

DRAFT MINUTES  
Northridge West Neighborhood Council (NWNC)  
General Board Meeting (GBM)  
Tuesday, 12 September 2023  
Northridge Christian Church  
18901 Chatsworth Street, Northridge 91326

I. Call to Order and Board Roll Call

- President Jorge Jiménez called the meeting to order at 6.30PM and welcomed eleven board members and five stakeholders.
- A quorum was declared via the following roll call:  
Here (11) Zaven Atashian, Aaminah Babatunde-Bea, Brian Cathcart, Jorge Jiménez, Janis Kraft, Joel Lowell, Arshia Malekzadeh, Brian Morgan, Angelica Robinson, Glen Wilson, and Greg Wood  
Absent (2) Kathleen Edwards and Larry Whitman

II. Pledge of Allegiance

- Veteran Jorge led us in the Pledge of Allegiance.

III. General Public Comment

- Stakeholder Brian Ruff mentioned that there was a veteran's sign along the Tampa Avenue median for thirteen years. However, in November 2022, a wayward truck wiped out that sign. He suggested that perhaps the NWNC could use their outreach funds to purchase a new sign.
- Glenn Bailey reported that the Valley Alliance of Neighborhood Councils, representing the valley's thirty-four neighborhood councils, continues to meet via Zoom on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Thursday of each month at 6.30PM. Meeting announcements and agendas can be found at their website at <https://vanc34.org/>. This month's guest speaker will be Ted Ross, general manager of the city's Information Technology Agency, who will discuss how neighborhood councils can use technology, including the My311 app. They will also discuss the importance of data being available by neighborhood council's regions, as similar data is available via city council districts.
- Keren Waters from the Granada Hills North Neighborhood Council was recently appointed [by Mayor Bass] and approved [by the city council] as a member of the Bureau of Neighborhood Commissioners, representing the seventeen neighborhood councils of the north San Fernando Valley.
- Glenn added that the deadline to confirm attendance at the Saturday, September 23<sup>rd</sup> Congress of Neighborhood Councils [for the sake of the caterers] is this Friday, September 15<sup>th</sup>.

IV. Presidential Comments

- Thursday, August 31<sup>st</sup>, Jorge had the pleasure of participating in the meet-and-greet networking event at city hall. He was able to connect with several city officials, including city attorney Hydee Feldstein Soto and Vanessa Serrano, interim general manager of the Department of Neighborhood Empowerment (DONE). He also met with several other neighborhood council board members who were impressed with all that the NWNC had done. They asked how Jorge and his fellow NWNC board members were able to get so many things accomplished.

V. Approval of NWNC Monthly GBM Minutes for August 2023

- A brief modification was made in real time, correcting the spelling of Senior Lead Officer Dimich’s name and badge number.
- Brian Morgan made a motion to approve the August minutes; Joel Lowell seconded this motion, and it passed.

Aye (10)	Atashian, Babatunde-Bea, Cathcart, Jiménez, Kraft, Lowell, Malekzadeh, Morgan, Robinson, and Wilson
Abstain (1)	Wood
Absent (2)	Edwards and Whitman

VI. Approval of NWNC Monthly Expenditure Report (MER) from August 2023

- Joel discussed the following expenses incurred in August 2023:

Date	Vendor	Category	Description	Amount
July 17	City of LA Congress of Neighborhood Councils	Outreach	Congress Funding	\$ 1,000.00
July 26	Friends of Vintage Magnet	Neighborhood Purpose Grant (NPG)	STEM Program	2,500.00
August 1	Devonshire Supporters of Law Enforcement in Devonshire (SOLID)		SOLID Funding	2,000.00
August 2	Golden State Storage	Office	Storage Facility	153.50
August 7	Kristina Smith/Mail Room			250.00
August 7			Web Services	250.00
August 7				250.00
August 7		Porto’s Bakery	Dinner	199.69
August 15	North Valley Family YMCA	NPG	Thanksgiving Baskets	2,500.00
August 15	LAFD		Cool Space Fan	2,982.78
August 16	Overnight Card Delivery	Office	Bank Charge	30.00
August 18			Bank Refund	(30.00)
August 21	USPS		Postal Box Fee	294.00
August 24	ICD Soft.com		Web Hosting Fee	96.00
August 29	Vista Print		Business Cards	111.59
			Total	\$12,587.56

- Joel also reported that the NWNC acquired the anticipated \$6,609.75 of rollover funds from the previous year. This resulted in a balance going forward of \$25,004.41.
- Joel Lowell made a motion to approve the August MER; Angelica Robinson seconded this motion, and it passed.

