

CITY OF LOS ANGELES
CALIFORNIA

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Nick Perdaris TBA



WWW.SVANC.ORG

Sun Valley Area
Neighborhood Council
9000 Sunland Blvd, Suite "A"
Sun Valley, CA 91353-0457
Telephone 818-767-8262
Fax 818-767-7510

**SUN VALLEY AREA NEIGHBORHOOD COUNCIL
GENERAL BOARD MEETING
Tuesday, April 8, 2008
Villa Scalabrini Retirement Center
10631 Vinedale Street
Sun Valley, CA 91352**

1. Call to Order, Pledge of Allegiance, Roll Call, SVANC Pledge

The General Meeting of the Sun Valley Area Neighborhood Council (SVANC) was called to order by President Jon Eshbach at 6:30 p.m. The Pledge of Allegiance was said, and then Roll Call was taken.

Board Members Present: Susan Bartlett, Mary Benson, Manuel De La Torre, Jon Eshbach, Frank Felix, Raul Gonzalez, Julie Monroy, Lee McTaggart, Larry Mellon, Mike O’Gara, Nicholas Perdaris (late), Jerry Piro, Dr. Ronald Sipus, and Art Sweet.

Board Members absent were: Yolanda Aranda (unexcused), Virginia Beck (unexcused), Tina Cameron (unexcused), Stephen Franklin (excused), Sylvia Gracia (unexcused), Jose Morales (excused), Carmen Perez (unexcused), John Prieto (unexcused), Exiquio Ruiz (unexcused), Jorge Torres (unexcused), and Nancy Vasquez (unexcused).

Fourteen of the 25 Board Members were present, which is a quorum and the business of the Council could be conducted.

Also present were approximately 30 Stakeholders and Guests.

2. Review, correct and approve the Minutes

While Board Members read the Minutes, Mr. Eshbach requested that visitors sign in.

MOTION (by Ms. Benson, seconded by Mr. Sweet): to accept the Minutes of the March 11, 2008 General Board Meeting as written.

MOTION PASSED by voice vote.

3. Emergency Personnel from Fire and Police Departments

Michelle Rodriguez, LAPD (L.A. Police Dept.) Senior Lead Officer (818-634-0755; 31020@lapd.lacity.org), reminded everyone to lock their homes to prevent burglaries

and to call 911 if you see a burglary in action, even if they're not in the home yet. Officer Esther Vasquez introduced herself and encouraged people to call her if they have a question at (818) 634-0854.

4. Presentation/announcements from elected officials or their representatives.

Gemma Jimenez, Field Deputy for State 20th District Senator Alex Padilla (818-901-5588; gemma.jimenez@sen.ca.gov), announced an April 27th Spring Parade on Van Nuys Boulevard to the government Civic Center, and encouraged everyone to file their taxes.

Olga Ayala, Field Deputy for L.A. City District Six Councilman Tony Cardenas (818-756-7558; olga.ayala@lacity.org), introduced new Planning Deputy Daniel Skolnick and related that approval has been received for more transportation projects, including beautification, street resurfacing, and lighting. She will check regarding construction at the intersection of San Fernando Road and Tuxford Street.

[The following report was given after Item #6.]

Joaquin Macias, Field Deputy for L.A. City District Two Councilwoman Wendy Gruel (213-473-7002; joaquin.macias@lacity.org), mentioned that many volunteers participated in last Saturday's community clean-up. The Cultural Affairs Department met with the mural project artist; after some complications, they're now able to move forward. Q-Star cameras are ready to be set up; they hold up to 1,000 pictures and can be downloaded without wires. A recent murder suspect was caught because of such a camera image.

5. Comments from D.O.N.E. representative

Mr. Eshbach said that our DONE (L.A. City Dept. of Neighborhood Empowerment) (213-485-1360; lacityneighborhoods.com) representative might be here later.

6. Public Comment

Stakeholder Karl Kunak reported that the Van Nuys Rescue Mission, Jill Campbell Tax Services and Andy Gump companies are willing to set up portable baths for homeless people, and clothing donations are needed. Also, more candidates were needed to help with the election.

Stakeholder Bob Alborzian (818-841-0548; www.sidewalkastronomers.us) of the Sidewalk Astronomers introduced himself and described the organization, which provides public services around the world. He announced a free Hansen Dam Star Party on April 11th from 7:30 - 9:30 p.m., at the Aquatic Center, weather permitting.

7. Board member comments

Mr. Sweet explained that NCs are allocated \$50,000 per year by the City and will lose the rollover amount by July 1st if it is not spent by then. He proposes an estimated \$25,000 to \$30,000 drainage improvement project at 7990 Lorne Street and San Fernando Road. For a long time, every time it rains, so much water collects there it's called "Lake Sun Valley." He would like the Board to support fixing this and to meet

with Councilman Cardenas to also get his support. Fixing this would beautify Sun Valley and help attract businesses.

