

Harbor Gateway North Neighborhood Council Board Meeting

Saturday, September 17, 2016

Holiday Inn-Torrance, 19800 S. Vermont Avenue

Present: Pamela Thornton (Chair), Tim Richardson (Vice Chair), Rosalie Preston (Recording Secretary), Hannah Woods (Corresponding Secretary), Joan Jacobs (Treasurer), Mark Lupfer (District 1), Clyde Noguchi (District 2), Rey Paduani (District 3), Betty Hawkins (District 4), Janet Mitchell (District 7), Larry Morrison (District 8), Deborah Lee (Community Organization), Richard Lee (Youth Representative), Theo Fowles (Outreach Representative), and Eva Cooper-Pace (At-Large Representative)

1) Welcome and Introduction: The meeting was called to order at 9:20 a.m. by Chair Pamela Thornton. She reviewed safety procedures for emergency situations and pointed out the exits. She introduced the use of talking sticks as a way to acknowledge who has the right to speak and said that this will also be utilized in future Board meetings. The attendees from the Department of Neighborhood Empowerment were introduced: Octaviano Rios (Neighborhood Council Advocate) and Stephen Box (Director of Outreach and Communications), as well as Gary De La Rosa (Human Relations Advocate, Economic and Workforce Development Department). Stakeholders present introduced themselves.

3) Presentation: Empower LA (DONE): Octaviano Rios explained that the purpose of the annual Board Retreat is to step back, look over the past year, evaluate the goals that were set, and determine how to better achieve the purpose of the Neighborhood Council for the coming year. One example of a goal for the coming year and for a few years beyond would be to “repave all of the Neighborhood Council’s streets over a four to eight year period of time.” The goals do not have to be set just for a one-year timeline. He explained that he, Stephen Box, and Jasmine Elbarbary work together to support the Harbor Area Neighborhood Councils.

Stephen Box then related how he became involved with his own Neighborhood Council and said that in his opinion, the secret to having a successful Neighborhood Council is to know what you want to achieve and then work to achieve it.

2) Guest Speaker: City Council President Herb Wesson then arrived and introduced himself. He is the Councilmember for Council District 10 and also serves as the President of the City Council. He introduced his grandchildren and son, who were also in attendance with him. He said that he appreciated the invitation to speak to the Harbor Gateway North Neighborhood Council and appreciates all of the volunteer efforts of the Board members. He noted that there are only a few who work to make their communities better. He pointed out that often other stakeholders will be upset by the decisions made by the Neighborhood Council, but that leadership is doing what needs to be done and taking people where they do not want to go. He said that he considered his role as Council President to be one that caused Neighborhood Councils to get the respect they deserve.

He then asked stakeholders to state some of their issues. District 5 stakeholder Lu Watson asked whether Neighborhood Councils would be able to get increased funding over the \$37,000 allocated for the fiscal year. Wesson said that it is his goal to gradually increase the Neighborhood Council budgets back up to \$50,000, but that this year the City is focusing on funding the homeless crisis. Recording Secretary Rosalie Preston asked whether there could be an increased penalty for illegal dumping plus more funds for enforcement to that more illegal

dumpers can be prosecuted. Wesson suggested submitting a proposal to the City Council so that this could be considered. District 4 Representative Betty Hawkins noted that even with signs posted, there is still speeding along 135th Street in front of the 135th Street School. Wesson suggested talking with Councilmember Joe Buscaino and having the Executive Board meet with Buscaino about the issue. District 5 stakeholder Vere Davis asked about illegal street vending along Vermont Avenue at the 105 Freeway exit and enforcement to prevent it. Wesson said that the City is working on a street vending ordinance and will update the HGNNC on its status. He noted that there are strong opinions on the proposal, both pro and con. Vice Chair Tim Richardson asked about the role of the Council President. Wesson said that he had wanted to be a public servant his whole life. He is one of 15 Councilmembers and has been voted the Council President by his peers. He is the first African American to serve in that position. In the absence of the Mayor, he acts for the Mayor. Additionally, he handles the routine business for Council District 10. Prior to serving on the City Council, he was an Assemblymember and served as the Speaker of the House in Sacramento. He was the second African American to hold that position. Eva Cooper-Pace asked about the background on where bike lanes were constructed because some of the lanes seem to be in inappropriate locations. Wesson said that there is a large group of advocates for alternative means of transportation. He anticipates adjustments to the lanes in the future as people in many other neighborhoods have expressed similar concerns. District 2 Representative Clyde Noguchi asked how the Council President maintained his work/life balance. Wesson said that he manages to have some time with his family, golfing, watching TV, and eating ice cream.

3) Presentation: Empower LA (DONE): Gary De La Rosa led an ice breaker exercise to demonstrate that it takes all four types of working styles (visionary, nurturing, analytic, and get-it-done) to have the skills necessary to be a successful Board. He stressed treating others using the Platinum Rule: treat others as they wish to be treated. For a successful collaboration, the scope needs to be clearly defined, all involved need to know how the project will advance the interests of its constituents/stakeholders, roles and responsibilities have been clearly defined, mechanisms for communication and joint accountability are in place, and an inclusive and fair process exists to support the work. “Never confuse movement with action.”

4) Report on the HGNNC Self-Assessment for 2015-2016: Stephen Box led a review by each Board member of what was accomplished and what needed improvement during the past fiscal year. Some of the obstacles mentioned were lack of collaboration, difficulty in getting most Board members to support events, Board friction, lack of adequate outreach to stakeholders so that they are aware of the Neighborhood Council, non-involvement of stakeholders, and time commitment issues.

