

Sunland - Tujunga Neighborhood Council Board Meeting Minutes
North Valley City Hall
7747 Foothill Blvd., Tujunga, CA 91042
April 8, 2009

Call to Order at 7:15 p.m. by Dan McManus, STNC President. Pledge of Allegiance. Chair Comments: Introduction of CD2's Dale Thrush, Andrew Hennigan, and Tujunga Senior Lead LAPD Officer Rich Wall.

Attendance: John Blue, Tomi Lyn Bowling, Cindy Cleghorn, Lydia Grant, Elizabeth Jahelka, Shirley Kellstrom, Dan McManus, Nina Royal, Mark Seigel, Richard Stewart, Belinda Woodruff and Linda Casteel, Luther Bedoyan. Excused: Marti Marshall, Edmund Novy, and Jenny Rodriguez. Absent: Ricky Grubb, Mose Mose, Deborah Ray, Ben Vandertuin and Berj Zadoian.

LAPD Officer Rich Wall reported that police have arrested four parolees at large on probation violations. He also announced that burglaries of motor vehicles were down this month in Sunland-Tujunga. The big new is that LAPD will hold a gun exchange for vouchers on Sat., May 9 from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. at 1020 Wick Street in Sun Valley.

Bob Hayes, LA Fire Dept. spoke about his opposition to speed bumps. He has broken several vertebrae in his neck as a result of the speed bumps and is on a mission to get rid of them. In addition to causing him injury, he noted that they slow down the response time of the Fire Dept. He asked stakeholders to call the Traffic Dept. and ask for removal of the speed humps.

Dale Thrush then said the speed bumps are installed to respond to the large demand by the public to control speeders. Dan said this item will be posted on the Safety Committee agenda to be discussed and then brought back to the board.

Chair Comments: Dan announced that STNC will celebrate its 6th Anniversary at the next STNC board meeting, May 13th at Mt. Gleason Middle School in Sunland. There will be a cake and food and everyone is welcome to attend. Dan also noted that the board has processed the funding for the July 4th fireworks to be held at Verdugo Hills High School. He forecast that this year's event will be even better than last year with more pyrotechnics.

Guest Speakers: Mission College President Judith Valles and Director of Finance and Development Larry Eisenberg addressed the board. On their choice for Sunland as a satellite college site: Mr. Eisenberg said they have been working on finding a site in Sunland for two years. They are now looking at the former K Mart site after being turned down by the owner of the commercial space behind Ralphs in Sunland. He said the Sunland-Tujunga population meets their criteria as 'underserved' and is a potential target market for ongoing education. He spoke about their meetings with Target reps about potentially sharing this site by building a several story building (some of which could be underground) to house the college. Since they have a culinary program at the college, they might also try having a restaurant on the site with the students preparing food.

Time Estimate: If they get through the initial hurdles with gaining a release from Home Depot on purchasing the property, he estimates it would take about 18 months to develop the site. Future meetings will be scheduled for community input.

Estimated for Sq. Footage: They would need 15,000 – 30,000 sq. ft. with an additional 5,000 – 10,000 sq. ft. if they add a restaurant.

Regarding talks with Target: They are awaiting a formal response from Target on their plans. They have had initial conversations with the property owner and believe it will work.

Presentation: CA Clean Money Campaign: Robin Gilbert spoke. She is a volunteer for the CA Clean Money Campaign. They work for, build support for, and educate the public on funding of public campaigns. Next June, voters will be asked to decide on the California Fair Elections Act, a ballot measure which would institute public funding of public campaigns. The June measure would impact the vote for the next Secretary of State. (The L.A. City Council is also considering a similar measure where public officials would be prohibited from fundraising). Robin said approval of this ballot measure would get politicians out of fundraising for campaigns so they can do what they were elected to do and would make politicians accountable to the public rather than their donors. If approved, candidates for State positions would receive a set amount of funds to use for their campaigns. In California, the funding would come from raising lobbyists' annual licensing fees from \$12.50 a year to \$350.00 a year. Note: this is the second presentation on this topic at the STNC.

Vote for Board Vacancy - STNC First Vice President - Community Improvement: Nina Royal, Tomi Lyn Bowling and Ed Novy were the initial candidates for this position. Ed Novy withdrew his candidacy due to a work conflict and Nina withdrew hers during tonight's board meeting. The board then unanimously approved Tomi Lyn Bowling for First Vice President – Community Improvement.

Dan acknowledged Nina for the way she handled the Vice President position.

Announcement of Board Vacancy - As a result of Tomi's appointment, her position as Stakeholder Group Rep - Business is now open. In accordance with STNC's procedure, Dan McManus then read the section of the STNC Bylaws describing this position which will be filled at the May 13, 2009 STNC meeting.

