

Harbor Gateway North Neighborhood Special Board Meeting

Saturday, June 9, 2018

Holiday Inn, Los Angeles Gateway - Torrance

Present: Pamela Thornton (Chairperson), Saira Cooper (Vice Chairperson), Rosalie Preston (Recording Secretary), Hannah Woods (Corresponding Secretary), Joan Jacobs (Treasurer), Clyde Noguchi (District 2), Rey Paduani (District 3), Betty Hawkins (District 4), Marvin Bell (District 6), Janet Mitchell (District 7), Larry Morrison (District 8), Deborah Lee (Community Organization Representative), Richard Lee (Youth Representative), and Eva Cooper-Pace (At-Large Representative)

1) Welcome/introductions/meet and greet: Chair Pamela Thornton called the meeting to order at 9:08 a.m. followed by a safety review. She noted that in light of a number of recent suicides in the news, Board members and stakeholders should reach out to any they know who are suffering with depression. She pointed out the posted Code of Civility which serves as a guide to conduct during public meetings. She asked that each Board member come to meetings prepared, having reviewed the agenda and other documents beforehand, and with a copy of the HGNNC Bylaws, a copy of which was included in each packet. The Bylaws serve as the governance document for the Neighborhood Council and have been reviewed and approved by the Dept. of Neighborhood Empowerment and the City Attorney. For 2018-2019, there will be new Standing Rules which the Bylaws Committee will work on with input from the Chair and Vice Chair. The revised HGNNC Bylaws which were submitted in March 2018 should be reviewed and approved sometime in July. Pamela also asked that at HGNNC events, if any HGNNC Board member or stakeholders are injured, the others present should make sure that the injured person receives proper care.

Pamela then reviewed the Board Score Card, a self-assessment of the past year's events and activities. The Board will be working on its Strategic Plan for the coming year. In the past, the HGNNC has not addressed some of today's controversial issues, such as race and gang activity, but may consider ways to discuss such issues through upcoming planned events.

She then introduced the two facilitators for the Retreat, Octaviano Rios, Neighborhood Council Advocate from the Dept. of Neighborhood Empowerment, and Gary De La Rosa, who works for the City of Los Angeles as a Human Relations Advocate.

2) Speaker: Councilmember Joe Buscaino, Council District 15: The Councilmember thanked the HGNNC Board members for their sacrifices of time as volunteers and advocacy for their stakeholders, being the eyes and ears on the ground who give him the details of what needs residents have for City services. He acknowledged John Jones III, Field Deputy for the Harbor Gateway North area. He reported that the process of updating the Harbor Gateway Community Plan will begin later this summer and he knows that the HGNNC will have active involvement in that plan. He is working to bring Vision Zero dollars from the Dept. of Transportation for the 135th Street area because of the school and also to Athens on the Hill because of the street racing issues there. Speed hump requests for Hoover Street have been made. He noted that on Bike to Work Day, he rode to City Hall via Hoover and 135th Street and experienced the issues with traffic first hand. His ride can be viewed via Facebook Live Video. Vision Zero dollars have been increased for the coming fiscal year. For any events that HGNNC holds, ask Council District 15 for assistance, such as with provision of pop-up canopies, for example. He pointed out the Tivoli lights which he had installed along Gardena Blvd. and suggested Gardena Blvd. as the location for a possible Winter Wonderland with ice similar to what has been created in other parts of Council District 15. He'd like to do another Coffee with the Councilman in the HGNNC area or even two. He is inspired by the position which the HGNNC has taken on the homeless crisis, which is the key issue for the City right now. As part of Mayor Garcetti's initiative A Bridge Home, he is working on finding a location within Council District 15 for temporary shelters. He is asking each Neighborhood Council to agendize a letter of support for a space for the homeless within their boundaries, such as Safe Parking LA, A Bridge Home, or portable showers. Tomorrow at 9 a.m. on Fox 11, he will be interviewed about the homeless issue. In regards to the Prologis warehouse site, he knows that the HGNNC took a position of opposition. There is currently a CEQA challenge to the project and he'll see how that pans

out. His office and the HGNNC do not always agree on every issue. In contrast, he was also opposed to the proposal for 15 single-family homes in the Merit Tract, as was the HGNNC.

In response to a question about the air pollution impact of having three freeways run through the HGNNC, he said that as a member of the South Coast Air Quality Management District Board, he had voted to support rule-making for warehouses. 80% of air pollution is generated by mobile sources. The SCACMD oversees fixed sources of air pollution only. Therefore, residents need to pressure the Air Resources Board for stricter regulations on mobile air pollution sources. By 2035, the Port of L.A. should generate zero emissions. He will continue to support green technology.

