

**SYLMAR NEIGHBORHOOD COUNCIL**

**EXECUTIVE OFFICERS**

PRESIDENT: Don Neal

VICE-PRESIDENTS: George Ortega  
and Kristin Mills

TREASURER: Richard Perry

PUBLIC RELATIONS: Jose Oliva



**SYLMAR NEIGHBORHOOD COUNCIL**

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Minutes of the  
**SYLMAR NEIGHBORHOOD COUNCIL (SNC)**  
**GENERAL BOARD MEETING**  
**Thursday, May 23, 2013**

at the Sylmar Park Recreation Center, 13109 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 6:43 p.m. and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

**2. Roll Call**

Roll Call was taken by the Secretary. Nineteen of the 21 Board Seats were filled. Two Board Seats (Community-Based Organizations and Retail) were vacant. Twelve of the 19 Board Members were present at the beginning of the Meeting: Ricardo Benitez, Cheri Blose, Deidre Campbell-Jones, Edward Campos, Laurie Fadness, Ann Job, Sherry Lincoln, Kristin Mills, Don Neal, George Ortega, Chris Shows and Roy Smith. Richard Perry and Rubi Ramirez arrived later. Board Members absent: Brianna King, Derek Martin, Judi Neal, Jose Oliva and Diane Valencia (all excused). 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. Also attending: 18 Stakeholders and Guests.

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

**4. Welcome and Introduction by Board Meeting Host.**

The Host was unavailable at this time.

**5. Approval of the Minutes**

Mr. Neal requested and it was agreed to TABLE approval of the Minutes of the March 28 and April 25, 2013 General Board Meetings.

*Board Member Richard Perry arrived at this time.*

**6. Public Officials and Community Representatives announcements and presentations.**

Manny Figueras, Constituent Svcs. Rep. for L.A. City District Seven Councilman Richard Alarcon (818-756-8409; Manny.Figueras@LACity.org), announced the Memorial Day service at Pioneer Cemetery.

**7. Board Member community announcements.**

Ms. Blöse reported that the City noted that the May 19<sup>th</sup> "Make Your Horse Count" event successfully registered 288 horses. In early 2013 only 1,382 horses were registered in the City, including 350 in the 91342 zip code. It was expected that 150-200 Stakeholders would attend the event; 500-600 attended with 100-300 horses. More license registrations are being submitted, some for up to five years. Mr. Neal announced that Hamer Toyota is contributing \$10,000 in funding for the Sylmar Olive Festival. Photos were taken of the Board with Dave Gilman of Hamer Toyota.

**8. Reports**

Secretary -- The Secretary reported on recent work forwarding Agenda requests; assisting in getting City services; providing information regarding the "Make Your Horse Count" event; providing Meeting information and e-mail spam warnings; and more.

Treasurer/Budget -- Mr. Perry deferred to below Item #10.

Land Use -- Mr. Ortega noted that the Committee will Agendize an Item regarding a new visitor center on the Guide Dogs of America site.

Outreach -- There was no report.

Government Affairs, Public Safety and Services -- Mr. Shows announced the June 5, 2013 Race for Youth at the MB2 Raceway in Sylmar.

Equestrian -- Ms. Blöse reported that the Committee met and discussed supporting another "Make Your Horse Count" event.

Bylaws -- Mr. Martin was not present and there was no report.

Education -- Mr. Neal reported that L.A. Mission College is recruiting students for their STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) Program.

**9. Public Comments**

Stakeholder Sam Cordova requested the SNC's support to convert Los Angeles Mission College, a two-year community college, into a four-year California State University. Stakeholder Les Aisenman requested SNC support to collect good uneaten fruit to be given to needy Valley residents. Stakeholder John Holmes was concerned with the worsening fireworks use problem. He indicated that LAPD Mission Station Seniors Lead Officers are working on it and reminded that fireworks are illegal everywhere in the City.

## **Old Business**

**10. Discussion** of SNC remaining budget and next year's SNC budget priorities of the Sylmar Neighborhood Council. Presentation by Richard Perry, SNC Treasurer. Further discussion of revision of SNC Bylaws.

