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SPECIAL MEETING OF THE PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE - MINUTES
Tuesday, December 19, 2017 - 6:30 PM
Denny's Restaurant (Private Room), 13201 Gladstone Avenue, Sylmar, CA 91342

Committee Chair – Diane Valencia
Vice Chair – Tom Weissbarth

Sylmar Neighborhood Council Meeting Minutes are a summary, not an exact, verbatim, word-for-word transcript of what was said at a Meeting. The only two exceptions are the Motions shown in italics and quotes shown with quotation marks (“ ”) at the beginning and ending of a word or words. The Minutes are not, nor were they ever meant to be, a comprehensive record of what was said about an issue or project.

1. **Call to Order**

Ms. Valencia called the meeting to order at 6:36 PM

2. **Housekeeping:** Sign-In Sheets, taking of Minutes, etc.

Ms. Valencia explained these items and thanked everyone in attendance for being available for another Special meeting to discuss time sensitive topics.

3. **Roll Call** of Committee

All Committee members present: Diane Valencia, Tom Weissbarth, Kurt Cabrera-Miller, Kathy Grubert, Bonnie Bernard, Robyn Farrow, Art Rocco

4. **Public Comment** on non-agendized matters, within the Committee's subject matter jurisdiction.

None

5. **Public Official Comments / Presentations, including Q&A**

None

6. **Appointment and/or removal** by Committee Chair of Committee Member(s)

No action. Ms. Valencia noted that this would be a recurring item on the agenda to provide flexibility with adding or removing members based on the need to do so.

7. **Discussion and possible action** to approve the draft Minutes of the October 12, 2017 Public Safety Committee meeting.

In the interest of time, Ms. Valencia suggested that items #7-9 be tabled to the next regular meeting to allow time to discuss the core items on the evening's agenda. No objections.

8. Discussion and possible action **to approve the draft Minutes of the November 9, 2017 Public Safety Committee meeting.**

See note under item #7

9. Discussion and possible action **to approve the draft Minutes of the December 11, 2017 Public Safety Committee meeting.**

See note under item #7

10. Discussion, updates and possible action **regarding open / action items of the Public Safety Committee.**

Ms. Valencia reported that on December 13 she received a response from the LAPD to our recent public records request. That response directed us to two public websites for the requested information and said they were closing our request. After determining that neither website contained our requested information, Diane sent an email back to the LAPD Discovery Section reporting our findings and saying that we consider our request yet unfulfilled and, therefore, still open. To date, Diane has not received a response from the LAPD to that email.

Further discussion on this topic involved discussion about reporting homelessness issues on the 311 app and clarification by Tom Weisbarth and Kurt Cabrera-Miller that reports regarding homelessness on the 311 app go to the Los Angeles Department of Sanitation.

Ms. Valencia will prepare a living document for review at subsequent meetings.

11. **Discussion and possible action** regarding concerns regarding local businesses – presented by Robyn Farrow.

Robyn Farrow reported some suspicious behavior that has been observed by nearby businesses and community members with respect to two different local businesses in the vicinity of Roxford and Glenoaks. Ms. Valencia indicated that she would forward these concerns to the LAPD and would work with Robyn on this issue.

12. **Discussion and possible action** regarding public safety aspects of the Street Dwelling Ordinance (LAMC 85.02).

Penny McMillan reported on the City's Transportation related resolutions and, despite there being positive action by the City Council in other communities to remove certain streets/areas for street dwelling, CD7 has yet to take action on Sylmar's behalf. Consequently, the City is doing little to improve conditions surrounding problems related to Sylmar's green zones.

Ms. Valencia voiced her concerns and presented evidence about fire dangers related to green zones in areas of Sylmar designated Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones. There was general agreement by committee members and stakeholders present that the committee should write a letter on this topic, to be voted upon at our next meeting.

Mr. Weissbarth suggested that regular street sweeping should be posted and implemented to avoid public safety health risks, including Hepatitis A.

Motion by Kathy Grubert, Second by Kurt Cabrera-Miller: **We request that all green zones in Sylmar be posted for weekly street sweeping and sanitation for a minimum of 4 hours.**

Motion passed: 6 in favor, 1 abstain (Tom Weisbarth), 0 opposed.

13. **Discussion and possible action** regarding public safety aspects related to Homeless Encampments

Ms. Valencia presented evidence of a string of fires in Sylmar over recent months related to this issue. This is a safety issue for the entire community, including the homeless themselves. There was a general agreement by those present that a letter should be written and directed to our CD7 office with a copy to LAPD Chief Sherman, our local Fire Chief, and LA's City Attorney. The content of the letter should highlight past incidences of fires in Sylmar that have been directly linked to homelessness encampments/individuals and request that a multi-agency

task force be created to regularly inspect and enforce a zero-tolerance policy for unlawful camping, illegal burning, and trespassing in areas of Sylmar designated Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones. The letter will be considered at the next committee meeting.

14. **Discussion and possible action** related to holding a Special Public Safety Committee meeting / Community Forum related to solicit input/feedback from community members regarding the Creek Fire

Motion by Kurt Cabrera-Miller and seconded by Art Rocco: **The SNC Public Safety Committee, jointly with the SNC Emergency Preparedness Committee, will hold a community town hall on January 6, 2018 at Olive View Hospital.**

Discussion involved concern over the possibility of related expenditures exceeding those allowed to committees for “regular and customary expenditures” for their committee meetings, especially given the time constraint involved in gaining Budget Committee and Board approval for such expenditures.

There was much discussion of the SNC’s Bylaws lack of clarity on what is considered “reasonable and customary” expenditures by committees. Ms. Valencia commented that she has never seen or heard such a term used by DONE and that she felt that outreach expenditures for meeting expenses should be able to come out of the Outreach category as the Board has already voted for funds to be spend in that manner. Bonnie Bernard pointed out that none of the SNC’s committees have been designated any specific amount in the budget to spend on their meetings, and that there should be uniformity across the SNC’s committees with respect to how and by whom “reasonable and customary” expenditures are defined. Ms. Valencia indicated a feeling that this term was vague and subjective.

Despite much discussion, there remained a general lack of clarity on what the SNC Bylaws and past history (from George Ortega, SNC’s current Treasurer) might suggest, regarding the definition of “reasonable and customary” expenditures, or has there been any advise provided by DONE. Therefore, it was ultimately generally agreed by committee members and stakeholders present that, due to its importance to Sylmar and the City (i.e. our community’s need to debrief the recent Creek Fire and to respond to the City’s request for feedback on the subject), the town hall should go ahead as planned but with limited resources (free room, no signage, refreshments, etc). It was further generally agreed that the committees will make every effort not to exceed “reasonable and customary” expenses that might be incurred by the two aforementioned hosting committees (around \$75 per committee).

Mary Gallardo and other community members offered to assist with the meeting.

Motion passed: 7-0

15. **Committee Member Comments** on subject matters within the Committee’s jurisdiction

Ms. Bernard commented that she was outraged about an outreach roadblock and that “all committees have a right to spend money on outreach”. Kurt Cabrera-Miller commented that the SNC needs to designate in their budget money for emergency situations, like the Creek Fire, so that the SNC can respond timely and appropriately.

16. **Future Agenda Items:** Please e-mail the Committee Chair, Diane Valencia, at Diane.Valencia@SylmarNC.org

17. **Closing Remarks, Announcements, Acknowledgements, and Adjournment**

Ms. Valencia called for adjournment of the meeting at 8:46 PM with no objections.