For the positives, Board members noted increased structure to Board meetings, increased meetings by key Committees, improved leadership, a calendar of events so Board members can support each other’s events, progress on having a new logo, and new, younger stakeholders who are involved and may become future Board members.

5) Strategic Plan for FY 2016-2017: Stephen Box explained that individual visions should mesh with the overall Neighborhood Council vision. Goals should be achievable so that stakeholders will want to participate and be part of your success.

a) Review of the HGNNC Vision Statement: A year from now the HGNNC will be recognized as the most liveable and sustainable community in Los Angeles County

b) Goals and Solutions: These are how the vision will be achieved:

i. Clean Streets LA Challenge, partnering with Caltrans, Metro, schools, Public Works, and the City Attorney to improve the cleanliness of our neighborhoods; at least three Clean Up Days and an increase of calls, online reports, and use of the app to 311 about illegal dumping and bulky item pick up from October 1 to November 18, 2016

ii. Engagement of our youth, with the creation of a Youth Council (one representative from each of the eight internal Districts), a possible contest to design a skate park to be located within the HGNNC boundaries, involvement of the youth in Clean Streets events, with possible partnership with the youth attending HGNNC churches, and one to two tours of City Hall to inspire involvement with City government

iii. Emergency Preparedness for our stakeholders, with a neighborhood survey involving 90 Block Leaders, one Emergency Preparedness Fair, plus sponsorship of CERT training and one Ham Radio license class, and a liaison to the Citywide Alliance on Emergency Preparedness

iv. Homelessness solutions, with measures taken to address the issue, including a survey of encampments and RV's, a Town Hall for HGNNC stakeholders about the issues in cooperation with CD 15, Mayor Garcetti, LAPD, the County Supervisor, State Assembly, State Senate, and the City's Housing Department, and creation of a resource brochure for handout

c) Performance Metrics for Goals: These will be determined by the Committee Chairs for each of the four goals.

d) Citywide Performance Metrics for the Neighborhood Council: The draft Strategic Plan contains some suggestions, such as submitting five Community Impact Statements during the 2016-2017 fiscal year, 35 requests for action from our elected officials, 48 Board and Committee meetings, collaboration on 15 events with elected officials/City Departments/community organizations/non-profits/schools, an increase in the stakeholder database of 101 people, and contact with HGNNC stakeholders twice a week throughout the year.

e) Motion to adopt the 2016-2017 Strategic Plan: It was moved by Richard Lee, seconded by Rey Paduani, and passed 12-0-2 (Woods, Hawkins) to approve the 2016-2017 Strategic Plan

6) Presentation: Board Governance

a) Video – How to Run an Effective Board Meeting: the video produced by the Department of Neighborhood Empowerment (<https://vimeo.com/16437829>) was shown, which stresses leadership, civility, knowledge of basic parliamentary procedure, and how to handle meeting disruptions.

b) Discussion of Roles and Responsibilities: A number of liaisons to City Departments will be appointed at the next Board meeting in October. Liaisons can be stakeholders, except for those communicating with the City Attorney, who will be the Chair and Vice Chair. There should be no serial discussions about Board items at social events or via social media or via telephone conversation. Bring your Neighborhood Council booklet to Board meetings, along with a copy of the Bylaws. There will be a paper and online form created to request items to be placed on Board agendas. Submit items a week ahead of the Executive Committee meeting to Pamela, with a copy to Vice Chair Tim Richardson and the hgnc@sbcglobal.net email address.

For Committee meetings where more than four Board members are expected to show up, the meeting should be designated a Committee/Special Board meeting. If not, then the non-Committee Board members must remain silent.

c) Adoption of Best Practices to Achieve the Council's Goals: Pamela Thornton stressed the three P's for Board members in relation to meetings: *preparation* before coming to meetings, consideration for the overall *purpose* of the meeting (keep to the agenda), and engaged *participation* in meetings.

She also suggested utilizing the Consent Agenda for Board approval of routine items, to save time and reliance on major discussions at Committee meetings so that the issue can be briefly presented at the Board meeting. Utilize liaisons. There should not be too many Committee meetings.

Stephen Box recommended the following: 1) know what you want, 2) ask for it, and 3) know who can get it done.

7) Discuss Committee Appointments and Special Liaisons for FY 2016-2017: tabled until the October 11 Board meeting. More information will be emailed to stakeholders.

8) Outreach Plan Presentation: Outreach Representative Theo Fowles utilized a PowerPoint presentation to explain that the purpose of outreach is to make contact with the community, get a message to the targeted audience, to make sure the organization is known by all, and to enhance networking. What does outreach look like? It's telephone calls, social media, face-to-face interactions, methods of seeking input from stakeholders (surveys), and letters sent to elected officials.

When the Council fixes something or has a solution, let everyone know about it. Advertise what the Neighborhood Council does: "we work with you to solve your issues."

Find partners who are already doing the work. Have a preview of upcoming events, Have t-shirts/caps, etc. at events to identify HGNNC members. Outreach also includes brochures, handouts, pens, Board members shaking hands.

Plan out major events and note them on a master calendar.

Our image should be a reflection of what we do, so make it impressive.

a) Logo discussion and presentation of possible designs: This presentation was tabled.

b) Website upgrade discussion: This item was tabled for a future meeting.

9) Public Comment for non-agenda items: District 5 stakeholder Elayne Simpson said that the Retreat had helped her understand the role of the Neighborhood Council better and that she planned to seek greater involvement on the part of her neighbors, Block Club, and Athens on the Hill Neighborhood Association.

10) Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 2:12 p.m.

Minutes taken by Rosalie Preston, Recording Secretary