



General Board Meeting Minutes

Thursday, February 16, 2012, 7:00pm
Hamilton Senior High School Cafeteria
2955 S. Robertson Blvd., Los Angeles, CA 90034

I. Call to Order and Roll Call

SORO NC Board President Doug Fitzsimmons called the meeting to order at 7:11.

Board Members Present: Rachel Lester, Harold Bock, Robyn Braun, Bette Billet, Michael Lynn, Nick Burkhart, Paula Waxman, Armando Roman, Benjamin Bellet, Nahed Guirguis, Terrence Gomes, Brian Kite, Barry Levine, Marjan Safinia, Sam Jagger, Martin Epstein, Susan Burden, Doug Fitzsimmons, Erick Morales

Board Members Absent: Kimber Smith, Troy Richardson, Victor Mitry

Guests: Mario Gonzalez, Elizabeth Carlin, David Giron, Raymond Yu, Betty Washington, Cary Brazeman, Craig McCain

II. General Public Comment

Raymond Yu: The City of Los Angeles is hosting the 27th annual Los Angeles Marathon on Sunday, March 18th from 6:00am – 6:00pm. Dodger Stadium is the starting point, and the finish line is in Santa Monica. More information can be found <http://www.lamarathon.com>

Betty Washington (Hamilton Assistant Principal): Academic Decathlon will be traveling to the state competition. In the regional competition, Hami scored 8th out of 65 teams. Unfortunately, the funding promised to the school didn't come through. Wondering what SORO NC can do to help.

Doug: It's too late for our funding process, but there are other avenues – SoRo Inc. included.

Marj (to Betty Washington): I strongly encourage you to follow up with SoRo Inc., as they are likely to be interested.

Megan (volunteer with LA Office of Historic Resources): Survey LA is a three-year survey of the entire city, and we are looking for historic resources that haven't already been documented through official city planning channels. We're asking for community input through our "My Historic LA" program, specifically to help our researchers learn more about the history of the city's neighborhoods. An online form is available at <http://www.surveyla.org>

Marj: When will the project be done, and when will the resources be available?

Megan: The project finishes in 2012-2013, and the resources will be available online thereafter.

Cary Brazeman (9:04pm): It is wonderful to see such a civilized meeting tonight! I will look forward to speaking about city controller-related issues in a future meeting.

III. Old Business

Confirmation of Board committee memberships and absence requests (GB021612-1)

No members have requested an official absence for February 2012.

Doug Fitzsimmons
President

Brian Kite
Vice-President

Terrence Gomes
Treasurer

Nick Burkhart
Secretary

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Barry, Eric, and Harold want to join the Transportation committee.

- **Vote: Requests approved by general consent.**

Draft Board Meeting Minutes of December 15, 2011 (Fitzsimmons / GB021612-2).

- **Vote: Requests approved by general consent.**

Draft Board Meeting Minutes of January 19, 2012 (Burkhart / GB021612-3).

- **Vote: Requests approved by general consent.**

Treasurer Report and vote to approve monthly expenses (Gomes / GB021612-4).

Terry: In the packet there is a record of what we spent in the last two months, as well as the purchase card report. Our expenses for December and January were typical.

- Marj moved to approve the report; Bette seconded.
- **Vote: Y-15, N-0, A-3. Report approved.**

IV. Community Reports

LAPD Report. Officer Mario Gonzalez: Burglaries were up in the area over the last month, with significant numbers of mid-afternoon and early evening burglaries. There were quite a few auto thefts as well, with Honda Civics being particularly targeted. There were no robberies or significant violent crime, but there were increases in reports of transients on private property. People living outside of the area committed 85 percent of crimes in this area.

Office of Councilmember Wesson. Liz Carlin: The City of LA is redoing its transportation element – so there are two community meetings coming up, and a web portal (<http://ideas.la2b.org>) where stakeholders can provide feedback. Last night's redistricting meeting went until 2am – Reynier Park came back into CD10, and the maps are expected on Saturday, February 18.

Doug: We are having a first meeting of our transportation committee next Thursday – hopefully at the Robertson Recreation Center. We'll be tackling things related to the transportation plan.

