

## NORTHRIDGE WEST NEIGHBORHOOD COUNCIL

Regular General Board Meeting via Zoom

Tuesday, August 13th, 2024, at 6:15 PM

I. CALL TO ORDER and BOARD ROLL CALL: Jorge Jimenez called the meeting to order at: 6:23 p.m. with board members: Jorge Jimenez, Kathleen Edwards, Janis Kraft, Kevin Herzberg, Brian Cathcart, Joel Lowell, Nicolas Haddad, Aminah Babatunde-Bea, and Greg Wood (left at 6:55 p.m.). (Angelica Robinson was present but ineligible to vote. She left the meeting at 7:40 p.m.). Quorum was reached with 9 board members. Zaven Atashian arrived at 6:37 p.m.

II. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE by board members present.

III. GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT - In reference to Aminah being asked to complete her Code of Conduct, Budget Advocate Glenn Bailey stated that the Code of Conduct is the most important training to complete and board members who had not completed it by the required date were suspended. However, if she could present proof of completing it, then she could vote at this board meeting. Aminah subsequently completed the Code of Conduct and emailed the certificate to Jorge.

Glenn spoke about the most recent Valley Alliance of NCs (VANC) meeting where Greg Nelson was the guest speaker. The recording is on the LAANC NC Alliance web page.

Glenn attended the Mayor's Infrastructure meeting regarding city policy toward sidewalk vendors. For this fiscal year beginning July 1, 2024, there is no vending enforcement except for ABA compliance. That is because there was no money put into the budget for this purpose.

IV. SPECIAL SPEAKER - Earl Torres, Sr. Volunteer Recruitment Specialist with the American Red Cross gave an informative presentation on Disaster preparedness, American Red Cross services, and how the American Red Cross can assist the community. He has been the volunteer recruiter for the past two years. Earl stated that 90% of their workforce are volunteers and that they are always looking for more people to serve in areas of need. Currently, Hurricane Debbie has affected Georgia and Florida with massive flooding and there is a blood supply emergency because they have had to close blood donation centers in these states. Volunteers get free housing and airfare to disaster zones, but he stressed that it is not a vacation; there is a lot of work to be done. He reminded everyone to put together an emergency evacuation plan with a Go-Bag and share it with family members. He asked those who want to get involved to donate their time or provide donations to the Red Cross.

Jorge noted that they would post the Red Cross's efforts on the NWNC website.

V. APPROVAL OF NWNC MONTHLY GBM MINUTES FOR JULY 2024.

Jorge noted that two of the board members did not receive the minutes from the minute taker and because they were also no posted on the website, this item would be tabled.

Motion made by Jorge Jimenez, seconded by Brian Cathcart to table approval of the July 2024 board meeting minutes to the next regular board meeting.

Vote was unanimous: 9-0-0

Ayes: Jorge Jimenez, Kathleen Edwards, Janis Kraft, Kevin Herzberg, Brian Cathcart, Joel Lowell, Nicolas Haddad, Aminah Babatunde-Bea, Greg Wood, and Zaven Atashian.

Opposed: 0

Abstaining: 0

Absent: Wood

Ineligible: Robinson

VI. APPROVAL OF NWNC MONTHLY EXPENDITURE REPORT (MER) FROM JULY 2024

Treasurer Joel Lowell reviewed the expenses from the previous month. There is a \$6,000 rollover coming but it has not been posted yet to the NWNC account.

Motion made by Kathleen Edwards, seconded by Joel Lowell, to approve the NWNC MER from July 2024.

Vote was Unanimous: 8-0-0

Ayes: Jorge Jimenez, Kathleen Edwards, Janis Kraft, Kevin Herzberg, Brian Cathcart, Joel Lowell, Nicolas Haddad, Aminah Babatunde-Bea, and Zaven Atashian.

Opposed: 0

Abstaining: 0

Absent: Wood

Ineligible: Robinson

VII. ANNOUNCEMENTS

Kathleen Edwards asked if the new roster was sent to the city. Jorge said the roster was sent to the city and that he would make sure they have the latest revision.

Glenn Bailey reported that Northridge Vision holds a meeting tomorrow at 2 p.m.; the next VANC meeting is Sept. 12<sup>th</sup> at 6:30 p.m. and the next BONC meetings are on August 19<sup>th</sup> and Sept 3<sup>rd</sup> at 6 p.m. Plan Check NC meets the: 2<sup>nd</sup> Saturday of the month at 10 a.m. on Zoom.

