

APPROVED
Northridge West Neighborhood Council (NWNC)
General Board Meeting (GBM)
Tuesday, 12 December 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 6.51PM and welcomed eleven board members and over fourteen stakeholders.
- A quorum was declared via the following roll call:
 - Here (11) Zaven Atashian, Aminah Babatunde-Bea, Brian Cathcart,
 Kathleen Edwards, Jorge Jiménez, Janis Kraft, Joel Lowell, Arshia
 Malekzadeh, Brian Morgan, Angelica Robinson, and Greg Wood
 - Resigned (1) Glen Wilson

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 2nd 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 is Deputy Chief Alan Hamilton, who oversees the valley's LAPD. He has promised to engage with more neighborhood councils. Also scheduled for discussion will be SB411, CF 23-1113, and CF 23-1114, including equipment and costs.
- Glenn also reported that May 3-5 would see the return of the Salute to Recreation Family Festival at the Northridge Park. This event, last held in 2019, often attracts over 10,000 attendees. Rescheduling to the cooler early May could attract more people. There will be
 - Arts/Crafts Sports Activities
 - Community Vendors/Exhibitors Stage with Entertainment, etc.
- On behalf of LAPD volunteer Mikkie Loi, Glenn reported that the LAPD's Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) program provides all-risk, all-hazard training. This valuable course, to be conducted in Spanish, is designed to help protect yourself, your family, your neighbors, and your neighborhood in an emergency situation. The classes, led by LAFD firefighter Joe Santa Maria, starts Tuesday, January 9th at 6.30PM at the Police Activity League Supporters (PALS) facility at 8721 Wilbur Avenue. The seven classes are as follows:
 - January 9th Introduction and Disaster Awareness
 - January 16th Incident Command System and Disaster Psychology
 - January 23rd Disaster Medical Operations 1
 - January 30th Disaster Medical Operations 2
 - February 6th Fire Suppression and Hazardous Materials
 - February 13th Light Search and Rescue
 - February 20th Terrorism and CERT
- You must attend all classes to receive a "Certificate of Completion". To register, please go to <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/lafd-cert-devonshire-pals-spanish-only-tickets-746174617367?aff=ebdssbdestsearch>
- For additional information, please visit <https://www.cert-la.com>

IV. Approval of NWNC Monthly GBM Minutes for November 2023

- Joel Lowell made a motion to table this agenda item; Angelica Robinson seconded this motion, and it passed unanimously.

V. Approve of NWNC Monthly Expenditure Report (MER) from November 2023

- Treasurer Joel reported that the November expenditures were principally for the normal office expenses. He recently received three months of invoices from Kristine Smith for website services.

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>

- Brian Cathcart noticed that the Neighborhood Purpose Grant (NPG) expenditures were overrun by \$2,982.78. This was due to budgeting merely \$7,000. However, the NPGs, approved in July and August, totaled \$9,982.78 as follows:

Recipient	Purpose	Amount
YMCA	Thanksgiving Baskets	\$2,500.00
Friends of Vintage Magnet Elementary School	STEM program	2,500.00
LA Fire Department Foundation	Fan for Station 70	2,982.78
Supporters of Law Enforcement in Devonshire	Furniture	2,000.00
		<u>\$9,982.78</u>

- Brian Cathcart made a motion to table this November MER agenda item; Greg Wood seconded this motion, and it passed unanimously.

VI. Announcements

- a. January 2nd NWNC Executive Board Meeting
- b. January 9th NWNC General Board Meeting
- c. DONE Training Updates for Board Members
 - All NWNC board members have completed their mandatory training.

VII. Presidential Comments

- Jorge mentioned that this has been a very interesting year for the NWNC as we started with one board, and in the second half of the year, we have a whole new board. He looks forward to all the efforts from the NWNC in the new year.
- Jorge reported that long-time NWNC board member Glen Wilson has resigned as he has relocated to an assisted living facility. He first moved to Santa Clarita and is now at a more convenient location in Granada Hills. Contact information is available upon request.

