

Sunland Tujunga Neighborhood Council
MONTHLY BOARD MEETING MINUTES
Wednesday, July 12, 2006 – 6:30 PM
Mt. Gleason Middle School, 10965 Mt. Gleason Avenue • Sunland

Attendance 114, audience: 98, Board members: 16

Color Guard led by Manual Sibrian, Troop 315, Sunland – Tujunga and Pledge of Allegiance.

1. Call to Order 7:10 p.m by STNC Chairperson Cindy Cleghorn. Welcome and Introduction of Dignitary: DONE Rep Amelia Herrera - Robles. Luis Sanchez from The Mayor's office later arrived as well as Jackie Keene from Councilmember Wendy Greuel's office.

Roll Call: Cindy Cleghorn, Nina Royal, Linda Brand, Jeannine Crowley, Victor Castro, David Cain, Dan McManus, Mark Seigel, Penny Barcena, Michelle Sahfran, Timothy Borquez, Dr. David DeMulle, Saro Minassian, Richard Stewart., John Blue and Shirley Kellstrom, Parliamentarian. Absent: Deborah Ray, Joan Slater (out of town), George Powell, John Van-Es (school), Janet Linsalato (work). Meeting set-up by Mt. Gleason Middle School students, Ed Rock, STNC Logistics Manager and Mark Seigel set up the sound system.

Explanation of Speaker Cards and introduction of Pat Kramer of Apple One who will take the minutes for the meeting.

2. Public Safety Update with Public Safety Chair Nina Royal introducing the LAPD Demonstration of LPR (License Plate Recovery) System: Prior to the formal start of the meeting, the LPRS car was demonstrated just outside the meeting entrance for all to see and ask questions of the LAPD officers. Inside the meeting room, Captain Joseph Corrieri, Commanding Officer of Foothill Area; Tujunga Sr. Lead Officer Frank Avila; and Sunland Sr. Lead Officer Larry Martinez participated. The Captain reported a 7% decrease in crime for the Foothill's although there has been an increase in robberies and burglaries. He referenced information in back of the room on crime prevention methods. The police then presented the LPR system that can capture license plates and compare them to the data base of stolen cars, Amber Alerts, convicted sex offenders, and people who have outstanding warrants. Whereas, on a slow day, an officer might be able to manually enter 500 license plates without this technology, with the new software and technology built into the police car, they can run up to 10,000 plates during a 10-hour shift, leading to immediate arrests.

The cars run \$20,000 each which includes the vehicle and the built – in technology. The Captain reported that the Sun Valley NC has purchased two of these cars and will be providing them to the area Foothills and Valley communities. They are asking for donations of \$4,000 from the area communities that would benefit from the cars. The Captain urged the STNC to consider funding \$4,000 toward the purchase of the cars.

Safety Committee Recommendation: Nina Royal moved, “That STNC share the cost with the neighborhood councils of Sun Valley Area, Arleta, Pacoima and Foothill Trails District for a License Plate Recovery System (LPRS). The system includes a camera, computers and software to be placed in a patrol car [and used] specifically for the LAPD Foothill Division. STNC’s share is \$4,000 of a total of \$20,000 for one car. Benefits to the community include: faster recovery of stolen cars, identification of criminals with warrants.” (*Budget Category: Safety Committee*).

During stakeholder questions, Sarkis Babahanian questioned the cost of \$20,000 asking if there was less expensive technology. The police informed him that it is a good value for that expense as it can also be used to download sex offenders’ info so police officers can track and ward off potential predators who may target children in school areas. Bob Douglas asked how often the police update their database. The answer was, several times a day with ongoing updates provided by the DOJ database. David Long asked why the community is being asked to fund this instead of the City. The Captain said that there is no money in the City budget for this expense. Eric Minassian asked if the police could speak with the Insurance Commissioner about the rate to insure this type of vehicle and whether it would provide insurance benefits to the community. Elsa Waters stated that she feels \$4,000 is a good price for community safety.

Cindy then took a straw vote of stakeholders who widely supported this expense.

A vote was taken to Call the Question, which carried. The original Safety Committee Recommendation was then passed unanimously.