Public Comment:

- Shirley Kellstrom announced the League of Women Voters' event on May 7th at 1:30 p.m. at North Valley City Hall to review June ballot measures.
- John Blue invited the public to a Neighborhood Community Party to be held April 23 at 8 p.m. at Caesars Banquet Hall (the former Canyon Theater). There will be booths for business networking, a BBQ and old fashioned rock 'n roll. The event is free.
- Regina Clark of Little Landers/Bolton Hall invited the public to their April presentation on Victorian Women's underwear.
- Steve Bednarczyk talked about his opposition to an arbitrary sewer rate without proper notification to the public. This fee raises watering fees to residents.
- Tomi Bowling asked for support for her participation in the March of Dimes Fundraiser for Babies. www.marchforbabies.org/tomi.
- Paula Warner asked for support for her participation in the Relay for Life Cancer Walk. She also spoke about her opposition to a new marijuana distribution store that has opened in her neighborhood, Sunland Organic Pharmacy on Foothill.
- Max Warner asked for support for his fundraiser, Relay for Life to raise monies for cancer research.
- Belinda Woodruff spoke about initiating a ban or stricter controls over halfway houses in the community for sex offenders. There are several operating in the community already.
- Mary Lou Pozzo, caretaker of the Verdugo Hills Historic Pioneer Cemetery announced that they have received designation as an historic landmark after a long campaign for this purpose. She also asked the public to help with clearing the cemetery of weeds and performing other light maintenance work on Sat. May 2nd and Sun. May 3rd from 9 – 12 p.m. at the Cemetery site.
- Lloyd Hitt invited the public to attend Little Landers Historical Society Annual Plant Sale on Sat. April 25th, 9 – 1 p.m. on Commerce Ave. behind Rio's. He also spoke about the LA survey of historic sites and he asked the public to visit the online site on the City's website to give input.
- Ben Fury Means, chairman of the Big Tujunga Fire Safe Council, asked the public to sign their petition to help them get their funding restored. They lost their funding to do brush clearing and other fire safety work due to a hostile neighbor.
- Bill Manning, former Region 1 board member, would like to rejoin the STNC. He resigned from the board a few months ago to pursue his interest in becoming a pastor. He has adjusted his schedule and now feels he would be able to serve on the board and is interested in the Stakeholder Group Representative - Interfaith seat, if that should become available.
- Elaine Brown announced a victory in the first stage of saving the corner parcel at Big Tujunga Canyon/Oro Vista. This is just the beginning of the process but it is hopeful. Elaine also attended the DWP Water Commission Meeting where it was proposed that DWP will hike water rates without any public input (see Steve's comment above). Another issue she brought forward was Councilmember LaBonge's proposal to allow Mountain Bikes on all hiking trails and equestrian paths in the city. She advised the board to oppose this measure for the disruption it will cause to wildlife, equestrians and hikers. A meeting will take place at City Hall on April 15th to further discuss this proposal.
- Mary Benson added that Councilmember LaBonge is supporting mountain bikes being allowed in all city parks except for Griffith Park, which is in his area.
- Nina Royal talked about the Saving LA Project and invited the public to attend their meetings the first Saturday of each month. Info is also available in the North Valley Reporter. Nina also asked the public to oppose veteran's benefits being cut.

- Lydia Grant announced the LA Parent Town Hall meeting on Monday, April 27th at 7 p.m. at No. Valley City Hall (www.parentrevolution.org) to discuss recommendations on school issues.

Safety and Outreach Reports: Nina Royal reported that police are working on a problem at the Chevron Station at Haines Canyon and Foothill Blvd. Mark Seigel noted that the owner of the Chevron Gas Station attended the Safety Meeting and deserved an Honorable Mention. Richard Stewart, Stakeholder Group Rep - Service Clubs, spoke about the first Community Calendar Night which drew stakeholders from the Elks, STNC, Lions Club, and the Junior Rotary Club. He acknowledged the Verdugo High Interact Group, which is planning a Foothill No Drugs March on May 30th.

Land Use Committee: Dale Thrush, Planning Deputy for CD2, reported:

- Medical Marijuana Ordinance: The City Council has an ordinance prepared by the City Attorney which bans the sale of marijuana in L.A. in the hopes of putting the many storefront businesses that sell marijuana, out of business. One member of the City Council wants a provision to allow those who need medical marijuana to be able to get it. This is creating an impasse.
- Monopine Cell Phone Tower: T Mobile wants to erect a 60' monopine cell phone tower by the Canyon Market on Tujunga Canyon Blvd. CD2 is opposing the 60' tower as the law limits cell phone towers to 45'. CD2 is also asking that T Mobile plant real trees around the tower so it looks more natural.
- Verdugo Hills Golf Course – The Golf Course owner is still not forthcoming with a sales price for releasing the property. The City has offered around \$12 million to make the owner 'whole' although right now, they can only raise about \$6 million.
- Angeles Golf Course – Discussion is ongoing with Santa Monica Conservancy to have them take over the vacant acreage to the east of the Golf Course and the west of Oro Vista. Problems with homeless people camped there are being discussed this month at a meeting CD2 will be hosting with LAPD, Golf Course ownership, and a homeless foundation that could relocate these homeless from the Wash. Once that takes place, efforts will be made to keep the homeless out permanently. Lydia commented about the need to move on this as a student in the community was recently assaulted by a vagrant in an attempted kidnapping. Cindy asked whether efforts were being made to also include the Halfway Houses for Sex Offenders in this discussion.