Jorge announced the following:

- a) September 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2024, NWNC Executive Board Meeting – first Tuesday at 7 p.m.
- b) September 10, 2024, NWNC next General Board Meeting
- c) DONE Training Updates for Board Members

VIII. Presidential Comments - Jorge spoke about the success of National Night Out and the importance of outreach and participation by board members at area events. He thanked everyone who attended and acknowledged the organizations that participated.

Attendance at Board Meetings: Every 2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday of the month, board members meet, and this is where the real work is done: voting on items and making decisions that impact the community. While every board meeting has met quorum for the past three years, he noted that it has been close to not making quorum. As stated in the bylaws, if a board member misses three regularly scheduled board meetings or four total Governing board meetings, he will be removed from the NWNC board.

## IX. GOVERNMENT REPORTS

- a) Public Safety LAPD Devonshire Division. (non-emergency number 1 877-ASK LAPD) – No report was given.
- b) CD 12 City Council Representative: Jonathan Coto, Councilmember Lee's Project Coordinator.
  - Jonathan thanked everyone for participating in National Night Out and gave a shout-out to the Devonshire Division of LAPD for putting on a great event. He said the Councilmember is opposed to the proposed merger between Kroeger and Albertsons supermarkets as he feels this would threaten the neighborhoods in CD12 as well as the store employees. As such, he has introduced a resolution stating they are against the merger and the FTC is looking into this proposal now.
  - He also co-presented a motion last week asking LAPD to report to Council on transitioning sworn civilians into LAPD to make the hiring process easier and faster.
  - The city has extended its AI Fresco dining application period to December 21, 2024, to allow local restaurants to expand their outdoor dining.

- This month is National Dog Month: to celebrate this, L.A. Animal Services is reducing their adoption fees for dogs and cats during August at all six shelters.

Kathleen and Jorge thanked Jonathan for his efforts with National Night Out. Jorge also thanked Janice for the outreach she did for NNO.

c) Other Government Departments/Agencies:

Assemblymember Pilar Schiavo talked about work her office is doing in Sacramento. They also secured \$20MM for the district which includes a new groundbreaking at CSUN with a supportive network to help student who are low income. Other investments went to LAUSD to provide food for families, foster youth services, and housing for the homeless in the district. Despite a budget shortfall, she was able to secure a \$2 MM investment for the Boys and Girls Center and a couple of other programs, including Veteran Housing. Over \$22MM was brought back to the district in the last year and a half. Housing, Health, and Homelessness are their main focuses. She also detailed different bills she has submitted to address concerns as the chairperson of the Military and Veterans' Affairs and chairperson of the Electric Vehicles Subcommittee.

*Kathleen asked about the tax gouging going on with gasoline in California.*

The Assemblymember said those dollars pay for infrastructure improvements. If that funding disappears, she was not sure how they would pay for roads and infrastructure. However, she noted that funding for this tax will be lessening as more people transition to electric vehicles. Currently, the tax is a dollar per gallon. She pointed out that there is a gas station in Chatsworth that is charging \$3.99 per gallon right now. She acknowledged that prices were over \$6.00 just a few months ago and said they are trying to figure out how to address this variation.

*Jorge asked if there is anything that will happen differently to prepare for the Olympics in 2028?*

She said there is a caucus to ensure that the billions of dollars being invested for the Olympics will include sites in the Valley. This is what the delegation has been advocating for. She suggested that everyone lend their voices to support this effort. She listed these upcoming events: Senior Fair in Santa Clarita on Oct. 10<sup>th</sup> and a Financial Planning Fair in W. San Fernando Valley in October.

d) Department of Neighborhood Empowerment: No report was given.

e) Budget Advocate, [budgetadvocates.org](http://budgetadvocates.org): Budget Advocate Glenn Bailey said they are helping new board members who have been elected to the NCs. Trainings will be coming up with the CAO for Budget Advocates and they are looking at doing one longer training, as opposed to two separate trainings ( 2.5 or 3 hours long). He also explained the process of participating on the committees that meet with General Managers or CFOs of the City departments.