Pamela asked for the Mayor to tour the HGNNC to assess the extent of homelessness in the area. Councilmember Buscaino said that he would continue to make the request, though he knows that the Mayor has a tight schedule.

Rosecrans Recreation Center Director Karen King pointed out the huge and growing amount of graffiti at the park. The Councilman said that he is aware of gang tensions in the area leading to the increase and said that the LAPD Gang Unit is working the area. John Jones III asked stakeholders to also report the graffiti via 311 so as to document the need for resources for paint out.

Before leaving, Councilmember Buscaino acknowledged the 15-year anniversary of the Neighborhood Council with a City resolution.

(Marvin Bell left the meeting at 10:20 a.m.)

4) Workshop: Facilitator, Gary De La Rosa, Human Relations, City of Los Angeles, Identifying opportunities and barriers in Board decision-making: The Neighborhood Council serves as a means to get information about services from City Departments and other agencies to stakeholders, such as mental health resources. Before attending the Board Retreat, he studied up on the HGNNC, including demographics, and asked the Board to analyze who is not participating. He then read out the Mission statement from the HGNNC Bylaws: “1) To provide an inclusive and open forum for public discussion of issues of interest to the Council, including City governance, the needs of the Council, the delivery of City services to the Council area, and other matters of a City wide nature; 2) to advise the City on issues of interest to the Council, including City governance, the needs of the Council, the delivery of City services to the Council area, and other matters of a City wide nature; 3) to initiate, execute and support projects for the physical, social and cultural improvement of the Council area; and 4) to facilitate communication between the City and Community Stakeholders on issues of concern to the community and/or the Stakeholders.”

He suggested having a greeter at meetings as part of the effort to treat the public with courtesy and respect.

He conducted an asset mapping exercise (schools including nearby high schools, California State University Dominguez Hills, Southwest College, El Camino College, Rosecrans Recreation Center, three L.A. County parks, Ralphs, churches, barber shops, three 7 Elevens (free water), two McDonalds (jobs, coupons), Harbor Gateway Transit Center, Fallas/National Stores, recycling centers, HGNNC stakeholders, HGNNC Board members, etc. Talk to people at the local hang out spots. Walk and bike around the neighborhood to get to know it well.

How can the Board members work together? He presented four personality types (monkey, golden retriever, owl, and lion); all four types are needed for an effective team. Learn the best techniques for working with all the four types. If one of the personality types is missing, then recruit someone from that category.

The data on stakeholders is important to consider. In the overall Harbor Gateway area, those of Mexican background are 42% and of Japanese background 2.6%, with 40.8% overall being born in other countries. The percentages of African American and Asian are higher than for Los Angeles County overall. The demographics of the Harbor Gateway area are highly diverse compared to the City overall and for Los Angeles County.

Diversity means gender, religion, race, age, disability, linguistic differences, socio-economic status, and cultural background. Diversity includes those with minority opinions; include minority opinion in your statements. Practice mutual respect for the qualities and experiences that are different from your own.

To create a safe space for all to come together, provide meeting greeters. Have ground rules for meetings and post them.

Create community focused programs that engage the community. Develop partnerships with organizations. Learn about the history and culture, dreams and goals of your stakeholders. Develop and execute community outreach programs focused on engaging those communities you are trying to engage. Use the languages represented within your community in marketing.

The Board should ideally represent the various elements of your community.

Assess your outreach efforts regularly: are there new Board members, new people at meetings?

As Lao Tzu said, "A leader is best when people barely know he exists, when his work is done, his aim fulfilled, they will say: we did it ourselves."

5) Funding guidelines: Joan Jacobs reviewed the do's and don'ts of receiving funding for projects from the HGNNC. A written summary was provided in the packet along with the City Clerk's Neighborhood Council Event Request form, which serves as a guideline for the types of information and details needed before requesting funding.

8) Outreach presentation: Branding - reveal of the new Harbor Gateway North NC and 2018-2019

Outreach plan: Outreach Coordinator Saira Cooper projected a PowerPoint presentation summarizing the new HGNNC marketing plan, which utilizes an interim logo (the HGNNC name block), with a contest later in the year to generate ideas for a permanent new logo for 2019-2020. There is a new outline boundary map. Samples of the newly designed banners with English and Spanish wording, pop-up banners, table tents, and Board name badges for outreach events were on display at the Retreat. There will also be posters for business window display grocery totes, and t-shirts and polo shirts for later in the year and possibly light pole banners along Figueroa Street, Vermont Avenue, and Imperial Highway and bus bench ads. There is a plan to distribute refrigerator magnets instead of the paper flyers for the quarterly General Membership meetings. The HGNNC has a Facebook page and Twitter account and will be considering other social media. Outreach programs for the coming year will be designed to reach out to areas of the community not currently well-represented. The Outreach Committee is working on a Community Engagement Plan and will need more volunteers.

