

WESTWOOD NEIGHBORHOOD COUNCIL
BOARD MEETING MINUTES
FEBRUARY 9, 2011
WESTWOOD PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
10822 WILSHIRE BLVD.
LOS ANGELES, CA 90024

1. CALL TO ORDER

Vice President Toni Gray called the meeting to order at 7:04 p.m. She welcomed the principal of Emerson Middle School, Kathy Gonella, and the principal of Fairburn Elementary School, Elizabeth Abramowitz. Board members in attendance were Connie Boukidis, Lisa Chapman, David Crew, Roozbeh Farahanipour, Brent Gaisford, Toni Gray, Mark Herd, Stephen Resnick, Mark Rogo, Clinton Schudy, Kurt Smalberg, Steven Somers, Michael Stajura, George Torbay, and Laura Winikow. Board members absent were Jerry Brown, Terry Pullan, and Yoni Riemer. There were also 29 stakeholders and guests in attendance.

2. APPROVAL OF JANUARY 12, 2011 MINUTES

Kurt Smalberg moved to approve the minutes with one correction. The motion was seconded by Clinton Schudy and passed unanimously.

3. BUDGET UPDATE

Stephen Resnick gave the budget update in place of Treasurer Yoni Riemer, who was unable to attend. Out of the \$45,000 budget, WWNC has spent or granted a total of \$3,130 which leaves \$41,870 remaining. The Budget Committee is planning to meet in order to update the budget, and the meeting place and time will be posted per the Brown Act.

4. NEIGHBORHOOD PURPOSES GRANT

This item was tabled until the next meeting.

5. EMERSON MIDDLE SCHOOL/FAIRBURN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Emerson Principal Kathy Gonnella presented her grant proposal in the amount of \$5,000 for a new projector, screen, wiring, and installation for Emerson's

Parent Center. The Center provides information and support to parents and is one way that Emerson is reaching out to them and the community.

Discussion followed about the grant approval process, with Kurt Smalberg expressing concern about granting money on a first come, first served basis. Connie Boukidis felt that this grant to Emerson would be a good use of the money that WWNC is given, and possibly the budget should be updated to increase the percentage of the budget that would go to grants. Michael Stajura requested agendaization of a motion to improve the grant process for the next meeting. Stakeholder Sandy Brown recommended that the board have a cut-off date for grant proposal applications next year. Laura Winikow said that the board should hear the second grant proposal on the agenda and then vote on both of them. Connie Boukidis moved to vote on both grant proposals at this meeting, which was seconded by Scott Whittle. The motion passed by a vote of 10 in favor and 4 opposed. Connie Boukidis and Laura Winikow recused themselves from voting on Fairburn Elementary's grant proposal due to a conflict of interest.

Fairburn Principal Elizabeth Abramowitz presented her grant proposal in the amount of \$8,346.24 for six new computers, one for each grade. She explained that Fairburn's current computers are ten years old so they really need new ones. Fairburn parent Joanna Darvish explained that the school would use the new computers to publish a student newspaper, make podcasts, and create a web page with Westwood community events posted. This would have the double benefit of increasing literacy and giving the students technological skills. The web page would be a community resource for all of Westwood's children.

Michael Stajura pointed out that any grant request over \$5,000 involves extra scrutiny. George Torbay moved to grant Fairburn \$5,000 for 4 computers but did not receive a second.

Toni Gray moved that WWNC approve Emerson's grant in the amount of \$5,000. Lisa Chapman recused herself from the vote. Toni's motion was seconded by David Crew and passed with 14 votes in favor.

Michael Stajura moved that "The amount of Fairburn's grant proposal which is listed on the agenda as \$7,604.76 should be amended to the amount on the application, which is \$8,346.24." Scott Whittle seconded the motion, which passed by a vote of 12 in favor and one opposed. Michael then moved that WWNC approve the grant in the amount of \$8,346.24 to Fairburn. Kurt Smalberg seconded the motion which carried by a vote of 14 in favor.

6. WESTWOOD ORGANIZED MEGA PROJECT (WOMP) VOLUNTEER DAY

Steve Sann, Chair of Westwood Community Council, announced that the 2nd annual WOMP Volunteer Day in Westwood Village will take place on April 17th from 8:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. Approximately 500 volunteers worked at the first one, about 450 UCLA students and 50 business owners. WOMP is requesting a grant for neighborhood beautification in the amount of \$7,500. The WOMP committee will give the details of specific projects to be done at WWNC's March meeting. Steve said that tonight he is only giving information without asking for a vote on the motion.