VIII. Awarding of Certificates of Acknowledgement

- Jorge recognized and read certificates dedicated to two recent NWNC board members, Abby Bailes and Sonny Liampetchakul.
- Andrea Alvarado was not present to accept her certificate; this will be presented at a meeting in 2024.

- Councilman John Lee also thanked Abby, Sonny, Jorge, and all NWN board members.

IX. Government Reports

a. Public Safety LAPD Devonshire Division

- The non-emergency number for the LAPD is 1-877-ASK-LAPD.
- Devonshire community relations volunteer Mikkie Loi was unavailable to present a report.

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. She has access to the area's new Rapid Response Team, with a truck to support CD12. If there is anything you need, please reach out to Kathy.
- Councilman Lee mentioned that burglaries north of Rinaldi Street have risen 113% this past year. In January, the LAPD will introduce a new "Harden the Target" program.
- It is important that everyone report vandalism and robberies ASAP, no matter how minor it may seem. If not reported, the incident is never reported within the statistical database.
- Bobby Bolton, a burglar who has committed over fifty robberies in 2023, has been arrested and is now in custody. Multiple homeowners have witnessed this person on their Ring cameras, and he is now held on over \$1m bail.
- Kathy continues to work with the Street Services Department to repair streetlights. It previously took a week to repair these lights; now it can take months.
- Graffiti is usually taken care of within days. If there is a hate symbol within the graffiti, the city attempts to alleviate this the same day.
- Additional CD12 funds have been allocated to LAPD overtime. Currently, the Devonshire Division has merely 44 police officers; that is barely enough to cover one shift.
- Kathleen asked about the left turn signal at Tampa Avenue and Chatsworth Street. Someone mentioned that it is now working, but this new traffic light surprises people, leading to increased traffic.
- Someone expressed concern that Germain Street has been resurfaced many times; the last time was five or six years ago. However, the cracks keep returning. The city cannot do a simply slurry, as that will never last.
- Greg also expressed concern about a pothole in the east lane of the southbound Tampa Avenue, just south of the 118-freeway.
- Arshia expressed concern about the very dangerous intersection in front of the Best Buy at 19350 Nordhoff Way. Perhaps reflective poles could be used to guide people into their proper lane? Brian Cathcart and Janis thought it would be a great idea to simply close Nordhoff Way between Corbin Avenue and Nordhoff Street. Kathy will take these concerns to her contacts at the Department of Transportation for a site assessment.
- Someone also expressed concern about traffic near the Beckford Avenue Elementary School, and parents getting onto Chatsworth Street from Vanalden Avenue. This signal is poorly timed, and parents often face wicked traffic as they drop their kids off from school. Kathy has already had the Department of Transportation examine that intersection, and Josh Yeager from CD12 continues to work this issue.
- CD12 hosts quarterly meetings with neighborhood councils within the boundaries of CD12. Mayor Bass was able to attend their last meeting. Their next meeting will be Thursday, December 14th at 8AM.

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 Joel Gonzales mentioned that Mayor Bass’s office is actively recruiting for a general manager of DONE while Vanessa Serrano serves as interim general manager. The application deadline has been extended to Friday, December 22nd.
 - Saturday, January 27th, DONE will host a Youth Conference for LA city residents, ages 14 to 17, who are interested in city government.
 - Most neighborhood councils remain concerned about SB411, CF 23-1113, and CF 23-1114, which will permit a return to virtual meetings. Neighborhood councils must approve this with a 67% majority; hence the NWNC needs merely eight affirmative votes. A provision is that the NWNC must meet in person at least once a year.
- e. Budget Advocate
- 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_f818d4021aec49109da624a8449a8d36.pdf
 - The Second Financial Status Report (which is reviewed every three months) discusses overages and areas that are underfunded. This year’s budget is \$390m below plan because of over-expenditures of \$297m and a revenue shortfall of \$93m.
 - The LAPD’s overspending was \$136m due to the impact of the new labor agreement, projected hiring, and increased overtime. Other areas of overspending included

