

**SYLMAR NEIGHBORHOOD COUNCIL
EXECUTIVE OFFICERS**

PRESIDENT: Don Neal
VICE-PRESIDENTS: George Ortega
and Kristin Mills
TREASURER: Chris Shows
PUBLIC RELATIONS: Jose Oliva



SYLMAR NEIGHBORHOOD COUNCIL

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Minutes of the
**SYLMAR NEIGHBORHOOD COUNCIL (SNC)
GENERAL BOARD MEETING
Thursday, December 19, 2013**

Sylmar High School, Spartan Hall, 13050 Borden Ave., Sylmar, CA 91342

SNC (and all other) Meeting Minutes are a summary, not an exact, verbatim, word-for-word transcript of what was said at a Meeting. The only two exceptions to this are the Motions and quotes, which are words that have quotation marks (“”) at the beginning and ending of a word or words. The Minutes were not, are not and are never meant to be a comprehensive record of what was said about an issue or project.

1. Call to Order and Pledge of Allegiance

President Don Neal called the meeting to order at 6:33 p.m. The Pledge of Allegiance was said.

2. Roll Call

Roll Call was taken by the Secretary. Eleven of the 19 Board Members were present at the beginning of the Meeting: Ricardo Benitez, Kathy Bloom, Ann Job, Sherry Lincoln, Derek Martin, Don Neal, Judi Neal, George Ortega, Chardell Powell, Patricia Rau and Chris Shows. Laurie Fadness arrived later. Board Members absent: Cheri Blose, Deidre Campbell-Jones, Rubi Ramirez, Roy Smith and Diane Valencia (all excused), and Kristin Mills and Jose Oliva (both unexcused). The SNC quorum (the minimum number of Board Members needing to be present to take binding votes on Agendized Items) is 11, so the Board could take such votes. Nineteen of the 21 Board Seats were filled. Two Board Seats (Industrial and Retail) were vacant. Also attending: 19 Stakeholders and Guests.

3. Housekeeping, Speaker Cards and Timekeeper – Mr. Neal explained this.

4. Welcome, Introduction and Announcements by Board Meeting Host.

Meeting Host Derek Martin welcomed everyone and reported that Sylmar High School Teacher Steve List and some students “fed the Fire Department” yesterday and got a fire engine tour.

5. Approval of the Minutes

MOTION (by Mr. Benitez, seconded by Mr. Ortega): The Sylmar Neighborhood Council approves the Minutes of its October 24, 2013 General Board Meeting as written.

MOTION PASSED unanimously by a hand vote.

It was agreed to TABLE approval of the November 21, 2013 Minutes.

6. Public Officials and Community Representatives announcements and presentations.

Marco Santana, Case Manager for U.S. 29th District of California Congressman Tony Cardenas (818-504-0090; Marco.Santana@mail.house.gov; <http://cardenas.house.gov>), offered help with veterans affairs, housing, social security, healthcare and more. Information is available about proposed and passed legislation. Stakeholder Tom Weissbarth of Sylmar Graffiti Busters reported that Graffiti Busters was asked to leave by December 31st “the building that we brought in and built” and asked for help. He also distributed information about and reported that “SIBL’s (the Sylmar Independent Baseball League) in serious trouble”; two groups are infighting and claiming to be the SIBL Board. He described the dispute as being about control of the property, the Board and a tax situation.

7. Board Member community announcements.

Mr. Benitez announced that yesterday Hamer Toyota had a Grand Opening. Mr. Martin noted that LAUSD schools are out tomorrow for winter break and asked to “please drive carefully.”

8. Reports

Secretary -- The Secretary reported on recent work including the website, spam e-mails, the Election Procedures Stipulation Worksheet, street cleaning, forwarding land use documents and more.

Treasurer/Budget – Mr. Shows reported that he is waiting for DONE [the L.A. Dept. of Neighborhood Empowerment] to process a new Purchase Card application so that items can be paid.

Land Use -- Mr. Ortega reported that there may be a project to consider at the January Committee Meeting.

Outreach – Mr. Benitez indicated that there was no report.

Government Affairs, Public Safety and Services -- Mr. Shows encouraged attending the January Meeting.

Equestrian – Mr. Neal indicated that there was no report.

Bylaws -- Mr. Martin indicated that there was no report.

Election – Ms. Job reported that the Election Candidate filing period is from December 23rd through January 22nd for the Saturday, March 8th SNC Election. She

encouraged being a Candidate, which is “a commitment.” Ms. Lincoln announced the January 10th “Rally in the Valley” Candidates and other Stakeholders event. Mr. Neal reported that Facebook participation is “growing.” DONE IEA (Independent Election Administrator) Jose Sandoval (JoseS@EmpowerLA.org; 818.984.2133; www.EmpowerLA.org), encouraged applying as a Candidate at www.EmpowerLA.org/Elections or faxing or e-mailing. All Seats will be open.

