that there might not be enough time and money to do everything but she still thought the board should answer the needs of stakeholders even if the board might disagree with them.
- S. Bill asked what issue Rana thinks there was since she differed between addressing it to the Ethics Commission and to the City Council. Rana said the

discussion was about ethics issues instead of the FBI investigation, and she did not want to conflate the two things. Bill said elections had consequences and commented how he was sure the intentions and backgrounds of those stakeholders who supported this motion. Rana pushed back saying that she took great issue with board members speculating those things of stakeholders and reiterated that the Executive Committee was to make a decision collectively.

- T. Kathleen added again that there were many self-identifying stakeholders that were actually not Northridge West stakeholders. Kelly commented that in terms of the statistics, she made sure to only count stakeholders and added that many of them provided street addresses. She emphasized she listened to the entire recording and found it insulting that Kathleen discounted her work.
 - U. Abby said that the board should also consider the viewpoints of people who may have voted for and supported John Lee.
 - V. Kelly made the motion to recommend item XIII “submit a letter to the Los Angeles City Ethics Commission and the Mayor of Los Angeles, Eric Garcetti requesting a statement clarifying whether or not there are any ethics issues concerning Councilmember John Lee” to the General Board Meeting. Ding seconded it. Gail commented that she agreed with Joel that the board had wasted too much time and the board was not going to get much information quickly. Rana said that having a platform to discuss things stakeholders care about is not a waste of time. Gail agreed and said that the board should not table it.
 - W. The Executive Committee voted item XIII. Rana, Ding, Kelly voted yes and Joel and Abby voted no. Motion passed.
- XV. Discussion and possible action for the Los Angeles Neighborhood Council Coalition (NWNC Neighborhood Council) request that the City Council create a new Council File based upon the results of the recent DONE (survey) to develop and support alternatives to armed crisis response and AB-2054 Emergency services: community response: grant program. (Assembly Bill). This would include revamping the City of Los Angeles 911 system. The 911 system should have a call option so that there are three options: Option 1 police, Option 2 fire/EMS, and Option 3 Community Assistance Liaison Team. Option 3 would be created to meet the demands for an alternative to arm crisis response for homelessness, domestic violence, neighbor disputes, and other quality of life issues (tabled from August General Board Meeting).
- A. Kathleen commented that based on turnout rate the survey was not representative of the Northridge West stakeholders and since the issue was already discussed before and actually the motion was voted down at the June Government Affairs Committee meeting, she did not understand why the board needed to discuss this again. Bill asked whether this was an ongoing issue to revamp the police system.
 - B. Rana commented that it was because of the Council File resulted from the survey was reintroduced to neighborhood councils to reconsider and asked if Kathleen knew any new developments of this issue. Kathleen shared that the board should add it to the Government Affairs Committee meeting and Abby added it to the agenda for the upcoming meeting already. Abby would love to

hear more feedback about ways to improve the 911 system. Rana clarified that the motion was only for a Council File. Kelly added that the survey was also for stakeholders, not just board members.

- XVI. Discussion and possible action for the Los Angeles Neighborhood Council Coalition (NWNC Neighborhood Council) request that the City Council create a new Council File to provide transparency for the reallocated \$150M that was defunded from the Los Angeles Police Department. The Los Angeles Neighborhood Council Coalition (NWNC Northridge West Neighborhood Council Joint ECM and Whole Board Meeting 7:15 pm Thursday, August 27, 2020 Neighborhood Council) wants the process to be transparent and the Neighborhood Councils that represent the areas of the city that are underrepresented and areas with People of Color be afforded the opportunity to weigh in on where those funds are allocated and how they are spent for the benefit of the community that are underserved (tabled from August General Board Meeting).
 - A. Kelly made a motion to move XV and XVI to the Joint Government Affairs and Public Safety Committee Whole Board Meeting. Ding seconded it. The Executive Committee voted unanimously to pass the move.
 - B. Rana encouraged stakeholders to attend the meeting on next Monday at 8pm.
- XVII. Discussion and motion to approve the August 11, 2020 GBM Minutes
- XVIII. Discussion and motion to approve the August 2020 Monthly Expense Report (pending posting)
- XIX. Committee Chair check-ins and possible recommendations for the September General Board Meeting Additional recommendations for the September General Board Meeting
 - A. Abby wanted to add the items mentioned in the meeting, the S.O.L.I.D. works NPG as well as the West Valley Animal Shelter to the General Board Meeting. She also mentioned the Council File in the Legislative Report about requiring NC members to have diversity, equity, inclusion and anti bias training and encouraged people to provide feedback.
 - B. Kelly suggested to add Beautification Committee updates and priority setting to the agenda.
 - C. Ding thanked Gail, Rana, Kelly, Jennifer and Abby for working with her on the school outreach project and the LAUSD District 3 Candidate Town Hall. The date would be 9/30 and the moderator would be Tanya McRae. She would share more information and the flyer soon.
 - D. Kathleen suggested the George Floyd Declaration Ad Hoc Committee to discuss definitions and implications of buzzwords such as racial inclusion, underprivileged/underserved, reimagine, diversity, and systematic racism. Rana supported the idea and would follow up with Abby who also served on the Ad Hoc Committee.
 - E. Gail shared the upcoming Town Hall of the unhoused and commended Ding for her contribution. She also shared that she and her team were still making masks for elementary school children and wanted to add the Homeless Committee as an item.
 - F. Kathleen asked about clarification of Committee composition and voting eligibility. Rana explained that the Standing Committee could have no more than

three board members and the Executive Committee has five. She offered to get official documents from DONE if need be to add to our website.

XX. Adjournment

A. 8:54pm