LAFD	\$37m
General Services	38m
Liability Claims	47m
 - Overall revenues were off by slightly over 6% versus plan, the major culprits being the documentary transfer and transient occupancy taxes.
 - To eliminate the shortfall, the City is considering the re-appropriation of previous unused payroll funds, the savings from continuing employee vacancies, and the reserve fund.
 - The balance of the fiscal year is concerning. There is the continuing impact of the labor agreements with the LAPD’s civilian unions. Other problem areas include
 - Increased liability claims
 - Continuing overruns on the human resources and payroll project
 - Migrants bussed in from Texas, and
 - Fallout from the 2021 fireworks explosion on East 27th Street.
 - There is the possibility that future revenues will not meet expectations. If the 7% shortfall in the seven economically sensitive taxes (property, business, sales, utility, hotel, documentary, and parking) were to continue, there is the possibility that annual revenue may be \$300m below plan.
 - There is a likelihood that the previously projected shortfall of \$170m for fiscal 2023-24 may increase.
 - During the next fiscal year, beginning 1 July 2024, the deficit is projected to be more than \$400m because of the significant budgetary impact of the recent labor agreements with the police, fire, and civilian unions.
 - The November NWNC meeting included a question for Advocate Garry Fordyce concerning the acronym UHLA, which is for the United to House LA. They advocate for an additional 4% tax on houses which sell for \$5m, and a 5.5% tax for those houses that sell for over \$10m. This one-time tax raises nearly \$900m/year to:

- Reduce homelessness
- Make housing more affordable, and
- Protect low-income seniors from losing their homes
- Additional information can be found at <https://unitedtohousela.com>.
- The advocate’s next Town Hall meeting, tentatively scheduled for Saturday, January 20th, will exclusively discuss the DONE budget. Mayor Bass will propose her budget by Saturday, April 20th; so there will be plenty of time between the January meeting and Mayor Bass’s budget release.
- Keren Waters introduced herself as the new North Valley representative to the Board of Neighborhood Commissioners (BONC). She also serves as President of the Granada Hills North Neighborhood Council. The BONC looks forward to hosting a summit, including two representatives from each of the city’s neighborhood councils. For additional information, please email Keren at keren.waters@lacity.org.

X. NWNC Committee Reports

a. Executive Committee

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

b. Public Safety

- Kathleen reported the following:
 - There is an alarming trend of people walking their dogs while wearing their ear pods. These folks are distracted by whatever they are listening to, and can easily step off a curb. A recent pedestrian wearing ear pods was unaware of a nearby potential stalker.
 - A food vendor along Tampa Avenue, between the 118 and Rinaldi Street, recently had his van double-parked. His station was occupying the entire sidewalk, blocking foot traffic and restricting handicapped individuals.
 - Wednesday, December 6th, there was a huge fire along Nordhoff Way. A homeless individual had repurposed wooden crates as his home. The LAPD and homeless advocates visited him many times, giving him housing options and asking him to move this flammable material (including BBQs and butane containers). As he was told that his “house” was going to be dismantled, he set it on fire, and ran in front of train. It is unknown if this was an accident or suicide. Caltrans, Metro, and Amtrak do not take responsibility for this or any of these nearby fires. However, these fires are near businesses, which could be damaged.
 - A burglar was arrested in September, released, and re-arrested on Thursday, December 7th. He is a member of a group of robbers who are responsible for multiple thefts throughout the north valley.
 - Kathleen will draft a motion to discuss the LAPD’s potential budget reductions, including cuts to their helicopters. She hopes to invite other area neighborhood councils to this valley-wide town hall. Perhaps representatives from Mayor Bass’s office and the LAPD can also join this town hall? Glenn will ask the Budget Advocates if they would like to participate; they get involved with anything related to budget.
- Greg added that in 2022, the city’s 911 operators handled over 2m calls in the six most common languages of LA:

English	Korean.	Russian
Farsi	Mandarin	Spanish

- c. Government Affairs
 - Greg wondered what impact a Community Impact Statement (CIS) from the NWNCC could have on issues that come before the city council, including
 - CF 23-1364, which deals with human trafficking, forced labor practices, recruitment, and employment
 - CF 23-0623-S1, which deals with procedures and performance standards for 100% affordable housing projects
- d. Planning and Land Use
 - Brian Cathcart has been thinking about ways to expand this committee. What impact do the zoning regulations have upon the streets and schools in this area? He would also like to consider our responsibilities towards public spaces, such as the mall.
 - He would like to hear a discussion about long-term planning for Northridge to make it more livable, not merely a drive-through in route to someplace else.
 - He would also like to consider a median at the intersection of Tampa Avenue and Lassen Street near the Nobel Charter Middle School. That way, kids will not have to make the full crossing. Perhaps they could just make it as far as the median island, and then continue when the light changes again a few moments later.
- e. Elections
 - This agenda item was tabled, as there was no report.
- f. Homelessness
 - Angelica and her team have not had a recent meeting; hence this agenda item was tabled.
- g. Beautification
 - Jorge recently met with representatives of the Church at Rocky Peak to help coordinate a group of volunteers for a project in the northwest valley on Saturday, March 16th. He requested input on potential projects, such as street cleanup, planting vegetables at a school, street beautification, etc. The Church at Rocky Peak already has the funding and volunteers; they just need ideas. Please speak up if anyone has any suggestions.
- h. Budget
 - Joel had no report beyond the MER. The January agenda may include a discussion to reallocate funds to the various budget categories.
- i. Outreach
 - Janis has no news to report; hence this agenda item was tabled.
- j. Education
 - Arshia has no news to report; hence this agenda item was tabled.

XI. Old Business

- a. 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

- Jorge drafted and read a CIS regarding his concerns about this conflict of interest issue and the request for the city council to expand their ethics.
- This CIS requests expansion of the definition of “immediate family” and what they do. Brian Cathcart and Greg suggested including business partners. Kathleen felt that it should be more specific.
- Greg was shocked at the weight of these issues put upon people who merely want to help. Why does it have to be so burdensome and complicated?
- Joel Lowell made a motion to table this agenda item concerning a CIS for CF 23-0530; Brian Cathcart seconded this motion, and it passed:
 - Aye (9) Atashian, Babatunde-Bea, Cathcart, Jiménez, Kraft, Lowell, Malekzadeh, Morgan, and Wood
 - Abstain (2) Edwards and Robinson

XII. New Business

- a. LAHSA’s Greater LA Homeless Count 2024 is open for registration, discussion to inform our board and stakeholders for possible participation
 - Jorge mentioned that if anyone is interested in volunteering for the 2024 Greater LA Homeless Count on January 23-25, please visit their website at <https://www.theycountwillyou.org>
- b. Discussion and Possible Action to file a CIS or board resolution to authorize the use of teleconferencing for Neighborhood Council meetings, including board meetings and committee meetings, in accordance with the rules established by SB411 and the subsequent motions 23-1113 and 23-1114 passed by the City Council on November 1st
 - Joel Gonzalez mentioned that these meetings must be all virtual or all in-person; they cannot be hybrid with a few board members sitting at the Northridge Christian Church, while others are at home. They can have one meeting as virtual, and the following meeting can be in-person. He asked if anyone saw a downside to returning to these virtual meetings. No one had any objection. Once approved, the virtual meetings could begin immediately. He added that virtual meetings could incur a cost of \$200/year for the software.
 - Glenn Bailey reminded the NWNC that if this were approved tonight, the next step would be to provide a brief CIS statement, including references to CF 23-1113 and CF 23-1114, as this CIS will reference back to those council files. It may also require at least one justification. Potential justifications may include:
 - Increased health and safety
 - Cost savings
 - Makes it easier for community involvement, etc.
 - Someone mentioned that the Sherman Oaks Neighborhood Council has already approved their CIS and are ready to re-start their virtual meetings.
 - Joel Lowell made a motion for the NWNC to write a CIS to transition to virtual meetings in support of CF 23-1113, and CF 23-1114; Brian Cathcart seconded this motion, and it passed unanimously.

XIII. Adjournment

- Angelica Robinson made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8.51PM; Joel Lowell seconded this motion, and it passed unanimously.