Ms. Benson stated that she and Mr. O’Gara met with DONE funding Manager Kevin McNeely, who confirmed that the City would only allow up to \$150,000 to be held in an NC account, and that the NC can only submit bills for this fiscal year, which ends June 30th, until June 13th. This is for funds spent, not funds earmarked. Also, there’s more good information on the DONE website.

Mr. O’Gara related that the City might change the \$50,000 annual NC allocation to \$45,000 or \$40,000 per year. SVANC now has approximately \$110,000 to \$112,000 in its account.

Mr. Piro announced that Crown Disposal committed to donate 5,000 trees.

Ms. McTaggart announced that the VST (Volunteer Surveillance Team) is buying a surveillance van, estimated to cost \$35,000 outfitted.

Ms. Monroy stated that she’d requested to have the following agenda item for this Meeting: on May 3rd there’ll be an Environmental Clean-Up at Sun Valley Recreation Center, with the clean-up from 8:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m. and a Health Fair following from 11:00 – 2:00.

Ms. Bartlett will submit an invoice for Graffiti Busters work completed in La Tuna Canyon through the Foothill Trails District NC.

Committee Reports: President, Treasurer, Land Use, Outreach, Community Service, Bradley Landfill Ad-Hoc, Office Ad-hoc.

[The following reports were given after Speaker #1.]

President

Mr. Eshbach reported that DONE paid for website work. Robert McAllister and Mr. O’Gara did a lot of work on the election; results will soon be available.

Treasurer

Mr. Eshbach said that there’s no report at this time and no Treasurer. Mr. O’Gara and Ms. Benson are doing the work. Bills are being submitted to DONE and they’re the Treasurer for now.

Land Use

Ms. Benson reported that the March 24th Meeting discussed tonight’s presentations. She composed a letter to the L.A. City Environmental Affairs Dept. (EAD) (311; <http://www.lacity.org/ead>) regarding Environmental Justice Zone activity. Also, a carpet warehouse sign on San Fernando Road and Sunland Boulevard violates City codes. Ms. Bartlett noted that the same company has the same sign at 10467 Roscoe Boulevard.

Outreach

Mr. O’Gara reported that the April 19th Sun Valley Earth Day Fair needs volunteers, especially Spanish-speaking. It’s from 10:00 a.m. – 2:00 pm. at the Sun Valley Recreation Center.

Community Service

Mr. Eshbach said that there’s no report at this time.

Election

Mr. Eshbach reported that approximately 106 people voted, around half the total of the Foothill Trails District and Sunland-Tujunga communities.

Bradley Landfill Ad-Hoc

Mr. Kunak reported that the Committee met March 28th; more participation is needed. Mike Kodama is doing a great job. The next Meeting will be in late April.

Office Ad-hoc

Mr. O’Gara reported that there’s nothing new to report.

Speakers

- 1) Genette Foster to speak about the housing complex at 8925 - 8933 Glenoaks Boulevard, where the self-serve car wash is next to the old Firehouse.
[The following report was given after Speaker #2.]

Genette Foster, Director of L. A. Family Housing (LAFH) (818-982-4091; lafh.org), introduced Stephanie Klasky-Gamer, their President and Chief Executive Officer. Ms. Klasky-Gamer spoke at length regarding LAFH and the project. LAFH was founded in 1983 to help homeless families and individuals rebuild their lives through an integrated system of temporary shelter, affordable housing development and comprehensive social services. They maintain an extensive and diverse network of community-based partnerships with non-profit and private sector organizations. LAFH owns and operates 21 properties, including three homeless shelters and 18 permanent rental properties, serving more than 2,500 people living in poverty this past year through its multiple housing and supportive service programs, and have served over 100,000 people. Many of their clients are military veterans and one-parent families.

They are proposing to build a facility called Glenoaks Gardens at the old Sun Valley Car Wash site on Glenoaks Boulevard by Penrose Street that would be part of the City’s new Permanent Supportive Housing Program. Residents may be from within five miles of the property and most will be referred from another agency, for example, the Veterans Administration, or can self-refer. It would have 60 studio apartments (they are allowed to build 114); a second elevator may be built into the project.

Supportive services, including counseling staff offices and computer labs, also will be built into the project. She reviewed the project's qualities, noting that it will include an environmentally sustainable design and meeting rooms that will be available to the community, including the NC. The intended residents are single adults who are formerly homeless and/or are low-income, many with a diagnosed mental illness. Each resident will be screened by four agencies. Substance abuse, mental health, and finance counselors will be on-site. LAFH already owns the site. They're continuing to get financing, including from a new City loan fund; construction completion is planned by 2009, with the apartments being fully leased by 2010.

Ms. Klasky-Gamer concluded that the site will continue to be fenced for the next eight months because they're prohibited from beginning construction until then. Their own maintenance company visits the site once per week to maintain it; LAFH is in communication with the LAPD to watch the site. LAFH wants to form a Community Advisory Board to receive ongoing input from the community. She invited Stakeholders to tour any of their properties.