John Heidt, Vice Chair of WCC, said that sweeping, removing graffiti from public areas, planting trees, and repainting curbs and trash cans are some of the projects that will be undertaken. WOMP will need supplies such as rollers, brushes, paint, and tape. WOMP is partnering with Tree People, so the newly planted trees come with a year of maintenance included.

Toni Gray mentioned that electrical outlets in Westwood Village are attractive nuisances, because the homeless use them to plug in boom boxes or charge cell phones.

7. WESTSIDE MOBILITY PLAN

Tom Gaul and Laura Muna-Landa gave a presentation on the Westside Mobility Plan, which is a study looking at the future of transportation on the Westside with a view to improving connectability between different transportation systems. The boundaries of the area under study are Sunset Blvd. in the north to LAX in the south, and west of Beverly Hills and Culver City. The study will cost \$2.4 million with a draft plan prepared in two years. They are identifying "hot spots" in different districts and are soliciting community input. In Westwood, Westwood Village and Westwood Blvd. are "hot spots". There is currently a parking survey underway until February 15th.

Toni Gray expressed dismay that on one hand, the City is selling the Broxton garage and on the other, paying for research and asking the community about what the problems are because selling the Broxton garage is part of the problem. Michael Stajura had two ideas to improve parking in the Westwood Village area. One is to do a study of the unused parking in the Village and how to maximize its use. The second idea is for the City to purchase an empty lot and build a parking garage on it that UCLA students could pay to park in. This would benefit the north Village area, where up to six people can be sharing an apartment and there are more cars than places to park in. Brent Gaisford concurred with this assessment. Clinton Schudy said that businesses in the Village lose customers because of parking problems. He remembered that the Village used to have diagonal parking. Now it has parallel parking but he recommended going back to diagonal parking because it would double the number of parking spaces.

8. COMMUNITY CARE FACILITIES SUPPLEMENTAL REPORT & ORDINANCE

Sharon Commins, 1st Vice Chair of the Mar Vista Community Council, described a motion that the Westside Regional Alliance of Councils (WRAC) is supporting in order to limit the concentration of Community Care Facilities in low-density residential neighborhoods. There are too many facilities operating illegally, and there is no code enforcement. Malibu is saturated with these facilities and they are now moving into Pacific Palisades. Sober living is a big business, and an unregulated industry. Sharon asked WWNC to support WRAC's position and motion.

Michael Stajura requested that a vote to join WRAC be agendized for the next meeting, and volunteered to be WWNC's representative. Mark Rogo recommended that because this is such a complicated topic it should be sent to a sub-committee who will vet it and report back to the board. Mark Rogo moved that the matter be tabled and referred to committee. David Crew seconded the motion, which carried with 10 votes in favor. Sharon said there is some urgency on this as the issue is going to the Planning Commission soon.

9. WEBSITE UPDATE

Lisa Chapman announced that Media 81 can set up a website for WWNC for \$1200, and will charge an hourly rate of \$75 to do repairs if needed. Lisa moved that WWNC approve the hiring of Media 81 to set up WWNC's website. George Torbay seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

10. WESTSIDE SUBWAY EXTENSION

Kurt Smalberg opened a discussion about the route of the subway between Century City and Westwood with the problem that the subway would go underneath 150 to 200 homes which could lower property values and be disruptive. Mark Rogo remarked that according to Supervisor Zev Yaroslavsky the subway will be between 80 and 100 feet below ground and that it has gone under other homes and buildings without complaints. Discussion was divided between these two viewpoints. Stakeholders Paula Levin and Glenn Flug voiced their opinion that there are legitimate concerns about the water table, pipelines, and abandoned oil wells underground and stated that their requests for information from the MTA and Supervisor Yaroslavsky have gone unanswered. Another problem Paula mentioned is that there is no parking for the subway, and that the MTA says they will think about it later. Connie Boukidis suggested that MTA Representative Jody Litvak be invited to speak at

a WWNC meeting to address concerns. Brent Gaisford moved to table this matter indefinitely but there was no second.

11. CITY PARKING GARAGES

Lisa Chapman moved that WWNC approve a more detailed three page version of a motion already voted on against the P-3 50 year lease of nine public parking garages. Connie Boukidis seconded, and the motion carried unanimously.