3. Public Safety Report: Nina Royal reported that August 1st is National Night Out: A night to organize events to meet your neighbors and coordinate efforts against crime. She suggested stakeholders show their support by putting a blue light in their windows, forming a Neighborhood Watch, or holding a block party. She invited anyone who would like to attend a block party to “Olde Towne Rocks” on Tuesday, August 1st from 6:30 – 9:30 p.m. on Commerce Ave. between Foothill Blvd. and Tujunga Canyon. There will be music, BBQ, and a show of support for law enforcement efforts in our community. It’s sponsored by the Commerce Owners and Business Restoration Association, Inc. and the Sunland-Tujunga Chamber of Commerce.

On July 20, the next CERT meeting will be held at City Hall. On August 5th, there will be a City Safety Class: CPR and First Aide. The cost is just \$25.00 for both. (a savings of \$66.00). On Sept. 12, there will be a Basic Car meeting at the Elks Lodge on Commerce Ave. in Tujunga with police reporting on events and activities in our area. To find out about the Volunteer Surveillance Team for the police, stakeholders are urged to attend this meeting.

Battalion Chief Wise spoke about Red Flag Day, which is when weather conditions raise the risk of fire to extremely hazardous. At that time, notices will start being

distributed on streets in the Red Flag districts informing motorists that they have to move their cars off the streets by 10 a.m. the following day or they will receive fines. There will also be a widespread communication to stakeholders in these Red Flag districts including phone calls the day prior to the Red Flag Alert, email alerts to those who sign up for them, and news alert via the TV, radio and other news outlets in L.A.

4. Certificates of Achievement -- Outreach:

- *Cindy presented STNC Board member David Cain with a Certificate of Appreciation for his work on the STNC float in the July 4th Parade.*
- *Cindy presented Vince McManus with a Certificate of Appreciation for Outstanding Youth Participation in the July 4th parade.*
- *Cindy presented a certificate to Serineh Minassian for Outstanding Service to the STNC. Serineh volunteers at the sign in table and helps with the audience with using the microphone.*

5. Report from local Dignitaries:

Amelia Herrera-Robles, DONE rep for the STNC reported: On July 19 and July 20 the City's Attorney Roundtable takes place at the Marvin Braude Constituent Service Center in Van Nuys. She asked for two STNC Board Members to attend the presentation from 5 p.m. – 7 p.m.

The Board of Neighborhood Commissioners meets on Tues. July 18, at the Marvin Braude Center to get input from NCs on challenges and successes. They will use this info to help develop policies. She then acknowledged that the STNC will be holding their annual Election in December and stated that she will help in any way she can.

Jackie Keene, CD2 Field Deputy: Reported that Councilmember Greuel has introduced a motion to consolidate bulky item pick-ups from the City. The trucks will continue to come out on Mondays in S-T. Alert on those dumping rubbish: Jackie asked anyone spotting this going on to call: "311" and report any license numbers on vehicles and the location where the trash has been dumped. She left signage at the meeting for stakeholders to post that prohibits dumping. Sidewalk Repairs: The City is taking applications again for the 50-50 program for the repairs of sidewalks. On October 7th, a Child Health and Safety Event will be held. It's sponsored by Councilmember Greuel. More info to come.

Luis Sanchez, East Valley Area Rep. Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa's office, announced a Town Hall Meeting with the Mayor to take place at Valley College, 5800 Fulton Avenue on Thursday, August 3rd, 4:30 – 7:00 p.m. RSVPs are required: (818) 778-4990. The City of L.A., Board of Public Works is offering Community Beautification Grants of up to \$10,000 to organizations for community beautification projects. This is a competitive matching grant program that annually awards funding to organizations deemed deserving of the grants. Contact Michael Espinoza for this at: (213) 978-0226 or go to: www.lacb.org for more info.