Aye (10)	Atashian, Babatunde-Bea, Cathcart, Jiménez, Kraft, Lowell, Malekzadeh, Morgan, Wilson, and Wood
Ineligible (1)	Robinson
Absent (2)	Edwards and Whitman

VII. Government Reports

- Public Safety LAPD Devonshire Division
  - The non-emergency number for the LAPD is 1-877-ASK-LAPD.
  - Senior Lead Officers (SLO) were not available this evening; Devonshire community relations volunteer Mikkie Loi reported in their place.
  - Many residential burglaries in the northwest valley are north of Rinaldi Street in Porter Ranch and Granada Hills.

- Burglars are now using wi-fi jammers; people are not aware that a break-in has occurred until they return home.
- People are leaving their doors unlocked; please always lock your doors, even when you are at home.
- Please do not leave ladders or any tools that may facilitate the burglary crews. For example, someone took a ladder from a neighbor’s yard, used it to climb the roof, then brought up the ladder and left it on the roof. They could also use this ladder to access upper windows or balconies
- Always be vigilant and be aware of your surroundings. Be a good witness, never put yourself in harm’s way. Always use the online reporting system to report a crime, no matter how minor the crime may seem.
- Mikkie reviewed the crime statistics for the four SLO’s territories of the NWNC’s area:

Basic Car	A23	A35	A67	A81
SLO	Kristin Dimich	John Parker	Sandra Zamora	Sean Taylor
Approximate Borders	Northwest of Lassen Street and Limekiln Canyon	Northeast of Lassen Street and Limekiln Canyon	Southeast of Lassen Street and Tampa Avenue	Southwest of Tampa Avenue and Devonshire Street
Total Violent Crimes	Down 2.9%	Up 14.1%	Down 5.9%	Down 3.7%
Aggravated Assault and Other	Up 14%	Up 14.3%	Homicide up 100% Rape up 50%	Rape up 800%
Total Property Crimes	Down 10.9%	Up 10.8%	Down 17.5%	Down 2.8%
Burglary	Up 32.1%	Up 67.5%	Up 8%	Up 30.3%
Theft	Up 3%	Up 37.1%	Unknown	Unknown
Year to Date 2023	565	677	495	840
Year to Date 2022	625	609	586	866

- These posted areas are relative to the NWNC borders; they also extend into other areas of Northridge, as well as Chatsworth, Granada Hills, and Porter Ranch.
- For additional information, everyone is encouraged to download the LAPD Devonshire app from <https://apps.apple.com/us/app/lapd-devonshire/id1341181797>.
- Mikkie reviewed the following upcoming meetings and events:
  - Tuesday, September 19<sup>th</sup> at 11AM Sgt Jose Torres will moderate the All Devonshire Area Retailers Zoom Meeting. The meeting ID is 863 4299 2955 with passcode 587664.
  - Wednesday, September 20<sup>th</sup> at 11AM will be Coffee with a Cop at the Starbucks at 16222 Nordhoff Street
  - Tuesday, September 26<sup>th</sup> at 6PM will be Basic Car A23’s monthly meeting via Zoom
  - Wednesday, September 27<sup>th</sup> at 6PM will be Basic Car A81 and A95 monthly meeting via Zoom. The meeting ID is 884 2013 9740 with passcode 782179. This month’s special guests will be from the 911 Communications Team.
  - Sandra Zamora and her A67 team are awaiting confirmation of in-person meetings at the Callahan Street Elementary School; meanwhile, her meetings will continue via Zoom.
  - Friday, October 6<sup>th</sup> from 5PM to 8PM will be SOLID’s 26<sup>th</sup> Annual All You Can Eat Pasta Dinner for \$15/person at St. Nicholas Greek Orthodox Church, 9501 Balboa Boulevard. Tickets are available at [soliddevonshire.org](http://soliddevonshire.org).

