

Harbor Gateway North Neighborhood Special Board Meeting

Tuesday, August 24, 2024

555 W. Redondo Beach Blvd., Room 115

Present: Joan Jacobs (Vice Chairperson), Rosalie Preston (Secretary), Majenni Nixon (Treasurer), Laivern Frerichs (District 1), Nita Stonehocker (District 2), Dave Trejo (District 3), Arvie Powell (District 4), Marvin Bell (District 6), Barbara Tyson-Frazier (District 7), Oscar Ruiz (District 8), Frankie Mays (Community Organization), Jackie Jackson (Youth Advocate), Finesse Simmons (Youth Representative), and Craig Kusunoki (At Large Representative)

1) Welcome/call to order/Board roll call: In the absence of Chairperson Miguel Vazquez and Vice Chairperson Joan Jacobs, Treasurer Majenni Nixon called the meeting to order at 9:36 a.m. The roll call determined that a quorum of 9 was present.

2) Ice breaker/getting to know the Board members and other attendees: Neighborhood Empowerment Advocate Helena Doub introduced herself. She has been working for EmpowerLA (Department of Neighborhood Empowerment) for five months. She previously was a social worker and also served on the Board of the Olympic Park Neighborhood Council for two years. Those present went around the room answering why they decided to get involved with the Neighborhood Council, why civic engagement in the community is important, or what their dream civic project would be.

3) Greetings from Councilmember Tim McOsker: Council District 15 Field Deputy Nicholas Chavez explained that the Councilmember was not able to attend himself. As a Field Deputy, Nicholas provides services to the Harbor Gateway North and Harbor Gateway South neighborhoods of Council District 15 south of the 105 freeway; north of the 105 in District 6 is served by Council District 8. Nicholas grew up in the Harbor Gateway North, with parents who reported issues via 311. He was inspired by their example of engagement.

4) How the City of Gardena keeps its sidewalks repaired, trees planted and trimmed, and streets resurfaced (Clint Osorio, City Manager-City of Gardena/Greg Tsujiuchi-Director of Community Development): Greg Tsujiuchi, the Director of Community Development for the City of Gardena, said that he oversees planning and land use, economic development, building and safety, permits and licensing, animal control, and code enforcement for the City of Gardena, which is a small city of 60,000 residents which covers six square miles. Gardena employs six code enforcement officers, so one for every square mile. Gardena is experiencing staffing issues but is still managing to answer most resident requests within one day via their Gardena Direct app. Gardena actively seeks out businesses to move into their city. There are many developers interested in building housing but Gardena holds them to a high standard. They require written development agreements, that includes requiring space for pets. Violations of city codes result in fines which if unpaid go onto the violator's property tax bill as a lien for the code enforcement citation. Gardena receives grants through Metro and Caltrans for street maintenance and landscaping of medians. Their city budget is created every two years and includes plans for infrastructure improvements for the next five years. They use a PCI index for the condition of their roads and this guides their priority for repair. Their overall PCI index is 80, which is the highest for any of the cities in the South Bay. Gasoline purchased in the city of Gardena results in the gasoline tax being returned to Gardena for future road repairs.

(Jackie Jackson entered the meeting at 10:20 a.m.)

Greg has worked in six other cities (including Vernon, Lawndale, Bell, Rosemead, and Hawthorne) and has 28 years of experience with small city governance. The Gardena City

Manager functions like the CEO and oversees the individual City departments (Community Development, Recreation and Human Services, Police, Public Works, and Transportation). Priorities for city improvements are set by the City Council. Code enforcement is one of their key priorities so that the city always looks good. Therefore, the city of Gardena emphasizes consistent enforcement of their ordinances.

(Joan Jacobs and Arvie Powell entered the meeting at 10:26 a.m.; Marvin Bell left the meeting)

Helena Doub said that the City of LA's 311 app will be updated. Board members can request data from 311 on the number of requests for service in the Harbor Gateway North area and how long the requests took to fulfill.

(Barbara Tyson-Frazier entered the meeting; Laivern Frerichs left the meeting)

Nicholas Chavez said that Councilmember McOsker shares HGNNC residents' interest in improving the response time for needed LA city services and agreed that longer-term budgeting and re-organization of city services for improved code enforcement needs to happen.

Introductions and backgrounds of recently arrived Board members took place.

5) Broadway Sur in South LA and other median beautifications in Studio City and Valley Village—how they were designed, funded, planted, and maintained:

Rosalie Preston projected PowerPoints for one of the Studio City planted medians, the Eastside Median on Ventura Blvd., which was planted by the non-profit Studio City Beautification Association. It started out as a concrete strip with weeds very much like the medians on the north and south sides of Rosecrans Avenue. It was first planted with succulents and pine trees, but when a car ran over the median, knocking down trees and destroying the irrigation system, a new landscape was created. SCBA Board Member Doug Short produced the design and then helped plant new trees, low water plants, and large rocks to prevent future vehicle damage. The median was "adopted" by the SCBA under the City's Adopt-a-Median program—Office of Community Beautification.