6. Public Comments:

- James Ellis and Marynance Schellenbach announced that the annual Watermelon Festival, sponsored by the Sunland Tujunga Lions Club, takes place Aug. 11 – 13 at Sunland Park. There will be a watermelon – spitting contest, good food, live music, and games and rides for kids. The festival is moving into a new realm: as a full - fledged community celebration of summer.
- Lloyd Hitt, Bolton Hall Museum, reported on the new concert series to take place at Little Landers Park starting in August. There will be two concerts a month from 5 p.m. – 7 p.m. on Sundays with different ethnic music represented. Anyone with suggestions on folk or ethnic performers can contact him at Bolton Hall.
- Jesus Ramos, Pacoima GraffitiBusters, asked anyone reporting graffiti to call the City's hotline: "311" or directly: (818) 896-6884. His organization covers Sunland-Tujunga, North Hills, N. Hollywood, Sun Valley, Arleta, and Pacoima.
- Helen Koochof, stakeholder, spoke about safety issues on Wentworth Ave. with traffic signals not getting fixed in a timely manner.
- Roberta Actor Thomas, stakeholder, voiced concern over a recent newspaper editorial.
- Valad Menashamian, stakeholder, also was concerned about the newspaper editorial. He suggested the Board Member who wrote the editorial should step down from the board.
- Tom Hoffman, stakeholder, talked about an area on Foothill by the 210 bridges that used to allow for carpool parking but now is closed off. He would like it restored.
- Ruth de Silveira, stakeholder, voiced her concern over bad grammar and poor English in business signage.
- Elaine Brown, stakeholder, reported on the Coalition for Economic Survival, a group that supports asking Councilmember Wendy Greuel to introduce an immediate moratorium to stop all condo conversions and demolitions. For more info, call: 213 252-4411 or go to: www.CESinAction.org. She also announced the Natinal Night Out event to be held on Aug. 1 on Commerce Ave. 6:30 p.m.
- Sarkis Babachanian, stakeholder, said he personally spoke with Dr. DeMulle about his editorial in the newspaper and that he saw it as Dr. DeMulle being frustrated about the traffic in our community. He suggested that there is a lack of understanding about his culture and those who have not assimilated into

American customs. He said he hopes the community comes together despite some feelings of consternation.

- Mark Seigel spoke regarding STNC's Election committee and invited stakeholders who are interested in joining this committee to let the Board know. He also announced his upcoming Ham Radio Class to start in September.

7. Executive Committee Reports

Chair – Congress of Neighborhood Councils, Cindy spoke about this informative event urging stakeholders to try to make it next year.

Vice Chair – 912 Commission: Nina Royal acknowledged Cindy as "Commissioner Cleghorn" in her recent prestigious appointment by the Mayor to sit on the 912 Commission. The meetings are open to the public. The next meeting is Thursday, July 13th, when they will set an agenda on what they are going to accomplish. The meeting takes place, downtown, at City Hall.

Treasurer's Report: Linda Brand reported that she has reconciled the budget with DONE and is working on the last 3 months of last year. The budget was submitted as part of the packet of minutes and listed the yearly allocation as \$50,000, the rollover as \$27,278 and the total budget for this fiscal year as: \$77,278. There was a breakdown of all the Committees' allocations, as well (see Budget 2006-2007). After reporting on expenses to date, **Linda moved, "That the STNC Board approve [an outstanding] payment of \$150.00 to Deborah Ray for last year's booth at the Commerce Street Fair in October 2005."** (Dan McManus seconded). **The motion carried unanimously.**

Grant Research: Elsa Waters spoke on behalf of the Community Beautification Grant and the ways it could be used to enhance the area. She said she had four ideas for using this grant including beautification of a small park. She asked stakeholders for input and said she is willing to get involved with grant writing. The survey is available on the back table and will be on the STNC web site. Deadline is Aug. 1st to turn in survey to the STNC office.

Recording Secretary: Minutes of June 14, 2006 for approval. Two small changes were requested. The minutes were approved as corrected.

Corresponding Secretary – Communications: Jeannine Crowley gave a brief report.

Outreach: Dan McManus acknowledged everyone's participation in the Sunland 4th of July Parade.

He announced the upcoming Outreach Committee meeting for Saturday, July 15th at 1 p.m. at Joselito's on Foothill Blvd. in Tujunga and asked stakeholders to support as many community events as possible.