- Regarding the Macy's smash and grab of Sunday morning, September 10<sup>th</sup>, the new Organized Retail Theft Taskforce responded and has taken the lead on this investigation. The LAPD has now increased foot patrol inside the mall, as well as its perimeter.
  
- b. CD12 City Council Representative
  - Kathy Lettieri is the Public Works Deputy for CD12; she handles everything you see when you walk out your door, including streetlights, sidewalks, trees, area clean-ups, weed abatement, sanitation, etc.
  - This year, she has worked to repair over 250 streetlights within CD12; this is a significant decrease from the over 900 streetlights that had to be repaired in 2022.
  - Regretfully, these lights were not prioritized as their dispatch office is on the other side of the hill. Therefore, Councilman Lee put a task forth together to resolve this problem. They have since fortified the utility boxes in the ground, rather than having the valuable copper wire in the poles. Copper wire theft is a key reason for these inoperable lights. A thief's removal of copper wire can jeopardize streetlights in a ten-mile radius. Contrary to common opinion, homeless individuals do not steal this copper wire.
  - Another key issue for Kathy is weed abatement. The amount of rain this past year has led to increased weed growth. If one has a retaining wall, which abuts to a street, the homeowner is responsible for the weeds. This includes the weeds that go to the street behind their property. There is a ninety-day process for weed inspection. After ninety-days, excessive weeds may result in a fine. Homeowners will not incur a fine for tree trimming (or lack thereof). The West Valley Alliance no longer oversees tree trimming, as they previously incurred out of pockets expenses in excess of \$20k.
  - Jorge asked if CD12 had a schedule with the West Valley Alliance's monthly clean-ups. Kathy replied that Thursday, October 5<sup>th</sup>, she will lead a group of volunteers doing sidewalk clean-ups.
  - Arshia expressed concern about the trees in area by the movie theatre's driveway from Shirley Avenue to the parking lot. The pedestrians and drivers often cannot see each other. Kathy will check that out, and work with the mall and movie theatre to help resolve that.
  - Brian Cathcart also expressed concern that kids leaving the Nobel Charter Middle School have merely 29-seconds to cross Lassen Street or Tampa Avenue; that is not enough time.
  
- c. Other Government Departments/Agencies
  - No one from other government departments/agencies was available to provide a report.
  
- d. Department of Neighborhood Empowerment (DONE)
  - Neighborhood Empowerment Advocate (NEA) Joel Gonzalez from DONE reminded everyone of the annual Congress of Neighborhood Councils on Saturday, September 23<sup>rd</sup>. This is an excellent opportunity for training and networking. He re-emailed the registration link to all board members.
  - This fiscal year, neighborhood councils have until Monday, April 1<sup>st</sup> to amend their bylaws.
  - SB411 has passed the assembly and state senate and is now awaiting Governor Newsom's signature. After twelve days, it will go to the LA city council. After that anticipated approval, it can be approved by the NWNC with a 67% majority.
  
- e. Budget Advocate
  - Glenn Bailey reported that the Budget Advocates website is <https://www.budgetadvocates.org>.

- Their key job is to track things that have a fiscal impact on the city.
- The advocates released their monthly report on Monday, September 4; this can be found online at [https://www.budgetadvocates.org/\\_files/ugd/f03c84\\_8b80e25ebb9642479bf0a2638e00cdb3.pdf](https://www.budgetadvocates.org/_files/ugd/f03c84_8b80e25ebb9642479bf0a2638e00cdb3.pdf)
- The city recently entered into a new labor agreement with the Police Protective League that will increase salaries of new recruits by 13% over the next four years. This Memorandum of Understanding, similar to a labor contract, will affect LAPD officers [lieutenant or below] per council file 23-0862.
- Friday, August 18<sup>th</sup> the City Council unanimously approved the purchase of the 204-room Mayfair Hotel at 1256 West 7<sup>th</sup> Street in Westlake for \$60m. This hotel will provide interim housing and support services for the unhoused.
- Saturday, August 19<sup>th</sup> the advocates held their annual retreat where they discussed what the advocates and neighborhood councils can and cannot do.
- The advocates are now populating their virtual committees to meet with the city's forty departments to discuss the department's requests. These budget requests are due during the 2<sup>nd</sup> week of November.
- A workshop during the September 23<sup>rd</sup> Congress of Neighborhood Councils will be City Budget 101, led by policy analyst Jacob Wexler from the City Administrative Analyst's office.

#### VIII. Announcements

- a. October 3<sup>rd</sup> NWNC Executive Board Meeting, location TBD
  - Brian Cathcart made a motion for the NWNC to approve the option of conducting virtual meetings, beginning possibly as soon as October 3<sup>rd</sup>. NEA Joel from DONE replied that it was too soon to vote on this issue. First, Governor Newsom must sign SB411 [or have it sit on his desk for twelve-days] and then the LA city council must approve it. In the meantime, the NWNC may call a special meeting to approve this action prior to October 3<sup>rd</sup>.
- b. October 10<sup>th</sup> NWNC GBM
  - The NWNC will continue to host their monthly in-person GBMs on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday of each month.
- c. Funding Training Workshops: September 21<sup>st</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup>
  - DONE will host Funding Program workshops on Thursdays, September 21<sup>st</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup> beginning at 6PM. Board members will learn:
    - Introduction to the Board Manual
    - How to Get Involved as a Board Member
    - Agenda Creation
    - Brown Act
    - Fiduciary Responsibilities
    - City Clerk, Council Offices, and other City Department Resources
    - Guidance on navigating through our various platforms, including the Empower LA Website, Cornerstone, CIS portal, City Clerk Funding Website, Roberts Rules Made Simple, etc.
  - Additional information can be found at <https://clerk.lacity.gov/clerk-divisions/nc-funding/training-workshops-tools/workshops> and at <https://empowerla.org/calendar/>
- d. Congress of Neighborhood Councils Saturday, September 23<sup>rd</sup>

- Glenn Bailey added that the deadline to confirm attendance at the Saturday, September 23<sup>rd</sup> Congress of Neighborhood Councils [for the sake of the caterers] is Friday, September 15<sup>th</sup>.
  - Online registration available at <https://www.neighborhoodcongress.la>
- e. Free Red Cross CPR Classes offered in Pacoima by Meet Each Need with Dignity (MEND)
- The non-profit organization, MEND, will soon host the Red Cross's CPR Classes. It is unknown if certificates will be issued to the graduates.
- f. DONE Training Updates for Board Members
- Jorge reported that everyone on the NWNC is caught up on their mandatory training.

#### IX. NWNC Committee Reports

- a. Executive Committee and Government Affairs
- Jorge reported that they have not yet had an Executive Committee or Government Affairs committee meeting as the NWNC lacks a secure physical location.
  - Greg was unable to attend the August meeting when committee memberships were agendized and expressed a strong interest in serving as Chair of the Government Affairs Committee. As there was no objection, Greg will assume this responsibility.
- b. Public Safety
- This agenda item was tabled, as Kathleen was unavailable to present a report.
- c. Planning and Land Use
- Brian Cathcart reminded everyone that in April, the NWNC overwhelmingly approved a liquor permit for the Copacabana International Grocery Market at 9643 Reseda Boulevard. This has since been approved by the city.
- d. Elections
- This agenda item was tabled, as Glen did not have any news to report.
- e. Homelessness
- Angelica did not have an update, as the committee has been unable to meet.
- f. Beautification
- Jorge did not have an update, as the committee has been unable to acquire a secure meeting location.
  - Someone suggested that the NWNC Committees use the SLO's trailer at the LAPD's Devonshire station at 10250 Etiwanda Avenue. However, that location is within the Northridge East Neighborhood Council's district and is not open to the public; it is only available for LAPD volunteers.
- g. Budget
- Joel reported that most budget issues were covered during the MER discussion of agenda item VI.
- h. Outreach
- Janis did not have an update, as the committee, comprised of herself, Angelica, and Larry, was unable to meet.

- Janis added that the NWNC was invited to a SOLID networking event at the LAPD’s Devonshire Station on Tuesday, September 26<sup>th</sup> from 5.30PM to 7PM.

i. Education

- Arshia did not have an update, as the committee has been unable to meet.

X. Old Business

a. Discussion and Update on SB411 meeting rules for Neighborhood Councils

- SB411, having passed the assembly and senate, now resides on Governor Newsom’s desk. It will be there for twelve days. It then must be approved by the LA city council and the NWNC (with 67% approval).
- There is an online form to send comments to Governor Newsom (limited to 6,000 characters) at <https://www.gov.ca.gov/contact/>
- The First Amendment Coalition (which includes newspapers) advocates for the people’s right to know and opposes SB411. They feel neighborhood councils should only meet in person. They fear virtual sessions could restrict transparency and encourage closed-door meetings.

b. Discussion to fill Secretary Position

- Angelica Robinson made a motion for Brian Cathcart to serve as Secretary of the NWNC; Arshia Malekzadeh seconded this motion, and it passed unanimously.

XI. New Business

a. Reimbursement to Glen Wilson in the amount of \$12.03 for purchase of two 17 lb. bags of ice for NWNC General Board Meeting held on August 8<sup>th</sup>.

- Joel had the original receipt for this reimbursement.
- Joel Lowell made a motion to approve this \$12.03 reimbursement; Janis Kraft seconded this motion, and it passed.

Aye (10)	Atashian, Babatunde-Bea, Cathcart, Jiménez, Kraft, Lowell, Malekzadeh, Morgan, Wilson, and Wood
Ineligible (1)	Robinson
Absent (2)	Edwards and Whitman

b. Discussion on creating a special committee to find a new location for holding General Board and Committee Meetings.

- Someone suggested holding meetings at the Symmetry Apartments at 19535 Nordhoff Street, next to Lowe’s. However, a resident must host meetings.
- Janis Kraft volunteered to lead this ad hoc committee, alongside Brian Morgan and Greg Wood. Glenn Bailey added that [per BONC regulations] if this ad hoc committee is composed of merely board members, then in-person meetings are not required. They can host their meetings via Zoom.
- Joel Gonzalez mentioned that wheelchair access and ADA compliant bathrooms are key for a meeting location. He added that the NWNC does not need to do the ADA requirements for city parks and schools, as that has already been taken care of.
- Kathy Lettieri suggested the Topeka Drive Elementary School; Brian Cathcart replied that the NWNC had already been rejected by many schools due to their closure prior to the 6.15PM meetings.

- c. Council Files (CF) and City Council Motions - Community Impact Statements (CIS) - Discussion and possible action: Council File 22-1232: Charter Reform/Ethics Commission/Powers and Responsibilities/Ballot Measure
- Jorge deferred this discussion to Glenn Bailey, who is more of an expert on this council file.
  - This CF22-1232 requests that the city attorney prepare and present the documents necessary to place a ballot measure on the next regularly scheduled election ballot to amend the city charter. This will streamline the City Ethics Commission, making them more independent, and update their enforcement processes, while increasing its integrity and effectiveness.
  - It is unknown how the city council will request that the City Ethics Commission meet this goal.
  - Glenn is confident of the proposed timeline to place this onto the next regularly scheduled election ballot. He advises that if interested parties would like to comment on this, they should submit comments ASAP, as the city council will discuss this very soon.
  - It was Kathleen's idea to agendaize this issue. However, she was not available to offer her thoughts and further discuss this issue.
  - Greg Wood made a motion to table this agenda item; Joel Lowell seconded this motion, and it passed unanimously.

## XII. Adjournment

- Greg Wood made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8.13PM; Brian Cathcart seconded this motion, and it passed unanimously.