12. PERSIAN NEW YEAR

Roosbeh Farahanipour announced that the annual celebration of Norooz will be held on March 27th this year and one block of Westwood Blvd. will be closed off from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. that day. The Norooz festival usually gets support from the City and has various government representatives at the festival so WWNC should have a representative there also. He will invite someone to WWNC's March meeting to talk about it.

13. COMMUNITY IMPACT STATEMENTS

Stephen Resnick submitted a Community Impact Statement on the parking garages to the City Clerk. He would like to get a password in order to submit future statements online. Scott Whittle moved that WWNC approve President Jerry Brown to appoint up to five board members who are authorized to submit Community Impact Statements. Lisa Chapman seconded the motion, which passed with 15 votes in favor.

14. STANDING COMMITTEES STATUS REPORT

Lisa Chapman reported that she is working on locating free space for committees to meet in, and there is a possibility that the Hammer Museum may have meeting space. The Traffic and Transportation Committee has no chair yet.

15. AD HOC BYLAW COMMITTEE UPDATE

Scott Whittle reported that the table of contents of WWNC's bylaws is the one recommended by DONE. Connie Boukidis moved that "WWNC accept DONE recommendations for Table of Contents modifications and to pursue bylaw

amendments in the recommended format.” Kurt Smalberg seconded the motion, which passed by a vote of 15 in favor and one opposed.

16. PUBLIC COMMENTS

David Crew, who is WWNC’s Budget Advocate, recommended that everyone take the City’s Budget Survey because it is another way to have your voice heard, and the Mayor will look at it. Anyone can go to www.labudgetchallenge.lacity.org to find the survey.

Laura Winikow reminded everyone that the next election day is March 8th. Measure L will be on the ballot, which is a measure that reallocates money to the library system and will help restore 6 days a week library service. Laura also announced that the Westwood Gardens Park next to the library will have its official opening on Thursday, February 10th at 2 p.m.

Stakeholder Joyce Rich volunteered to be on a committee to help get shelter for the homeless. Lisa Chapman stated that it would be an ad hoc committee and requested agendaization of this matter for the next meeting. Steve Sann said that Westwood Community Council has a task force on homeless and would like WWNC to collaborate with them. Steve also said a new BID is forming and will have the homeless on its agenda.

Stakeholder David Carlat recommended that public comments be at the beginning of the meeting, not the end, so people don’t have to sit through the whole meeting to have their say. David is representing a new restaurant, Fundamental, a gourmet sandwich & salad place at Westwood Blvd. and Wellworth Ave. Fundamental will be applying for a beer and wine license and business hours until midnight. No application has been submitted yet.

Stakeholder Roxane Stern recommended that all stakeholder suggestions should be registered and kept track of. Lisa Chapman said that when WWNC’s website is up, they will be kept track of.

Stakeholder Brant Feldman brought up the fact that the Post Office in the Federal Building is closing down, and wanted to know if WWNC should make a statement about that. Stephen Resnick said he spoke with Representative Henry Waxman’s deputy and was told that the GSA has leased it until 2014. Scott Whittle said that he spoke with a post office worker who told him they wouldn’t be moving out for at least a year. Lisa Chapman said that the upcoming closure will affect UCLA as well as the neighborhood and an ad hoc committee could be formed for this issue.

Stakeholder Laura Lake requested agendaization of a vote on UCLA’s proposed building of a hotel and conference center at Hilgard Ave. and Westholme Ave.

for the next meeting. There is a loose coalition of homeowners and faculty that is opposed to this. Toni Gray stated that UCLA can approve its own EIR for this project, and it will be competing with local businesses. She would like to get Councilmember Koretz's support on this.

Stakeholder Sandy Brown announced that Assemblyman Mike Feuer will be holding a Town Hall meeting on February 15th at Sinai Temple. Sandy recommended an upcoming KCET program about selling ad space in public parks, featuring herself and Dennis Hathaway of the Coalition to Ban Billboard Blight.

Brent Gaisford recommended that an explanation of how to use the speaker cards be given at the beginning of each meeting.

Michael Stajura agreed with the stakeholder who said that public comments should be at the meeting's beginning, recommended time limits on speakers, and announced an event at the Veterans Administration on Thursday, February 10th at 6 p.m.

17. MOTION TO ADJOURN

Mark Rogo moved to adjourn the meeting, which was seconded by Laura Winikow and carried unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 10:01 p.m.