

## South Robertson (SORO) Neighborhoods Council

SORO Neighborhoods Council  
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A Certified City of Los Angeles Neighborhood Council

**Victoria Karan**  
President  
**Jon Liberman**  
Vice President  
**Ann Hammond**  
Secretary  
**Terrence Gomes**  
Treasurer

### Approved General Meeting Minutes October 15, 2008 at 7:00 p.m. Hamilton Senior High School 2955 S. Robertson Blvd. Los Angeles, CA 90034

#### I. CALL TO ORDER, ROLL CALL

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Jon Liberman, Acting President.

**Board members present:** Brian Bergman, Bette Billet, Harold Bock, Robyn Braun, Doug Fitzsimmons, Gary Garcia, Terrence Gomes, Anne Gross, Nahed Guirguis, Ann Hammond, Gina LaBeaud, Barry E. Levine, Jon Liberman, Marjan Safinia

**Board members absent:** Christine Aghassi, Susan Burden, Daniel Fink, Roy Nwaiser, Sandra Willard

**Guests present:** Jennifer Badger, Elizabeth Carlin, Brooke Powers, Adeena Bleich, Sonia Madan, Har Simran Khalsa, Jenny Savitsky

#### II. SPECIAL PRESENTATIONS

- a. **Mary Earl:** Jon introduced Mary Earl, newly elected President of SoRo, Inc. She said she looks forward to working with SORO NC. She reported there is currently approximately \$4,200 in the SoRo, Inc. account available to SORO NC for recommended expenditures to benefit the SoRo community. She said SORO NC should be applauded for its wonderful progress over the past months. She suggested SORO NC decide exactly what it would like to see in this year's Festival to ensure those elements can be taken into account in the planning, and asked for those decisions by December 2008. She also invited SORO NC Board member to participate in the Festival Planning Committee.
- b. **Victoria Karan:** The former President, SORO NC, Vikki individually thanked every Board member present and applauded all on their hard work and accomplishments on behalf of the SoRo community. Liz Carlin and Jennifer Badger presented Vikki with a certificate of appreciation from the Councilmember's office and praised her on her effectiveness as SORO NC President.

- c. **Marcie Adavalos:** Representing California for Solar & Clean Energy, she presented arguments for voting “yes” on Proposition 7 during Public Comments, as she had not arrived earlier.

### III. GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT

Sonia Madan, a teacher at Hamilton High School, asked for community support for purposes of a grant to the City of Los Angeles Cultural Affairs Department for \$10,000 to paint a mural to help beautify the neighborhood. Terrence offered use of some materials SORO NC has on hand, including base paint and paint equipment. Jon and Doug offered to post a notice on the SORO NC website and to send word out to the community through the bethechange email distribution list.

Jenny Savitsky, representing Friends of Canfield, reported that Canfield Elementary, which lost Title I funding two years ago, will sponsor a Beautification Day, 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m., on October 27<sup>th</sup>. They will plant drought-resistant plants, for the purposes of beautifying the school, teaching students about indigenous plants, and saving the school costs of repairing the sprinkler system. The day will also feature recycling, for which the community is invited to drop off electronics no longer needed. Friends of Canfield welcomes volunteers for the day. A second Beautification Day will be held in April; Jenny explained they would again welcome community volunteers as well as financial support. Brian invited her to attend the next Land Use Committee meeting to discuss these programs further and prepare a motion for the Board’s consideration. Jon will send out a note to the community about the October 27<sup>th</sup> through the bethechange email distribution list, and Doug will post a notice on the SORO NC website.

Har Simran Khalsa thanked CD-5, CD-10, Brooke Powers and the individual SORO NC Board members who helped to make the September 21<sup>st</sup> Peace Picnic so successful.

### IV. READING OF THE MINUTES AND APPROVAL

Doug moved to approve draft minutes of the General Meeting of September 10, 2008 with Brian seconding. **Minutes approved unanimously.**

### V. REPORTS

- a. **Office of Speaker of the House Karen Bass:** No report was made as no representative was present.
- b. **Office of Councilmember Jack Weiss (CD-5):** Field Deputy Jennifer Badger reported on two issues. First, she explained that Councilmember Weiss has been fighting billboard blight in the neighborhood, and there is currently a motion before the Council to address the issue throughout the city. Second, she noted residents’ concerns that a tree in the 1700 block of Canfield Avenue may have to be removed because its roots are damaging the sidewalk. She met recently with residents and the Department of Urban Forestry. Doug added that he understands electronic billboards are easier to fight before

they go up rather than after posted, and asked if it is too late to try to stop the one about to be connected on Robertson and Gibson.