## X. NWNC COMMITTEE REPORTS

- a) Executive Committee: Jorge A Jiménez said there was no meeting this month.
- b) Public Safety: Kathleen Edwards talked about the presentation at the last VANC meeting on artificial turf. See: [CF24-06-02](#), which advocates that a study be done on the effects of artificial turf on people's health and is supported by Urban Forestry. She explained that artificial turf has been measured at 160 degrees in the heat, which is higher than block top (155 degrees) and considerably higher than regular soil's temperature. She noted that trees surrounding artificial turf are dying. There are also health issues for humans and animals as artificial turf emits toxins that are dangerous to breathe and the methane and forever chemicals accumulate in the environment and living tissue. Consequently, artificial turf is not environmentally safe. The L.A. City Council is considering having a City Department report back on these effects. She asked that a presentation on artificial turf be added to the Sept. agenda for NWNC.
- c) Government Affairs (Greg Wood) – No report.
- d) Planning and Land Use: Brian Cathcart talked about articles of interest that were posted on the NWNC website relating to the value and worth of trees in our communities and on wildfire insurance.
- e) Elections: Jorge has spoken with the EmpowerLA rep about the NWNC bylaws and said there is some verbiage that needs to be amended in the coming year. Kathleen asked for further info on the need to change the bylaws language. Jorge said that Section B. needs to mirror exactly how the bylaws read. There was also discussion about a motion by the City Council to limit the terms of board members to allow for more opportunity for Youth Reps and how this could impact the elections.
- f) Homelessness (Angelica Robinson) – No report.
- g) Beautification (Jorge A Jiménez) – No report.
- h) Budget (Joel Lowell said he got a notice that the rent is going up for their storage area, but that it is already reflected in the budget.
- i) Outreach (Janis Kraft) – No report.
- j) Education – No report.

## XI: OLD BUSINESS

- a) Inventory: Present NWNC physical inventory count update to the board and hold discussions if needed. Jorge reviewed the inventory process saying the storage area is now incredibly organized. He thanked everyone who showed up to help and has a spreadsheet of what is listed in the inventory.

There was discussion about the correct process for disposing of electronics and items valued at \$1,000 as well as furniture under \$1,000, which Glenn said should be returned to the city.

## XII. NEW BUSINESS

- a) Discussion and possible motion to request a limited amendment to Article X (Elections) Section 4 (Method of Verifying Stakeholder Status) of NWNC's Bylaws to change methods of verifying voter eligibility identification requirements for stakeholders voting in neighborhood council elections.

Jorge noted that Kathleen had already touched on this in terms of voter eligibility. Glenn explained in detail why this Article was proposed which came out of problems voting by mail during Covid. When an NC opts for their election to be vote by self-affirmation, photo IDs are required. With vote by mail, there is always the opportunity for people to use false addresses to make it possible to vote. Glenn spoke about the registration process for both and issues that may result if the bylaws do not reflect the way an NC wants to do their election.

Motion made by Brian Cathcart, seconded by Kathleen Edwards to keep the bylaws the same as they are currently.

Vote: 8-0-1

Ayes: Jorge Jimenez, Kathleen Edwards, Janis Kraft, Kevin Herzberg, Brian Cathcart, Nicolas Haddad, Aaminah Babatunde-Bea, and Zaven Atashian.

Opposed: 0

Abstaining: Joel Lowell

Absent: Wood and Robinson

- b) Discussion and possible motion to approve funding of \$2,500 for an NPG submitted by North Valley Family YMCA to support their annual YMCA Thanksgiving Baskets distribution program for families in need in the north San Fernando Valley area.

David Hartmire of the North Valley Family YMCA explained that they are currently requesting double that amount as the need grown across the Valley for this program. He apologized for getting the paperwork with the changed amount in too late to vote at this meeting. The "Y" has reached out to every school and been inundated with requests for this event. They now have over 700 volunteers who have agreed to help this event.

- Brian asked for statistics on the increase. David stated that they went from serving 2,000 meals across the Valley to 4,000. This includes 50 - 60 families per school.

- Kathleen asked if NWNC will be credited on their event flyer if they approve the NPG. David confirmed that they would as all the sponsors will be recognized on their event flyer and throughout the year at the “Y.”
- Kathleen then asked for a report back on the success of this event. David promised to send a letter with comments from some of the families they help.
- Kathleen noted that it is a worthy cause. While the agenda stated the funding be approved at \$2,500, she asked if it could be increased to \$5,000.
- Joel stated that the amount on the motion must reflect what is on the agenda and if the board wanted to approve another amount next month, it could be done that way, instead of doubling the amount at this meeting. Mr. Hartmire agreed to return next month to support it again.
- Janice said she participated in this event and in helping other food banks and would vote for more funding next month.
- Nick Haddad then asked for an accounting of the monies available in the budget.

Motion made by Kathleen Edwards, seconded by Janice Kraft, to approve an initial amount of \$2,500 for the North Valley Family YMCA's NPG to support their annual YMCA Thanksgiving Baskets distribution program for families in need in the north San Fernando Valley area.