President – Mr. Neal reported that the Metropolitan Water District installed a monument at the MWD headquarters downtown to recognize the 1971 Sylmar Tunnel Disaster. Mr. Ortega added that, if a pocket park is created near the Disaster site near Maclay and Fenton, another monument could be installed.

Ad Hoc Pacoima Dam Sediment Removal – Ms. Job indicated she will advise of when the next Scoping Meeting date will be held. Ms. Rau reported that the L.A. County Dept. of Public Works website [<http://dpw.LACounty.gov>] indicates that the Meeting will be held in Spring 2014. Mr. Neal explained that the SNC Bylaws indicate that, as of the March 8th SNC Election, this Committee must be dissolved; it can be re-created after the Election.

9. Public Comments

Stakeholder Ivan Forbes was concerned that pit bulls attacked other dogs in El Cariso Park. He wants support for legislation for pit bulls to only be walked by an adult and muzzled while being walked. Stakeholder Eugene Hernandez was concerned about challenges to homeless persons’ rights, especially at holiday times. Bart Trevino of the San Fernando Valley Partnership (818-837-7767; BTrevino@SFVP.org) was concerned that many youth have easy access to alcohol; he would like to partner with Neighborhood Councils to address the issue. He requested and Mr. Neal agreed to Agendize this. George Castaneda of NextDoor.com, “a private social network” that allows neighborhood groups to connect with each other, said it is “completely secure in your own neighborhood” and that Mayor Garcetti has given “his full support.” They “launched” web pages for all Neighborhood Councils that can be used for outreach through any mobile device. He explained that “the idea is to keep the information local . . . it’s the mirror opposite of Facebook.” He described a “verification process” for which “no credit card information is needed.” Stakeholder Hiral Bhakta encouraged the SNC to support having a memorial in Sylmar to recognize the 1971 Sylmar Tunnel Disaster. Mr. Ortega commented that Food for Less will take the Ralph’s Market space.

Old Business

10. Appointment and possible vote [see the below Motion].

Mr. Neal described the event.

FUNDING MOTION (by Mr. Ortega, seconded by Mr. Shows): The Sylmar Neighborhood Council approves a Neighborhood Purpose Grant in the amount of \$2,400 to financially support the Mission Community Police Council event, Race for Youth, for facility rental for event.

DISCUSSION: Mr. Neal relayed that DONE indicated that the funding must be allocated as a Neighborhood Purposes Grant (NPG). He described that the event is an annual fundraiser to support the LAPD Mission Station Cadet program. Mr. Hernandez believed that “this is a waste of money.”

Board Member Laurie Fadness arrived at this time.

FUNDING MOTION PASSED unanimously by a roll call vote of the ten eligible voters present with all 10 in favor (“Yes” or “Aye”) (Benitez, Bloom, Fadness, Job, Lincoln, Don Neal, Judi Neal, Ortega, Powell and Shows).

11. Discussion and possible vote [see the below Motion].

[This Agenda Item was addressed after Item #13.] Armand Santos of the Prometheus Development Group presented slides displaying capabilities of the application. Their “main clients are Community College Districts.” He indicated that content updating would be up to the SNC. Mr. DeVandry believed the application would be “redundant” of the website.

FUNDING MOTION (by Ms. Fadness, seconded by Mr. Benitez): The Sylmar Neighborhood Council will purchase a mobile application from Prometheus Development Group, not to exceed \$3,000 to assist w/ Sylmar NC Outreach & Elections. Presentation by Armand Santos (10.) *The initial investment to develop the application for Apple®, Google® and HTML5 shall be \$3,000.00, inclusive of the first year of access and control of the application. The yearly investment to continue access, control and basic technology updates shall be \$1,700. Additionally, a \$99 yearly fee is to be paid to Apple® and \$25 to Google®.*

MOTION to CALL FOR THE QUESTION (by Mr. Neal); there were no objections.

FUNDING MOTION PASSED by a roll call vote of the ten eligible voters present with six in favor (“Yes” or “Aye”) (Benitez, Bloom, Fadness, Don Neal, Judi Neal and Shows) and four opposed (“No” or “Nay”) (Job, Lincoln, Ortega and Powell).