Mr. Perry said that the balance of funds remaining in the SNC Budget through the June 30<sup>th</sup> end of the Fiscal Year is \$1,032.52. The City is changing the expenditure process; Neighborhood Councils will be able to write checks to vendors who do not accept credit cards. Mr. Neal reminded that the SNC needs to approve Bylaws revisions.

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

[The Agenda said:] "Under the bill, they could not be forced into shelters, but would have access to them. It also mandates that public bathrooms be available around the clock, and protects the "basic human right" to panhandle. They could sit, sleep, move about and engage in "life-sustaining activities that must be carried out in public spaces because of homelessness.""

Mr. Aisenman spoke of the challenge providing services for homeless people and requested SNC support. Mr. Ortega noted that the proposed legislation has been greatly revised and is still being considered by the State Assembly.

**MOTION** (by Ms. Campbell-Jones, seconded by Mr. Benitez): The Sylmar Neighborhood Council will write a letter of support of Assembly Bill AB5, the "Homeless Bill of Rights and Fairness Act."

**DISCUSSION:** Mr. Neal noted that Board Members were sent a copy of the Bill and that DONE [the L.A. Dept. of Neighborhood Empowerment] advised what action Neighborhood Councils could and could not take. Mr. Campos was concerned about safety problems caused by homeless people while noting that we still need to be compassionate.

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

**MOTION PASSED** by a hand vote with seven in favor; five abstained.

## **New Business**

**12. Presentation** on the 1971 Sylmar Tunnel Explosion in which 17 miners were killed, to support the development of a Memorial and/or a pocket park at the site on Maclay and Fenton.

Ralph Brisette, the lone survivor of the disaster, explained that he was "here to speak on their behalf" of the 17 of his "fellow miners" and hoped "there was some way to honor" them. Peter Rosenwald, researcher, described Mr. Brisette's extensive community service.

*Board Member Rubi Ramirez arrived at this time.*

Kurt Kam, author, and Stakeholder Bob Feeny described the importance of recognizing history. Mr. Kam said "there's a water tunnel running under most of Sylmar." Mr. Rosenwald described efforts working with the MWD (Metropolitan

Water District) to establish a memorial. Mr. Brisette described that he's "still in recovery mode after 42 years . . . from the experience." He was "the youngest in the disaster . . . the night before the explosion" he "smelled something he never smelled before . . . they put in more ventilation . . . for the gas" he had smelled. He "was standing in front of the locomotive . . . it must've shielded me from the initial blast . . . it was the worst thing I ever experienced" that 17 of his fellow miners were killed. He'd worked with them "from job to job" and they "survived the Sylmar earthquake." [Applause.] Mr. Neal said the Olive Festival history booth will "have something about that event." Photos were taken of the Board with Mr. Brisette.

**13. Presentation and possible vote** [see the below Motion].

Mr. Neal described the walkie talkies and that Ms. Fadness personally paid for and already used them at the "Make Your Horse Count" event.

**FUNDING MOTION** (by Mr. Benitez, seconded by Ms. Lincoln): The Sylmar Neighborhood Council will purchase walkie talkies for Sylmar NC outreach and community events (i.e., community cleanups, Olive Festival, Sylmar Parade, etc.) in an amount not to exceed \$200.

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

**FUNDING MOTION PASSED** by a hand vote with 12 in favor; Ms. Fadness abstained and Ms. Ramirez abstained due to not yet being of age (18) to vote on financial matters.

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

**FUNDING MOTION** (by Mr. Ortega, seconded by Ms. Fadness): The Sylmar Neighborhood Council approves funding to cover a \$30 overage on the Relay for Life event food costs.

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

**FUNDING MOTION PASSED** by a hand vote with 12 in favor; two abstained, including Ms. Ramirez due to not yet being of age (18) to vote on financial matters.

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

**FUNDING MOTION** (by Mr. Ortega, seconded by Ms. Lincoln): The Sylmar Neighborhood Council will purchase two picnic tables for the Herrick Elementary sustainable garden/campus beautification project in an amount not to exceed \$400.

**DISCUSSION:** The funding was previously allocated.

**FUNDING MOTION PASSED** by a hand vote with 12 in favor; Ms. Campbell-Jones abstained and Ms. Ramirez abstained due to not yet being of age (18) to vote on financial matters.

**16. Discussion and possible vote** [see the below Motion].

Mr. Neal described the need.