6) Guest Speaker: Congresswoman Maxine Waters, 43rd Congressional District: The Congresswoman acknowledged that the HGNNC does not get the attention it deserves. She discussed the housing crisis, which is in part due to rising rents. She has sponsored HR5393, the Working Together to End Homelessness Act of 2018, which provides \$13.27 billion over five years to provide housing, outreach, and supportive services for the homeless. Prop. HHH funds from L.A. City and Prop. H funds from L.A. County will help build 45,000 units over the next five years in buildings similar to those of the Vermont Villas at 16304 S. Vermont Avenue. Construction of accessory dwelling units will be another way to add more housing. In the interim, there is a need for temporary shelters. Housing and homelessness are two big issues for the Congresswoman and if in November, Democrats gain more seats in Congress, she would become Chair of the Financial Services Committee and strongly advocate for housing funding.

Regarding the Torrance Refinery, it does employ 570 workers and 500 contractors but has a disturbing safety record, including the February 2015 explosion. She and Congresswoman Ted Lieu arranged for an investigation by the U.S. Chemical Safety and Hazard Investigation Board. Questions were asked of Exxon Mobil, but they were not responsive and shortly thereafter sold the refinery to PNB. There are still safety issues under the new ownership. The South Coast Air Quality Management District has begun considering phasing out the dangerous HF acid used in the gasoline manufacturing process there, under Rule 1410. After Congresswoman Waters wrote a letter supporting such a ban, the unions representing refinery workers and the refinery itself attacking her stand. The SCAQMD did not come to a decision on the issue on April 28 and will hold another meeting on June 20 in Diamond Bar. More information is available at www.aqmd.gov and search for Rule 1410.

(Deborah Lee left the meeting at 1:30 p.m.)

The Congressman is a strong supporter of local transportation, including Metro, Torrance Transit, and G-Trans (the former Gardena Bus Service). She encouraged the HGNNC to invite Metro to meetings to learn of their plans for the area.

She also highlighted Community Block Grant funds which could be used to fund pocket parks, alley repairs, etc., and encouraged HGNNC stakeholders to have input in how the City's allocation is spent.

She also suggested inviting the new Chief of Police, Michel Moore, to a meeting.

Her office is available to assist with services related to Social Security, information about those in Federal prisons, Medicare, Medicaid, the budget for HUD, and the postal system.

7) 2018-2019 Action Plan - Facilitator, Octaviano Rios, Department of Neighborhood

Empowerment, Top priorities for the 2018-2019 fiscal year: Octaviano congratulated the Board and stakeholders on a wonderful Retreat. He had planned to guide development of the new action plan, but time has run out. This year, only the Self-Assessment is required for submittal, but he encouraged the Board to discuss goals and metrics for 2018-2019 at a future meeting. His advice is to keep the vision and five major goals of the previous Strategic Plan and focus on specific actions to carry out the goals. He suggested revising the vision and goals every three years. The spring 2019 Board election should be a big focus of outreach efforts, with election outreach having the three goals of awareness of the Neighborhood Council, recruitment of candidates, and having lots of stakeholders voting. He also recommended drafting a master calendar for the year. All Board members should help carry out the Neighborhood Council goals.

9) General public comment on non-agenda items: District 7 stakeholder, HGNNC Budget Representative, and Harbor Area Budget Advocate Dr. Princess Sykes presented a copy of the Budget Advocates White Paper.

Karen King, Director of Rosecrans Recreation Center, asked any available Board members to attend the Fri. June 22 at 12 noon dedication of the new gymnasium floor, which was provided by the Annenberg Foundation.

District 5 Stakeholder Lu Watson reported that District 5 Representative Llewyn Fowlkes is doing well after surgery.

Octaviano Rios asked everyone to take the Dept. of Neighborhood Empowerment survey.

10) Wrap up/next steps/adjournment: Chair Pamela Thornton acknowledged the two HGNNC Budget Representatives Dr. Princess Sykes and Sierra Gothe and District 5 stakeholder and HANC Representative Lu Watson and thanked them for their work this past year.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:57 p.m.

Minutes taken by Rosalie Preston, Recording Secretary