Design Advisory Committee (DAC): Victor Castro - Jackie Keene gave an update on the most recent Home Depot news: Home Depot has submitted Tenant Improvement Plans to the City and that CD2 is waiting for the review by Bldg. and Safety. The DAC meets Monday, July 17th at Mt. Gleason School at 6 p.m. to review new info on the Verdugo Hills Golf Course proposal. 6 p.m. at this location, Mt. Gleason. They will also review Joy Fellowship Church's traffic study. Victor said he's

trying to get DOT out to discuss an overall traffic study for all of Tujunga Canyon Blvd. instead of four, separate entities each doing their own traffic study does not seem to serve the community. On July 31, the DAC and STNC will hold a joint meeting at North Valley City Hall where updated info will be brought to the table and at that time, a motion will be presented for STNC to take a position either in support of or against the Union Mission Rescue Project proposal for Kagel/Lopez Canyon. The DAC made the following recommendations to the STNC on projects they have reviewed as of their meeting on June 19:

1. DAC recommends support for a zoning variance for a Leona Avenue request for parking relief.
2. DAC recommends denying a zoning variance for 9531 Inspiration Way, a substandard hillside lot in a designated Red Flag zone and an access road for the Canyon Hills Development.

Board member John Blue indicated he did not have ample opportunity to review the DAC recommendations in advance and requested the vote for them be postponed. STNC chair Cleghorn acknowledged this request to postpone a vote on these two items to July 31st.

Rules: Nina Royal presented the Board with language for a Code of Civility (see minutes Page 20 – 21) (Draft #1 dated 6-14-06) asking that it become part of the Candidate package for STNC board elections and recommending future STNC boards adopt this document annually. During discussion, a Board Member asked what kind of action would be taken to support this Code; would there be any way of enforcing it? DONE coordinator Amelia Herrera – Robles reported that the Code of Civility has been used by other NCs with the language that, if Board Members violate the Code, the Bylaws could support removal of a Board Member. John Blue spoke against having a Code of Civility or other rules to govern personal behavior. Stakeholder Debby Beck referred to the Code of Civility not being stringent enough; she suggested all Board Members should have a code of conduct that applies to all their activities while serving on the Board, as well as in their work. She referenced the editorial by a Board Member as a reason to have a stronger code of conduct. Mark Seigel spoke about the history of the NC, starting as a small, Town Hall group. He asked for input on whether the Bylaws should be changed to support this and said he felt that any changes should take into consideration the rules of the City Charter and the First Amendment. Michelle Sahfran said she had mixed feelings about this.

Linda Brand moved, seconded by Mark Seigel, “That the Rules Committee revisit this draft in regards to objective or subjective language.” The motion carried with one abstention.

Presentation by Parliamentarian, Shirley Kellstrom: Postponed.
Bylaws: Mark Seigel: Postponed until the next meeting.

Ad-Hoc Committee Reports: Communications, Jeannine Crowley: None.

8. New Business - Discussion/Action:

- a. Motion: Cultural Arts Rep. Timothy Borquez: Tim gave a presentation on the need for funding in the community for the arts, specifically the McGroarty Arts Center's ART REACH Program in the schools, asking for \$10,000 be allocated from the Outreach Budget. (see p. 23 minutes package). He then made the motion, seconded by Richard Stewart, **"That in recognition of the McGroarty Arts Center ART REACH Program's success and vital service in the development of skills that enhance learning and leadership qualities of a few hundred students yearly in our Sunland - Tujunga Community through instruction in the arts, I move that the STNC vote to approve one or both of the following parts of this motion:**
 - b. **To contribute \$5,000 from the STNC Outreach Budget to the McGroarty Arts Center as it has requested specifically to continue the Art Reach Program in our Community's local elementary and middle schools in the upcoming school calendar year,**
 - c. **To contribute \$5,000 from the STNC Outreach Budget to the McGroarty Arts Center in order to develop and implement with the director of the new Verdugo Hills High School Performing Arts Program, an ART REACH Program for the upcoming academic year that will offer complimenting, free on-campus performing arts instruction to students within the new performing Arts School who will be admitted on the recommendation of the high school program director based on students' dedication to the program.**
 - d. **That the McGroarty Arts Center credit the STNC as the main sponsor of one or both of these ART REACH Programs in all press releases, event programs and event signage concerning the program, if approved by these votes.**
- Claire Knowlton, Asst. Director of McGroarty Arts Center spoke about the work they have been doing in the schools and how the City, which was their main funder, has withdrawn funding. John Lawler, lead teacher for Verdugo Hills High School Performing Arts also spoke on this issue and how the school is losing its drama program due to a lack of funding. VHHS Drama Student Chrissa Villanueva spoke about how important drama is to her and other kids in high school and how they are the future stakeholders of this area.
- STNC Treasurer Linda Brand noted that the Outreach Committee only has \$15,000 budgeted for general outreach, therefore, it would not be possible to fund these proposals as presented.
- Stakeholder Debby Beck said she felt the proposal should be funded. As a lifelong artist, she said the money could be taken from other budgets, if

necessary. She said STNC would be reaching future stakeholders and kids would be growing up and benefiting from this.