- 2) Wendy Fa from the Los Angeles Department of Public Works to speak on the expansion of the Tujunga Spreading Grounds at 10031 Glenoaks Boulevard. [The following report was given after Item #7.]

Ms. Fa spoke at length regarding the Hansen Spreading Grounds Enhancement Project. After reviewing recent L.A. City Department of Public Works (DPW) (311; lacity.org/dpw/dpwhome.htm) projects, Ms. Fa described how this \$17 - \$21 million project will be on 120 acres next to the Tujunga Wash Channel, downstream from the Hansen Dam, to modernize the facility to increase water volume and flood protection, improve water quality and reduce the need for imported water. The project will combine 20 old basins that have outdated equipment with six new, state-of-the-art-equipped basins which could increase water flow by 50% and capture runoff water before it flows to the ocean. It's estimated that the enhancement could save \$3 - \$4 million while fulfilling CEQA (California Environmental Quality Act) requirements, rules and guidelines. They're working with Vulcan Materials Company (vulcanmaterialscompany.com) and the DWP (the L.A. Department of Water and Power) (800-342-5397; ladwp.com) on the project, which received a Mitigated Negative Declaration.

They could construct biking and hiking trails, plant native vegetation, and create a smart/educational garden to help educate children and adults. This is not a toilet-to-tap project. They're also working with L.A. County to reduce truck traffic in the area. This and the Big Tujunga Dam project are ongoing, while the DPW has six other projects planned. Ms. Fa reminded everyone about water conservation measures, such as limiting lawn watering [bewaterwise.com]. They're also working with the MWD (Metropolitan Water District of Southern California) (213-217-6000; mwdh2o.com) on this.

OLD BUSINESS:

Item #1: Review bill for website (previously approved); second and final bill is due.
Mr. O’Gara reported that this was taken care of this morning.

Item #2: Discussion regarding Solution Strategies and Ms. Benson’s request for the business methodology.

Ms. Benson indicated that Sun Valley was never contacted by Solution Strategies (solution-strategies.com) regarding the Environmental Justice Zone surveys, even though they claimed to have done so; she’ll send them a letter.

At this time it was noted that the time was 8:30 p.m.

MOTION (by Mr. Piro, seconded by Ms. Benson): to extend the Meeting time to 8:45.

MOTION PASSED by unanimous voice vote.

NEW BUSINESS:

Item #1: Need volunteers for Earth Day at Sun Valley Park on Saturday, April 19, 2008 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Mr. Eshbach noted that this Item was covered earlier in this Meeting.

Item #2: Discuss hire of a Treasurer through DONE.

Mr. Eshbach noted that this Item was covered earlier in this Meeting.

Item #3: Discussion/Motion/Vote to pay some conference expenses [see below].

MOTION (by Mr. O’Gara, seconded by Ms. Bartlett): to pay some conference expenses (the fee and hotel bill), estimated to be \$847, for Mary Benson, Chairman of the PLUM [Planning and Land Use Management] Committee, to attend the State of California Parks and Recreation Trails and Greenways Conference May 28-30 in Mission Bay Ca., for Ms. Benson to learn about grant funding for the Rim of the Valley Trail and other trail grant funding for the Sun Valley area. Motion requires approval and arrangements through DONE.

DISCUSSION: Mr. O’Gara explained that the Conference will be discussing grant funding for the Rim of the Valley Trail and other trail grant funding for the Sun Valley area, and that this is a DONE-approved expenditure. Ms. Benson added that she’ll propose grant projects for our area.

MOTION PASSED by voice vote, with Ms. Benson abstaining.

Item #4: Discussion and appointment of an Ad-hoc Committee Chairman to set up an aid system (if needed) to assist Graffiti Busters, to prevent them from being impaired by budget cuts. Excess funds in SVANC account subject to City taking away.

DISCUSSION: Mr. O’Gara declared that we need an Ad Hoc Committee formed to assist Graffiti Busters. There was extensive discussion regarding how to facilitate such assistance while NC funds are available. It was agreed to have a Special Meeting this Friday, April 11th at 8:00 p.m. at the NC Office at 9000 Sunland Boulevard. No vote was taken.

Item #5: Discussion/Motion/Vote to oppose development of the Verdugo Hills Golf Course.

MOTION (by Ms. Benson, seconded by Mr. O’Gara): to oppose development of the Verdugo Hills Golf Course and to send a letter of support to the “Save Verdugo Hills Golf Course Committee.”

MOTION PASSED by unanimous voice vote.

Item #6: Motion/Discussion/Vote: Removal of Yolanda Aranda from SVANC Board due to unexcused absences in excess of those allowed in the By-Laws.

DISCUSSION: Mr. O’Gara explained that, according to the By-Laws, Article 5.4, Removal and Resignation, four unexcused absences is cause for removal from the Board, and Ms. Aranda has had four consecutive unexcused absences. There was discussion about the letter that he’ll send to Ms. Aranda. No vote was taken.

Item #7: Adjourn

This Meeting was adjourned at 8:46 p.m.