**FUNDING MOTION** (by Mr. Benitez, seconded by Ms. Lincoln): The Sylmar Neighborhood Council will purchase additional Sylmar NC banners, safety vests, and develop a Sylmar NC Seal for letterhead and outreach materials in an amount not to exceed \$500.

**DISCUSSION:** Ms. Campbell-Jones volunteered to design an SNC logo/seal at no cost to the SNC.

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

**FUNDING MOTION PASSED** by a hand vote with 12 in favor; Mr. Smith abstained and Ms. Ramirez abstained due to not yet being of age (18) to vote on financial matters.

**17. Discussion and possible vote** to purchase additional Sylmar NC banners, purchase safety vests, and develop a Sylmar NC Seal for letterhead and outreach materials in an amount not to exceed \$500.  
[See above Item #16.]

**18. Discussion and possible vote** to financially support the Sylmar Olive Festival in an amount not to exceed \$1,500 for porta potties, hand washing sinks, three compartment sinks, permits fees, etc.  
Mr. Neal explained that a quote was received for the cost of Olive Festival supplies. He reminded that all funds remaining in the SNC Budget through the June 30<sup>th</sup> end of the Fiscal Year must be allocated or will be swept back to the City.

**FUNDING MOTION** (by Mr. Ortega, seconded by Mr. Benitez): The Sylmar Neighborhood Council supports the Sylmar Olive Festival with an allocation of \$2,532.52 payable to National Construction Rental for porta potties and three-way sinks, four compartment sinks, additional fencing, etc., all required by the permitting process.

**DISCUSSION:** Mr. Perry clarified that the amount needed to purchase the items is \$3,032.52.

**AMENDED FUNDING MOTION** (by Mr. Ortega, seconded by Mr. Benitez): The Sylmar Neighborhood Council supports the Sylmar Olive Festival with an allocation of \$3,032.52 payable to National Construction Rental for porta potties and three-way sinks, four compartment sinks, additional fencing, etc., all required by the permitting process.

**DISCUSSION:** Mr. Neal explained that these items are not payable to LA Mission College Foundation. They are payable to National Construction Rental; LA Mission College Foundation was simply being invoiced (it is now changed to the Sylmar Neighborhood Council), since we used their account as an operational account to

pay expenses. It is NOT a Mission College Foundation event, although they work closely with us. There are quotes for these above items, and they have been voted on, and approved, by the SNC Board. Ms. Blose requested to be reimbursed for "Make Your Horse Count" "out-of-pocket expenses." Mr. Perry clarified that the funding was already allocated. He and Mr. Neal explained that receipts are needed by June 14<sup>th</sup> for Purchase Card use.

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

**AMENDED FUNDING MOTION PASSED** by a hand vote with 12 in favor; Mr. Smith opposed and Ms. Ramirez abstained due to not yet being of age (18) to vote on financial matters.

**19. Appointments and/or vote** to name new Board Members. Open seats: Community Based Organization (CBO) and Retail Representatives; Committee Chairs, and Sergeant at Arms.

Mr. Neal noted that Stakeholder Chardell Powell expressed interest in being appointed to the Board and has been given a Candidate Filing Packet. There were no other candidates at this time.

**20. Board Member Comments**

Ms. Lincoln announced that the Relay for Life raised \$37,000 and is still accepting donations. Mr. Neal announced the May 25<sup>th</sup> Herrick Elementary School Memorial Garden event.

**21. Future Agenda Items, Meeting date** – Mr. Neal encouraged writing to the Executive Board at [executiveboard@sylmarnc.org](mailto:executiveboard@sylmarnc.org) or mail c/o Sylmar Neighborhood Council, Sylmar Recreation Center, Sylmar Park, 13109 Borden Ave., Sylmar, CA 91342. The next General Board Meeting will be on June 27, 2013. Location TBA.

**22. Closing Remarks, Acknowledgements and Adjournment**

Stakeholder Ivan Forbes reported that his home was burglarized; a 250-pound "Coast Guard" bell was stolen by "five young men" he described as around 16-17 years old. He "reported the theft to the Police" and "wants to alert" Sylmar residents.

Mr. Neal **ADJOURNED** the Meeting without objection at 8:38 p.m.

Minutes written by DL.