- c. **Office of Councilmember Herb Wesson (CD-10):** Councilmember Herb Wesson's Aide Liz Carlin congratulated the norobertsonstripclub.com group on the outcome of the Police Permit Review Panel hearing earlier in the day. She also reported that, altogether, more than 2,000 people participated in the summer Movies in the Park series. As a result of this success, the Councilmember plans to hold this series again next year; she will coordinate with the SORO NC Outreach Committee to help ensure more advance notice and cooperation than was possible this year. This year, parks such as Reynier Park, that are within neighborhoods, had the best attendance; therefore, Reynier Park will definitely be included again next year. Liz also announced that the Councilmember plans two events during December. On December 18<sup>th</sup>, turkeys and hams will be given away to those living in CD10 who are in need and who have contacted the office beforehand to reserve (phone: 323-733-8233). On December 20<sup>th</sup>, a holiday event will be held in the CD-10 parking lot; working through elementary schools in the district, toys will be available for children, with a focus on the those most in need. Liz said they welcome financial and volunteer support for these two activities. In closing, Liz thanked SORO NC for being such a collaborative partner.
- d. **LAPD:** No report was made as no representative was present. Jon noted that Officer Gray had to attend another meeting.
- e. **DONE:** No report was made as no representative was present.
- f. **Robertson Recreation Center Report:** Brooke Powers, Recreation Facility Director at Robertson Rec Center, distributed the Center's Fall 2008 newsletter. She announced that a Halloween Carnival will be held on Friday, October 31<sup>st</sup>, 4:00 – 8:00 p.m., at the Center, featuring many arts and crafts activities, games and prizes. Volunteers are needed to help decorate the Center and work at the Carnival. She also reported that the Center is aiming for another RAL program in the winter, and the bus trip postponed from the summer RAL program was held October 9<sup>th</sup>.

## V. EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE REPORT

- a. **President's Report:** Jon reported there are six vacancies for the SORO NC Board. Notice has been posted on bethechange. So far, one application from Zone 6 has been received and one person from the business community has contacted Marj. Jon emphasized that potential Board members need to be realistic about the time commitment involved in serving on the Board. Jon summarized the selection process for vacant Board and officer positions: applications for Board member need to be received seven days before the next Board meeting (i.e. by November 5<sup>th</sup>), and any Board member can be a candidate for an officer position, including President. He suggested that anyone interested in being a candidate for President advise the Secretary and send a brief biographical sketch to her for circulation to the Board.

Jon also reported that he will re-send the goals upon which the NC agreed and asked each Committee Chairman to say where they stand on implementation of goals. Bette

and Marj clarified that the aim is to send a report to the community at the end of the year summarizing what the NC has accomplished. It was agreed that each Committee Chair would discuss its Committee's progress at its next meeting, and each Committee Chair would prepare a brief paragraph at the end of the year to be incorporated into an end-of-the-year report to the community.

Jon said the Executive Committee has started work on a records retention policy to ensure the NC has copies of all documents including letters that have been sent on behalf of the NC. The first step is checking with the City to see what requirements and procedures may be in place with which the NC must comply. Ann has received a large policy document from Barry Stone, and she will review it for guidance.

- b. Treasurer's Report:** Terrence presented Treasurer's Reports for the past two months. Ann and Nahed said they had not been able to open the Excel spreadsheets on line to see the whole workbook, which Terrence explained had nine tabs in all. Jon said he brings a paper copy to each meeting, which anyone can review as needed, so it is not necessary to make extra copies to distribute at the meeting. Ann asked if the format was easy for everyone to understand. Robyn said it is in a format that is familiar. Brian moved to approve; Marj seconded. **Vote: 12-Y; 0-N; 2-A.**

## VI. OLD BUSINESS

None.

## VII. NEW BUSINESS

- a. Motion to request that SORO, Inc. make a donation of \$500 towards yard signs to promote the SORO NC Town Hall (Safinia) (GB101508-4).** Marj introduced the motion, clarifying that 50 signs are needed and the price is not exact. She will get several quotes, and turnaround time would be a critical factor given the timing of the November 10<sup>th</sup> Town Hall event. She said SoRo, Inc. has indicated its willingness to provide funds for this expense. Gary asked if flyers could also be made available to him, so that he could publicize the event at Hamilton High's October 22<sup>nd</sup> College Night and October 23<sup>rd</sup> Parent's Night. Doug moved to approve, Brian seconded. **Motion passed unanimously.**
- b. Motion to purchase 30 lawn signs to announce SORO NC meetings (Bock/Hammond) (GB101508-5).** Harold explained that lawn signs have proven useful in increasing attendance at Board meetings, emphasizing that they are effective only if Board members take responsibility for posting them in a timely manner and removing them promptly after meetings. Discussion focused on durability of the signs and emphasized that dry erase markers would need to be used. Doug clarified that the signs would use the new SORO NC branding. Terrence said he has old signs that can be recycled. Anne suggested there be more signs made so they could be used to direct people the night of the meeting to the Cafeteria, as it is a difficult place to find on the high school campus. It was agreed that the signs would be used on an experimental basis. Brian proposed an amendment, that 40 signs rather than 30 would be procured; Jon seconded. **Proposed amendment to the motion passed unanimously.** Doug moved to approve the amended motion; Jon suggested. **Amended motion passed unanimously.**

(Gina LaBeaud left.)