Broadway Sur is a capital improvement project taking place along Broadway from Imperial Highway to Manchester and then a portion of Vermont Avenue from Manchester and then north. It is one of three major corridors in Council District 8 that Councilmember Marqueece Harris-Dawson decided to focus on when he first took office. The other corridors are Crenshaw Blvd. and Western Avenue. Council District 8 staff was not able to be present for the Board Retreat. However, Rosalie Preston was able to meet with Roberto Perez, CD 8 Economic Development Director, via Google Meet to get more details of how Broadway Sur was planned and carried out. Roberto also emailed the PowerPoint which was then projected. Outreach to the community began in 2016. More than 1,300 people participated in the workshops and events to discuss the project. The Planning Deputy of that time, Kristen Gordon, worked with the Bureau of Street Services who used a consultant to help with the visioning process and then grants were applied for, including an Active Transportation Grant from Caltrans of \$26 million. The grant was written by Metro. The City of Los Angeles also applied for an infrastructure grant for South LA, part of a larger grant. That was \$7 million. There was an Urban Greening Grant of \$2 million to cover the cost of 200 new trees in the median. StreetsLA applied for a Measure W grant to cover the stormwater capture element of the median, which is still in the planning stages, with construction scheduled for June 2025-Fall 2026. The first grants were received in 2018. The Department of Transportation installed new crosswalks, with bollards to prevent vehicles from injuring pedestrians, and new protected bike lanes. In the next six months, DOT will be installing flashing beacons above crosswalks, speed tables (similar to speed humps but longer and flatter), and bump outs to further protect pedestrians and bike riders. Other grants will be used to re-do other parts of the median and create recreational spaces. StreetsLA will maintain the new trees and landscaping for their initial establishment period of 3-5 years. Beyond that, Council District 8 will need to work with StreetsLA to secure funding for longer term

maintenance. Rosalie said that Roberto mentioned that getting the grant to plant trees was fairly easy, so that could provide a guide for planting trees on the two medians along Rosecrans Avenue on the north and south sides of the street between Vermont Avenue and the 110 freeway.

HGNNC webmaster Aaron DeVandry stopped by to introduce himself and let the group know that he will be gradually redesigning the HGNNC website to make it easier to navigate ahead of the 2025 Board election. Attendees then took a break for lunch.

(Barbara Tyson-Frazier left the meeting at 12:50 p.m.)

6) Role of a Neighborhood Council Board member (Helena Doub-EmpowerLA): This topic was tabled for a future Board meeting.

7) Goals and activities for the 2024-2025 fiscal year (discussion led by Helena Doub-EmpowerLA): Helena Doub reviewed the 2023-2024 Goals/Priorities from last year's Board Retreat, which were beautification, responsible community development/community oriented development, and increasing stakeholder participation. She asked how well those goals were achieved and the barriers to achievement, but not much progress was made on the action items under each of those goals, such as median plantings on Rosecrans Avenue, traffic calming at 135th/Hoover, the traffic signal at Rosecrans/Menlo Avenue in District 4, and hosting Coffee with a Cop. For the medians, a plan was not created and a process started. There was discussion of long-term solutions for illegal dumping: cameras, lighting, education, vouchers for clean up services, enforcement by the City of Los Angeles.

Ideas for the 2024-2025 fiscal year were written on a flip chart by Youth Representative Finesse Simmon. The three priority areas for 2024-2025: beautification and creation of green spaces, safety and cleanliness, and increasing stakeholder engagement and participation/community connection, including youth.

To achieve these over-arching goals, a number of actions were written down and attendees assigned to work on them.

- Beautify Rosecrans medians with trees and native shrubs/partner with Environmental Charter Middle School—contact CD 15 and Bureau of Street Services/StreetsLA (Joan Jacobs and Dave Trejo)
- Host van/bus trips with lunch for stakeholders to view key HGNNC issues and existing assets, creating cohesiveness among stakeholders of all Districts (Jackie Jackson and Dave Trejo)
- Support HGNNC website improvements (Rosalie Preston)
- Organize a cultural event/survey to engage stakeholders, possibly in collaboration with the 2025 Juneteenth event (Finesse Simmons and Outreach/Communications Committee)

(Oscar Ruiz left the meeting at 1:43 p.m.)

- Create partnerships with existing community gardens and the Venice Family Clinic for their bi-weekly food give aways, including tabling (Majenni Nixon and Janeshia Robinson)
- Host a Coffee with a Cop at Farmer Boys or McDonalds (Frankie Mays and Nita Stonehocker)

8) Next steps: Helena Doub recommended putting the Board 2024-2025 goals on each Board agenda for brief follow up.

9) General public comment on non-agenda items that are within the Neighborhood Council's subject matter jurisdiction. Each speaker will be allowed 2 minutes per speaker:
There was none.

The meeting was adjourned at 1:55 p.m.

Minutes taken by Rosalie Preston, Secretary