- Stakeholder Marti Marshall disagreed saying not everyone would directly benefit from this. She said she is against using STNC funds for McGroarty Arts Center and that the NC's purpose is not to fund private organizations; that schools need to find ways to raise money for their own programs.
- Stakeholder David Long urged the Board to approve some of this funding. He said there should be a balance in how monies are spent noting the police car funding request that was approved earlier in the meeting.
- Amelia Herrera-Robles of DONE noted that the STNC couldn't donate monies to schools, pay for salaries, or behave as a foundation where you are making donations.

Mark Seigel made an amendment to the original motion (seconded by Nina Royal) to send this funding request to the Outreach Committee to work out the bugs. Motion to send to Outreach Committee. The amendment of the motion carried with a vote of 10 for and 1 opposed. Cindy then took a Straw Vote on whether the Board supported the "concept" of funding this program. The vote was unanimous in favor of the concept.

2. **Motion: Outreach Committee: Dan McManus moved that, "The STNC approve an expenditure of up to \$7,000.00 for the purpose of printing, assembling, and installing 40 STNC light pole banners, based on the design selected by the community, at various locations along Foothill Blvd. between Lowell Ave. in Tujunga and the 210 freeway overpass in Sunland. (Budget Category: Outreach) (See p. 29 of Minutes Package).**
 - Stakeholder Elaine Brown objected to the installation of permanent banners saying it is not allowed under the Foothill Blvd. Specific Plan.
 - Jeannine Crowley stated that the STNC has to market itself to the community and that the banners would be attractive to the community.
 - Dan McManus reminded the Board that, every step of this process has been documented and approved by the STNC up until this point including the logo contest and the design for the banners. The funding is the final step to this process that everyone has agreed is needed.

Tim Borquez presented an amendment to the motion, asking that funding of up to \$5,000 be allocated for the banners instead of \$7,000. (seconded by John Blue) instead of 7,000 The amendment did not pass. The vote was 3 for and 7 opposed. The original motion was then voted on. It passed with a vote of 10 for and 1 opposed.

3. **Safety Committee Recommendation:** "That STNC sponsor traffic safety event to be held in August 2006. Estimated cost not to exceed \$200 for refreshments." (Budget Category: Safety Committee.) Postponed.
4. **Executive Committee Recommendation:** "That STNC approve STNC Elections procedures Ver. 0.2 and set date for 2006 STNC board election for

Saturday, December 9, 2006 or January 13, 2007, subject to availability of Independent Election Administrator and DONE approval." Postponed.

5. **Motion: Nina moved, "To oppose DWP's proposed trash fee increase and send an STNC Board Member to represent the STNC at the DWP Rate Increase Public Hearing on July 25, 2006 at the John Ferraro Council Chamber, Rm. 340, City Hall, Los Angeles. The proposed rate increase is as follows: \$7.00 for single family dwellings on Sept 1, 2006; \$4.00 on July 1, 2007; \$4.00 on July 1, 2008 and then \$2.00 on July 1, 2009. (Linda seconded).**

Jeannine asked for clarification on whether the rate increase was \$7.00 per container. The answer was "yes," it's per container. **The motion to oppose the DWP rate hike carried with 10 for, 1 opposed.**

9. Announcements:

- Saro Minassian said he would like to get multicultural seminar going. Dan McManus suggested he attend the Outreach Committee meeting to discuss it.
- Tim Borquez said he would like to work with the Outreach Committee to put together another motion for funding McGroarty's Art project.
- Victor Castro announced the July 31, 7 p.m. meeting at North Valley City Hall to decide on STNC's commitment toward the Kagel/Lopez Canyon residents proposal.
- Cindy announced the July 22nd, 8 – 1 p.m. Board Training.
- Linda Brand suggested adjourning the meeting before they incur an additional fee of \$60.00 for going past 10:30.

10. Future Agenda Items: None.

11. 2nd Public Comment: None.

Meeting Adjourned: 10:15 p.m.

- Minutes prepared by Pat Kramer, Apple One.