Land Use Chair Report & Recommendation: The Land Use Committee had a perfect attendance at their last meeting. Funding was allocated to purchase a new sound system which will eliminate a need to pass microphones around.

- Auto Body Expansion: Tomi asked the board to be aware of the Classic Auto Body request at 10249 Plainview to create an Auto Mall. The business wants to expand from their present 4,000 sq. ft. to 19,000 sq. ft. Both Tomi and Dale noted that a Conditional Use Permit would be required. The Auto Body said they were told by the Planning Dept. that they did not need a CUP to expand.
- (Bowling) moved to allocate \$500.00 from the LUC Budget for the CEQA Education Workshop in June for Land Use Committee members and stakeholders to attend (date to be determined). The motion carried unanimously.

LA Department of Transportation Memorandum of Understanding: Belinda Woodruff attended this meeting as the STNC rep to LA DOT MOU. They will hold their first meeting with DOT on April 11th at 10 a.m. at the Hollywood Constituent Center on Fountain Ave. Anyone can attend. Cindy Cleghorn is also participating in these meetings. Web site: www.nctranspo.com

Approval for acceptance of the minutes for STNC's March 11, 2009 meeting. The motion carried unanimously.

New Business:

(Cleghorn/Woodruff) moved that STNC allocate up to \$500.00 for an Historic Monument Marker for Verdugo Hills Cemetery. The motion carried unanimously.

(Cleghorn/Royal) moved that STNC approve a funding request of \$150.00 for an STNC Family Fun Days sign along Foothill Blvd. The motion carried unanimously. (Our Lady of Lourdes Church is the sponsor).

(Cleghorn/Woodruff) moved that STNC approve up to \$500.00 to help with expenses for the Valley Regional Congress on May 30, 09 in Panorama City from 8 a.m. – 2 p.m. The motion failed 5-6-0.

(Seigel) then asked that this vote be reconsidered due to a lack of discussion on this issue prior to the vote. Motion to reconsider carried unanimously.

Discussion on the original motion that STNC approve up to \$500 for the Valley Regional Congress: Mark was opposed to the motion based on past performance of funds allocated last year. Last year, NCs funded \$3,500 for videotaping the Citywide Congress. Mark said the videotaping was either not done or was not completed as no tape was made available.

(Grant) moved to amend the motion that STNC approve up to \$500.00 to help with expenses for the Valley Regional Congress on May 30, 09 in Panorama City from 8 a.m. – 2 p.m. and that DONE provide accountability on the spending for this money to STNC. The amendment carried unanimous. The original motion carried with one opposed.

(Cleghorn/Bowling) moved to approve a letter to Mayor Villaraigosa to keep the current level of funding intact for Neighborhood Councils. The motion carried unanimously. Cindy reported that the City is seeking to cut NC funding by 10% - 20% which would amount to \$5,000-10,000. The Mayor is also considering cutting the 3rd year roll over of NC funds.

(Cleghorn/Grant) moved that the City Council revisit Financial Disclosure for NCs as requested by Councilmembers' Hahn/Zine/Garcetti motion and approve the Declaration to Neighborhood Council Financial Disclosure Form. The motion carried unanimously.

Bylaws Committee Report

Mark asked whether board members had completed DONE's Ethics training noting that BONC is considering approving a motion that prohibit board members to vote until they complete this training. John Blue acknowledged Bill Skiles' work on the bylaws and asked if the board could recognize him for his efforts.

Treasurer's Report:

Mark said he is behind schedule on sending in the STNC's quarterly reports to DONE because the previous STNC treasurer was lax in returning the treasurer paperwork to him. Cindy added that the board needs to approve next year's budget before June 30th and that board members need to give Mark their proposed budgets for the STNC to take that vote at the June meeting.

Board Member Reports

- John Blue reminded the board about the free concert coming up on April 23rd.
- Nina Royal reminded the board that her Safety and Outreach Committee meetings take place the 3rd week of the month.
- Lydia Grant noted that her Education Committee has not received input from School Officials recently. She feels the District is not taking an interest in local schools and parents' concerns. She is pushing for the LA Parents Union meeting rather than meeting with school officials because of continual cancellations by school department reps. She noted that six school staff members were injured recently in incidents of violence on school campuses locally. Her meeting takes place the last Monday of the month at 6 p.m. at North Valley City Hall.
- Cindy distributed a Community Action Plan survey for Community Block Grant Funding.
- The next STNC meeting is Wednesday, May 13th at 7 p.m. at Mt. Gleason Middle School. After that, meetings will resume at North Valley City Hall.

Meeting Adjourned at 9:50 p.m.

Minutes by Pat Kramer, Apple One, via audio.