Vote: Unanimous. 9-0-0.

Ayes: Jorge Jimenez, Kathleen Edwards, Janis Kraft, Kevin Herzberg, Brian Cathcart, Nicolas Haddad, Aaminah Babatunde-Bea, Joel Lowell, and Zaven Atashian.

Opposed: 0

Absent: Wood and Robinson

C. Discussion on Council File CF 24-0867 Proposed Changes to Neighborhood Council Board Structures to determine if Northridge West Neighborhood Council should take a position and file a CIS (Community Impact Statement) if the council file reaches the city council committee(s).

Kathleen said this involves term limits being imposed on NC board members. (related from a previous CF 21-0407). She reported that 18 out of 34 NCs did not have enough candidates in their last elections for all the positions that were open, so this seemed like a blatant attempt to silence neighborhood councils or to make them fail. She also thinks a lot of NCs would go under with this restriction.

*Motion (Rodriguez - Hernandez) relative to Board of Neighborhood Commissioners, with assistance of the Department of Neighborhood Empowerment, and relevant departments be requested to provide recommendations on potential methods and options to amend the Neighborhood Council Bylaws (Bylaws) to ensure youth participation in Neighborhood Councils including the designation of a youth seat on each Neighborhood Council board to increase diversity and allow for leadership growth.*

Glenn Bailey pointed out that this Council File does not specify the limitations; rather, it has to do with making room for a Youth Seat. He said it has been referred to committee and that one NC has already filed a CIS.

Kathleen noted that there have not been candidates for a Youth Seat at NWNC even though there is room for one. To mandate this would affect quorum. Kathleen suggesting tabling it until there is more information on this.

Motion made by Joel Lowell, seconded by Brian Cathcart to table voting on this motion until more information can be obtained.

Vote: The motion passed unanimously. 9-0-0.

Ayes: Jorge Jimenez, Kathleen Edwards, Janis Kraft, Kevin Herzberg, Brian Cathcart, Nicolas Haddad, Aaminah Babatunde-Bea, Joel Lowell, and Zaven Atashian.

Opposed: 0

Abstaining: 0

Absent: Wood and Robinson

d) Discussion and possible motion to approve funding of up to \$4000 in Outreach Funds to support the hosting of the NWNC sponsored North Valley Community Art Faire in the fall of 2024.

Janice said that due to the lack of time to plan this event and obtain permits, this item needs to be approved at this time. The Art Faire will be held on Oct. 27, 2024, at a location still to be determined. One of the issues that remains is that Rec & Parks requires a portion of the sale of any art pieces.

Kathleen suggested modifying the motion, taking out the word "sponsoring," and substituting it is "participating in," since NWNC would be responsible for fees if sponsoring this event. She suggested getting information about whether artists can sell their art at the park and whether Rec and Parks would require a portion of the proceeds.

Motion made by Janice Kraft, seconded by Joel Lowell to amend the verbiage to approve up to \$4,000 to support the hosting of the North Valley Community Art Faire in the fall of 2024, in which NWNC is participating.

Vote: 8-0-1 (Zaven)

Ayes: Jorge Jimenez, Kathleen Edwards, Janis Kraft, Kevin Herzberg, Brian Cathcart, Nicolas Haddad, Aaminah Babatunde-Bea, and Joel Lowell.

Opposed: 0

Abstaining: Zaven Atashian

Absent: Wood and Robinson



Motion made by Janice Kraft, seconded by Joel Lowell to approve up to \$4,000 to support the hosting of the North Valley Community Art Faire in the fall of 2024, in which NWNC is participating.

Vote: 8-0-1 (Zaven)

Ayes: Jorge Jimenez, Kathleen Edwards, Janis Kraft, Kevin Herzberg, Brian Cathcart, Nicolas Haddad, Aaminah Babatunde-Bea, and Joel Lowell.

Opposed: 0

Abstaining: Zaven Atashian

Absent: Wood and Robinson

Motion to Adjourn: Joel Lowell moved, Janice Kraft seconded, the motion to adjourn the board meeting at 9:25 p.m.

Votes: 9-0-0.

Ayes: Jorge Jimenez, Kathleen Edwards, Janis Kraft, Kevin Herzberg, Brian Cathcart, Nicolas Haddad, Aaminah Babatunde-Bea, Joel Lowell, and Zaven Atashian.

Opposed: 0

Abstaining: 0

Absent: Wood and Robinson