- c. **Motion to purchase 30 lawn signs for SORO NC Board member recruitment (Bock/Hammond) (GB101508-6).** Harold clarified that these signs would be generic so can be reused. Brian suggested they be placed in areas where there are Board member openings. Signs will direct people to the SORO NC website. Doug will ensure notice of Board openings is put on the website. Signs would have the SORO NC branding. Anne suggested a flyer also be created and distributed to sites such as the local library to encourage people to consider running for the Board. Harold agreed, and he noted that individual referrals by Board members will continue to be the most effective recruitment method. Brian moved to approve the motion; Jon seconded. **Motion approved unanimously.**
- d. **Motion to incorporate Board member training as agenda item (Bock/Hammond) (GB101508-7).** Ann explained that the motion was designed to meet the dual needs of keeping Board members up-to-date on skills and information needed while being efficient with respect to their time and availability. The Ad Hoc Board Development Committee will take responsibility for prioritizing topics and ensuring they are included on the agenda. For the next meetings, Terrence will be responsible for training on forms to be completed when the Board approves expenditures. In response to the Grievance Panel report and recommendations, Roy will be responsible for training the Board before the end of the year on bylaws, as soon as the approved set of bylaws is received back from DONE. Brian moved to approve the motion; Doug seconded. **Motion approved unanimously.**

## VIII. COMMITTEE REPORTS

- a. **By-Laws:** Jon reported that a complex form needs to be filled out before the revised bylaws, along with minutes of the meetings at which the proposed changes were approved, can be sent to DONE for approval. He has been working on it and committed to send it to DONE by Monday, October 20th. He noted that Barry Stone is leaving at the end of this month. Doug acknowledged Jon's tremendous contribution in getting his work done, and all present applauded in agreement.
- b. **Education:** Barry reported that the Committee did not meet this month. There are currently nine volunteer mentors working with 13 children; more mentors are needed. The school is eager to have a presentation on storm water conservation, and Ann will provide the contact information. He also needs contact information for Paul Reykes. Gary distributed flyers for Hamilton High School's planned School Safety Night on Thursday, November 6<sup>th</sup>. Gary also thanked the Education Committee and SORO NC for the cell phones to ensure a Safety Zone around the school, and he distributed the flyer setting out the process to be followed, including names and phone numbers in order of those to be called.
- c. **Green Team:** Given the lack of success in identifying a new Committee Chair for the Green Team, it was agreed that this would be incorporated under the Land Use Committee.

- d. **Land Use:** Brian reported that the Land Use Committee has been working on the tree issue on Canfield, mentioned earlier by Jennifer Badger, and on an automotive repair shop request for variance at Guthrie and La Cienega.
- e. **Outreach:** Marj reported that, earlier in the day, the Police Permit Review Panel hearing on the Skin Cabaret permit led to a decision by the Panel not to grant the permit at this time but rather to exercise its subpoena power to call on the owner to appear to respond to issues that have emerged. Marj also reported that Outreach suggests postponing the Board retreat to January, when a new Board President and new Board members will be in place. She said several speakers have been lined up for the Town Hall meeting on Energy and Savings on November 10<sup>th</sup>. Doug reported there has been progress on the website, it is now functional, and it will be built up by the end of the year. Marj added that the permit for additional banners between 18<sup>th</sup> and Pico is in process, and it is expected that new banners will be up come January 1<sup>st</sup>.
- f. **Public Safety:** Jon reported there had been no meeting this month. He aims to have a joint meeting with Outreach. There have been reports of crime in Reynier and Beverlywood. Baila Romm has been developing the Neighborhood Watch program. Gary asked for letters of support for the Safe Passage program.
- g. **Ad-hoc Board Development Committee.** No report was made.
- h. **Ad hoc Inter-NC Committee:** No report was made.

X. **ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting adjourned at 9:20 p.m.

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Voting record, by agenda item

Representing	Name	1015 08-1	1015 08-2	1015 08-3	1015 08-4	101508 -5 to amend	1015 08-5 as amended	1015 08-6	1015 08-7
Zone 1	Daniel Fink								
Zone 2									
Zone 3	Harold Bock	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Zone 4	Robyn Braun	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Zone 5	Bette Billet	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Zone 6									
Zone 7	Jon Liberman	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Zone 8	Sandra Willard								
Zone 9									
Zone 10									
At-large 1	Brian Bergman	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
At-large 2	Christine Aghassi								
At-large 3	Terrence Gomes	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
At-large 4	Anne Gross	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Business 1	Marj Safinia	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Business 2	Barry Levine	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Business 3									
Business 4									
Business 5	Roy Nwaiser								
Org. 1	Doug Fitzsimmons	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Org. 2	Ann Hammond	Y	A	A	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Org. 3	Nahed Guirguis	Y	A	A	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Org. 4	Susan Burden								
School 1	Gina LaBeaud	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y		
School 2	Gary Garcia	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Totals		Y-14; N-0; A-0	Y-12; N-0; A-2	Y-12; N-0; A-2	Y-14; N-0; A-0	Y-14; N-0; A-0	Y-14; N-0; A-0	Y-13; N-0; A-0	Y-13; N-0; A-0

Key: Y=Yes; N=No; A=Abstain