Office of Councilmember Koretz. David Giron: There are new LED street lights around SORO, in the Beverlywood and Crestview areas. It will take some time to finish this, but it is happening. The council does have final authority on the redistricting despite the draft maps that have come out now. There will be a Robertson Recreation Center meeting next Tuesday (February 21) at 6:30pm, with the Parks Advisory Board. Design consultants are being chosen right now. We're aiming to start the Prop K (LVNOC) process in the middle of March.

V. Committee Reports

Executive. Doug: First of all, we're nearing the end of our fiscal year. Next month, we really need to have all funding motions in and passed. Technically, we may have until April, but DONE's deadlines are unreliable. Committee chairs – if you have things you have been planning to do, next month is the last chance to bring them forward. We will have a chance to vote on all of those, "death match arena" style.

Harold: What happens if the SoRo Festival is canceled?



Doug: SoRo, Inc. is very confident that it will happen. They are looking for a director for the festival, and they have already received at least two applications. They will certainly know by next month.

Doug: Funding for next year will start very soon. We're talking about holding a special general board meeting late in March, as I would like the funding process to be a board meeting, rather than just a committee chair meeting. We will talk more about this at the next meeting. The city has defunded Neighborhood Council elections, and there is an effort to have DONE administer NC elections instead of the City Clerk. Our bylaws have been approved back in September, though we were never informed. The bylaws are official, though a few line items are still pending. DONE and BONC did make some amendments, and a full list of those items are available on the SORO NC website. A PDF version of the current bylaws is also available on the website. Redistricting is happening, both for the city council and in LAUSD. LAUSD redistricting affects our area quite significantly. The next meeting is in the Hamilton auditorium on February 23rd at 6pm. One other thing we have considered for quite some time is, thanks to Sue, moving the General Board meetings to the Wiesenthal Center. They are graciously waiving the sign-in requirement, and parking will be smooth and open for at least the first hour of the meeting. If the board is interested in making that change, it is available to us.

Bette: Previous attendees have commented that the facility discourages people from coming to the meetings. This is speaking in favor of the motion.

Marj: A potential negative is that people know that we meet here, and have been meeting here for quite a while.

Terry: We should consider moving the meeting next month, so that we won't be cut off while discussing funding motions.

Brian: We can consider placing signs at Hamilton to redirect any meeting attendees.

Terry moved to change the location of the General Board meeting, Nahed seconded.

• Vote: Motion approved by general consent.

Terry (Budget update): We've been told in meetings in City Hall that we're looking at a reduction in funding of 6-12%. Also, I want to remind you that we have to have all of the documents attached to funding submissions. I will be more than happy to help beforehand, but I want everything to be ready to go so that we get everything funded unlike other NCs, which didn't have their paperwork in order. We also know who didn't take the Mayor's Budget Survey. On the 22nd it's ending, so please take it. Thanks to Liz for getting it on the council district website.

Liz: It went out to our e-mail list also.

Land Use. Terry: We have a couple of projects going on right now – a small lot development, coming from someone who proposed a similar development back in 2008. We met with Christian and David, the developer. We also have Pico Glatt Kosher Mart coming next month to our meeting.

David Giron: It isn't required of businesses requesting a variance to go to the Neighborhood Council, but they agreed.

Education. Barry: There was no meeting for the month, and Carol from the library did not get in touch with us to make a request for money.



Green Team. Paula: We are doing our tree planting on Saturday, March 24th, and I will be calling each one of you to find out what you want to do on that day. All board members will have to pitch in and help, so please plan on being available that morning from 8am to 12pm. I can probably get a good number of students from Hamilton to help, but it has been something that we have been working on for a couple of years, so I hope everyone can come out to that. The Green Team will be having a speaker at the April meeting, from the Theodore Payne foundation, who helped to design the drought-tolerant garden near City Hall. On January 22nd, we picked 2500 pounds of fruit, which was greater than in previous years.

Public Safety. Mike: For next month, we will be working on emergency preparedness. We'll be working on designing a disaster drill, and we will also be working on areas other than Crestview, Reynier, and Beverlywood to develop neighborhood watch programs. We will be walking Zone 6 or 7 on the 3rd, and Zone 2 on the 4th.

Outreach. Marj: We will consider a fantastically exciting project with KCET later tonight. We're also actively spreading the word in search for a volunteer to lead the SoRo Festival. