

DRAFT MINUTES  
Northridge West Neighborhood Council (NWNC)  
General Board Meeting (GBM)  
Tuesday, 9 January 2024  
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 6.27PM and welcomed nine board members and five stakeholders.
- A quorum was declared via the following roll call:  
Here (9)        Zaven Atashian, Aminah Babatunde-Bea, Brian Cathcart, Kathleen Edwards,  
                     Jorge Jiménez, Janis Kraft, Joel Lowell, Angelica Robinson, and Greg Wood  
Absent (2)      Arshia Malekzadeh and Brian Morgan

II. Pledge of Allegiance

- Jorge led us in the Pledge of Allegiance.

III. General Public Comment

- 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 presentation on Thursday, January 11<sup>th</sup> will be from the LA28 Olympics Committee. They will discuss how this event will impact valley traffic, as well as benefits to the parks and recreation areas, financial issues, etc.
- The city and county's Urban Forestry Divisions are creating plans for the future of trees in our communities with recommendations on how to care for trees and forests. Many of these meetings will be in person; others will be via Zoom. An upcoming meeting will be held at the Northridge Public Library at 9051 Darby Avenue on Saturday, January 20<sup>th</sup> beginning at 2PM.

IV. Special Speaker

- Chris Ahuja, candidate for Congress in the 32<sup>nd</sup> District, introduced himself and would like to listen to stakeholder's concerns.
- Chris runs a small talent agency business, which he started in 2008. He is impressed that the NWNC supports small businesses such as Porto's for refreshment services. Chris is currently completing his online credentials from the Harvard University/Kennedy School of Public Service; this has been very valuable in his service as a board member of the Tarzana Neighborhood Council. It will also help him bring new and innovative ideas to congress.
- As the father of two children, ages four and seven, Chris wonders how our kids are going to deal with the economy, education, taxes, traffic, the environment, etc. Four years ago, his infant daughter became very sick soon and had to spend time in the Kaiser Hospitals in Woodland Hills and Hollywood. The family's out-of-pocket medical bills were incredible.
- He recently visited Target, and was shocked that although televisions are not locked up, socks are secured. A board member reminded Chris that the homeless consider socks to be highly desirable.
- As Brad Sherman has been in congress for nearly thirty years, he may not feel that he has much competition. Perhaps due to his long tenure in Washington, Brad is unfamiliar with local issues, such as property taxes or the cost of a loaf of bread. He feels that Brad lacks moral leadership and is not objective. To represent the 32<sup>nd</sup> district, one requires a broad prospective. Chris

would also like Brad to do more in-person events rather than telephone calls, which almost sound pre-recorded.

- For additional information on Chris, please visit his website at <https://www.chrisahuja.com/>

V. Approval of NWNC Monthly GBM Minutes for November 2023

- Kathleen Edwards made a motion to approve the November minutes; Angelica Robinson seconded this motion, and it passed unanimously.

VI. Approval of NWNC Monthly GBM Minutes for December 2023

- Joel Lowell made a motion to approve the December minutes; Angelica Robinson seconded this motion, and it passed unanimously.

VII. Approve of NWNC Monthly Expenditure Report (MER) from December 2023

- Joel Lowell made a motion to approve the December MER; Kathleen Edwards seconded this motion, and it passed unanimously.

Date	Vendor	Description	Amount
December 2	Golden State Storage	Storage Facility	\$153.50
December 5	Amazon	Name Tags	8.48
December 9	Porto's Bakery	Food and	96.18
December 12	Burger Lounge	Beverages	403.90
December 12	Smart and Final		57.08
December 18	Kristina Smith/The	Web Services	250.00
December 18	Mail Room		250.00
December 19	Apple One	Meeting	179.20
December 20		Minutes	217.60
			<u>1,615.94</u>

- Joel Lowell made a motion to modify the agenda to add the November MER; Angelica Robinson seconded this motion, and it passed unanimously.
- Joel Lowell made a motion to approve the November MER; Angelica Robinson seconded this motion, and it passed unanimously.

Date	Vendor	Description	Amount
November 2	Golden State Storage	Storage Facility	\$153.50
November 10	Porto's Bakery	Refreshments	228.71
November 14	Smart and Final	Refreshments	6.01
November 15	Apple One	Meeting Minutes	179.20
November 29	Flags Importer	Flag	95.13
		Total	<u>\$662.55</u>

- These recent MERs reflect an increase in our monthly fee to the Golden State Storage from \$135.50/month to \$153.50/month.
- The recent financial statements reflect an overrun of \$2,982.78 in Neighborhood Purpose Grants (NPGs); this will get resolved later this evening in agenda item XII.A.
- Currently, the financial balance is nearly \$15k. When the \$6,609.75 rollover from FY2022-23 is included, this will result in a balance of over \$21k.

VIII. Announcements

- February 6<sup>th</sup> NWNC Executive Board Meeting
- February 13<sup>th</sup> NWNC General Board Meeting

- c. Department of Neighborhood Empowerment (DONE) Training Updates for Board Members
  - All NWNC board members have completed their mandatory training.
  - Kathleen added that the NWNC should establish an ad hoc By-Laws Committee meeting. Revised By-Laws are due by Monday, April 1<sup>st</sup>. Glenn reminded everyone that this ad hoc committee, with merely four [or less] members, can meet virtually.

IX. Presidential Comments

- Jorge reported that he is working with Neighborhood Empowerment Advocate Joel Gonzales to get Community Impact Statement (CIS) signers established.
- This in-person January meeting satisfies the need for an in-person meeting for FY2023-24. The NWNC may meet virtually as soon as they acquire 67% approval.

X. Government Reports

- a. Public Safety LAPD Devonshire Division
  - The non-emergency number for the LAPD is 1-877-ASK-LAPD.
  - Senior Lead Officer Sandra Zamora and Devonshire community relations volunteer Mikkie Loi were unavailable to present a report.
- b. CD12 City Council Representative
  - Neither Kathy Lettieri or anyone else from CD12 was available to provide a report.
- c. Other Government Departments/Agencies
  - Ms. Uzoamaka Aniezue, field representative for Assemblywoman Pilar Schiavo, mentioned that Ms. Schiavo is now the Chair of the assembly's Military and Veteran's Affairs Committee. She also serves on the following committees:
    - Emergency Management
    - Utilities and Energy
    - Public Employment and Retirement
    - Water, Parks, and Wildlife
  - Pilar also serves as Chair of the Select Committee on Electric Vehicles and Charging Infrastructure, as well as the following select committees:
    - Los Angeles County Homelessness
    - Mental Health Accessibility within Non-English Speaking Communities
    - Social Housing
    - Transportation Solutions
  - They are currently seeking high school and/or college students to serve as interns at their office in Valencia; please visit their website at <https://a40.asmdc.org/district-internship> for additional information.
  - California's 3.4m small businesses are critical to the state's recovering economy. Those with fewer than 100 employees comprise 97% of all businesses in California and are responsible for employing more than 37% of all workers. Ms. Schiavo's office is now accepting applications for Small Business of the Month. Candidates must be located within Assembly District 40 and meet the Small Business Administration's guidelines:
    - Few than 100 employees
    - \$15m or less in gross revenue over the last three tax years
  - For additional information, please visit their website at <https://a40.asmdc.org/small-business-month>
  - Ms. Schiavo and State Senator Scott Wilk invite stakeholders to their upcoming virtual Cash for Collect webinar on Thursday, January 25<sup>th</sup> beginning at 6PM. This informative meeting will include presentations by the California Student Aid Commission, UNITE-LA, and

California State University, Northridge. It will provide resources to families about Federal Student Aid and the California Dream Act, as well as how and where to apply for grants and scholarships. RSVP at <https://a40.asmdc.org/event/20240125-cash-college-webinar>

- If you know of any companies that are hiring, or people looking for jobs, please alert them of an upcoming job fair, to be hosted by AD40, on Saturday, March 2<sup>nd</sup> beginning at 9AM. This will be held at the North Valley Caring Services Facility, 15453 Rayen Street, North Hills.

d. Department of Neighborhood Empowerment (DONE)

- Neighborhood Empowerment Advocate Joel Gonzales was unavailable to present a report.

e. Budget Advocate

- DONE and the Board of Neighborhood Commissioners postponed their monthly meeting, usually held on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Monday, originally scheduled for Monday, January 15<sup>th</sup>. This will be Dr. Martin Luther King Day. This meeting may be rescheduled for Tuesday, January 23<sup>rd</sup> at 1PM.
- Advocate Glenn Bailey mentioned that each month, they send out a report to neighborhood councils, which can be found at [https://www.budgetadvocates.org/\\_files/ugd/f03c84\\_aad97f62ce7342e89d09c1760250845e.pdf](https://www.budgetadvocates.org/_files/ugd/f03c84_aad97f62ce7342e89d09c1760250845e.pdf).

- The city has six capital projects that will require funding of over \$20b over the next decade:

An 11-mile section of the LA River that stretches from Griffith Park to Downtown	1.5b
Expanding and modernizing the Convention Center, excluding an 850-room 4-star convention hotel	1.5b
Development of the Civic Center consisting of 1.5m sf of office space that will allow the city to consolidate its many departments into a centralized location and 3.5m sf of residential space	\$2b to \$3b
Upgrade the city's parks and recreational facilities	\$2b
Upgrade our streets and sidewalks.	\$5b
Comply with the Clean Water Act (through 2037), a portion of which may be funded through the Measure W parcel tax approved by 69% of the voters in November 2018	\$8b

- Greg mentioned that some Northridge areas continue to lack curb cuts which are required to comply with ADA requirements. Glenn replied that LA is a very big city that has not yet completed all mandatory curb cuts.
- Monday, December 11<sup>th</sup> City Controller Kenneth Mejia released an audit of the LAPD's Air Support Division. The audit focuses on the LAPD's use of helicopters from fiscal years 2018-22 and explores whether the LAPD is justified in supporting the program's current size and scope, including seventeen helicopters and more than ninety employees. The average annual expense of \$46.6 million exceeds the budget of fourteen city departments. This audit [including helicopters and budget cutbacks] has been assigned Council File 23-1422.
- As of the end of December, the budget advocates have met with over a dozen city departments to learn about their FY2024-25 budget requests and to discuss the delivery of city services. By the end of January, the advocates will have met with most departments. In February, the advocates will begin to prepare their annual white paper report [including recommendations] to Mayor Bass and the city council for their consideration.

- These past two years, the advocates have hosted a 90-minute virtual town hall to discuss the DONE budget. They hope to host another one by the end of January, with adequate time for Q&A. This will allow for plenty of time between this virtual town hall and Mayor Bass's budget proposal release on Saturday, April 20<sup>th</sup>.

#### XI. NWNC Committee Reports

##### a. Executive Committee

- Jorge had no news to report; hence this agenda item was tabled.

##### b. Public Safety

- Kathleen reported the following:
  - She reminded everyone that, per LA Municipal Code No 41.24, no person can enter any private property not open to the general public without the consent of the owner, their agent, or the person in lawful possession, where signs forbidding entry are displayed. These "no trespassing" signs, citing LAMC 41.24, are available from the LAPD.
  - It was recently reveal that a sex offender lives near the Mason Park. Please visit <https://www.familywatchdog.us> and/or <https://www.meganslaw.ca.gov> for information about potential predators in your neighborhood.
  - The FBI is investigating fake online AI photographs. These photographs have resulted in reduced feelings of self worth for children and teen-agers and resulted in self-harm and even suicide.
  - There are now warnings about the abusive usage of Apple Air Tags. Stalkers and domestic abusers now drop them into shopping bags or sew them into clothing to enable them to follow their victims. Cellular telephones will now warn people that an Apple Air Tag is nearby.
  - Kathleen also discussed recent activity at the state legislature:
    - Prison sentences will increase for crimes related to the distribution of Fentanyl.
    - Regretfully, SB316 failed to pass; this would have considered the previous crimes of arrested shoplifters.
    - SB14, which unanimously passed the senate and assembly, changes the definition of child sex trafficking. It is now classified as a serious felony, making the crime a strike under the Three Strikes Law.
    - AB1394, which also unanimously passed, will levy fines of \$1m to \$4m against social media platforms that fail to promptly remove sexually explicit content involving minors.
    - Effective July 2024, AB12 will limit residential security deposits to one-month's rent (down from the previously permitted two-months rent).

##### c. Government Affairs

- Greg had no report.

##### d. Planning and Land Use

- Brian had no report.

##### e. Elections

- This agenda item was tabled, as there was no report.

##### f. Homelessness

- Angelica had no report.

g. Beautification

- Jorge reported that Congressman Brad Sherman recently secured funding for the Tree People. Saturday, January 20<sup>th</sup>, the Tree People will distribute fruit trees at the Northridge Library beginning at 2PM. Jorge will be there to learn more and take notes. The Tree People do not install the trees, but they can provide guidance concerning the tree's maintenance.
- Brian mentioned that lower Limekiln Canyon, near the Tunney Avenue sweep, has some fruit trees that are over eighty years old.

h. Budget

- Joel had no news to report; hence this agenda item was tabled.

i. Outreach

- Janis had no news to report; hence this agenda item was tabled.

j. Education

- Arshia has unavailable; hence this agenda item was tabled.

XII. Old Business

- a. Discussion and possible motion to reallocate 2023-24 Budget and include 2022-23 rollover as necessary
- Joel recommends taking the \$6,609.75 (rolled-over from FY 2022-23) and applying it to NPGs. He also suggested that the NWNC may roll over another \$10k in July 2024; it might be a good idea to think about how the money could be spent.
  - Brian suggested small grates along sidewalks, which he recently saw while out of town. These small grates may improve water distribution while reducing trips and falls.
  - Joel Lowell made a motion to modify the budget by rolling over the unallocated \$6,609.75 to NPGs; Kathleen Edwards seconded this motion, and it passed unanimously.
- b. Discussion and possible motion to submit a CIS on LA City Council File 23-0530 Ethics and Conflict of Interest Laws/Disclosure Requirement/Registered Lobbyist/Relative/Councilmember or Staff/Lobbying Prohibition
- Several board members recommended including specific family members, such as children, grandchildren, aunts, uncles, cousins, etc, and their agents, including business partners, etc.
  - Joel Lowell made a motion to submit this CIS on Council File 23-0530; Angelica Robinson seconded this motion, and it passed unanimously.

XIII. New Business

- a. Discussion and possible motion on holding a Town Hall for our Stakeholders, including the participation of other Neighborhood Councils in the Valley, regarding the public safety issues surrounding the issue of decreasing the funding of LAPD helicopters as presented by LA City Controller Mejia, and the possible consequences of reduced LAPD capabilities due to Controller Mejia's audit report.
- Jorge shared an article from The Patch, which can be found at <https://patch.com/california/los-angeles/lapd-helicopters-offer-unclear-benefit-crime-audit-finds> and a 65-page summary from Controller Mejia's website <https://controller.lacity.gov/landings/lapd-helicopters>

- Kathleen mentioned that opponents feel that this is a noise issue, whereas the pro-helicopter people believe this to be a public safety concern. It is imperative that stakeholders know the pros and cons of this issue. She added that the Woodland Hills Neighborhood Council is also interested in this issue. Perhaps we can make this a citywide town hall?
- Jorge added that safety has to be one of the top concerns of our stakeholders, including burglaries, car theft, street racing, etc. The support of an air-unit could be very helpful. He asked Kathleen about the goal of this proposed town hall. She replied that it is to keep everyone informed. She does not want to turn this into a political issue. Jorge agreed that the main purpose is to educate the stakeholders and urge them to speak out.
- Angelica reminded everyone that this would be a reduction, not an elimination of helicopters.
- Glenn recommended hosting the town hall via LAPD Divisions, perhaps this should be merely those neighborhood councils covered by the Devonshire Division. Alternatively, it could be for the west valley, including the areas covered by the LAPD's Topanga and West Valley Divisions. He added that Deputy Chief Alan Hamilton, who oversees the valley's LAPD, recently did an off-the-cuff presentation on this issue. He should be invited. Perhaps Brian Williams, Mayor Bass's deputy in charge of public safety, could also attend this town hall.
- Bernyce Hollins is Mayor Bass's senior director of the city budget; she should also be involved with these helicopter concerns.
- Glenn also reminded everyone that City Controller Mejia pays the bills, but does not have any authority. Only Mayor Bass [in her proposal of Saturday, April 20<sup>th</sup>] and the city council [who must pass the city's budget by Friday, May 31<sup>st</sup>] can make such a request.
- A stakeholder compared LA with New York, whereas New York is a smaller city, yet with many more police officers.
- Another stakeholder believed that this town hall could be a year too late. There is merely two months to put this together. To make an impact, the NWNC would need to get nearly a thousand people to attend.
- Joel and Angelica suggested an ad hoc committee to determine if this town hall is feasible.
- Aaminah Babatunde-Bea made a motion for the NWNC to host a town hall for stakeholders, along with other valley neighborhood councils, to discuss LAPD air support; Brian Cathcart seconded this motion, yet it failed as there was no clear victor:

Aye (4)	Atashian, Cathcart, Edwards, and Jiménez
No (4)	Babatunde-Bea, Lowell, Robinson, and Wood
Abstain (1)	Kraft
Absent (2)	Malekzadeh and Morgan

#### XIV. Adjournment

- Greg Wood made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8.45PM; Joel Lowell seconded this motion, and it passed unanimously.