New Business

12. Presentation and possible vote for alternate/ new website design for Sylmar NC Board consideration. Presentation by Aaron DeVandry. Aaron DeVandry, “webmaster for 15 Neighborhood Councils,” (NCs) described how he organizes NC websites. He believed the SNC website needs a redesign and described his ability to greatly increase website visits. He “wouldn’t charge for” redesigning the website; after that, he would want “a basic maintenance fee.”

MOTION to TABLE (by Mr. Ortega, seconded by Mr. Powell): The Sylmar Neighborhood Council TABLES this Item.

MOTION PASSED by a hand vote with ten in favor; one abstained.

13. Discussion and possible vote to purchase an updated and mobile “responsive” redesign of our website to assist with Sylmar NC Outreach & Elections, not to exceed \$3,500. Presentation by Wendy Moore.

It was noted that the amount above should be \$3,600, not \$3,500. Ms. Moore, the current SNC Webmaster, displayed slides and described “content about Sylmar” on the website, as opposed to other NC websites that do not show as much content about their neighborhoods. She described quickly posting content and photos about Sylmar news and events on the website. Ms. Moore contrasted the readability of the SNC website with other NC websites. She displayed possible website designs. Her fee, which would be in addition to an annual maintenance fee, would include website redesign, about which she sent information to the Board last May, and to make it “mobile responsive.” She would use the Drupal content management system instead of Wordpress. She estimated that “the mobile part could easily be a third of” the \$3,600. Mr. Hernandez believed that \$3,600 was way too much. Another person encouraged keeping the current website, saying “it’s Board Members’ responsibility to keep the website updated.”

MOTION to TABLE (by Ms. Fadness, seconded by Ms. Lincoln): The Sylmar Neighborhood Council TABLES this Item.

DISCUSSION: It was noted that an annual agreement or contract between the SNC and Ms. Moore was approved last October [3rd, General Board Meeting].

MOTION PASSED by a hand vote with seven in favor; one opposed; one abstained.

14. Discussion and possible vote [see the below Motion].

Mr. Neal explained the ads.

FUNDING MOTION (by Ms. Fadness, seconded by Mr. Ortega): The Sylmar Neighborhood Council allocates funds for two Daily News full-page color ads for its NC Election, not to exceed \$800.

DISCUSSION: It was explained that one ad would be for candidate recruitment (runs one day during first week in January) and one for 'get out the vote' (runs one day during first week in March) – approximately \$378 each (approximately \$756 for both). In addition, the SNC would share the ad expense with other NCs. Ms. Lincoln noted that other NCs also advertise in La Opinion Newspaper.

FUNDING MOTION PASSED unanimously by a roll call vote of the ten eligible voters present with all 10 in favor (“Yes” or “Aye”) (Benitez, Bloom, Fadness, Job, Lincoln, Don Neal, Judi Neal, Ortega, Powell and Shows).

15. Discussion and possible vote [see the below Motion].

FUNDING MOTION (by Mr. Ortega, seconded by Ms. Fadness): The Sylmar Neighborhood Council allocates funds for two North Valley Reporter full-page ads, not to exceed \$300.

DISCUSSION: It was explained that one ad would be for candidate recruitment and one for 'get out the vote' – approximately \$125 each (approximately \$250 for both). Mr. Hernandez was concerned that the North Valley Reporter is not visible enough in Sylmar to justify the expense; he believed that “The Sun” newspaper would be better because it is bilingual. Ms. Job explained that the first ad would include the January 10th Rally in the Valley; the second ad would encourage voting.

FUNDING MOTION PASSED by a roll call vote of the ten eligible voters present with nine in favor (“Yes” or “Aye”) (Benitez, Bloom, Job, Lincoln, Don Neal, Judi Neal, Ortega, Powell and Shows) and one opposed (“No” or “Nay”) (Fadness).

16. Appointments and possible vote to approve new Board Members to open Seats: Retail and Industrial, and Committee Chairs, as needed. There were no candidates at this time.

17. Board Member Comments

Board Members thanked Stakeholders for attending this Meeting.

18. Future Agenda Items, Meeting date

Mr. Neal encouraged to write Agenda suggestions to the Executive Board at ExecutiveBoard@SylmarNC.org, or mail Sylmar Neighborhood Council, c/o Sylmar Recreation Center, 13109 Borden Ave., Sylmar, CA 91342. The next General Board Meeting will be on December 19, 2013. Location: Sylmar Recreation Center, Sylmar Park.

19. Closing Remarks, Acknowledgements and Adjournment

MOTION to ADJOURN (by Ms. Fadness, seconded by Mr. Benitez).

MOTION to ADJOURN PASSED with no objections.

Mr. Neal declared the Meeting **ADJOURNED** at 9:02 p.m.

Minutes written by DL.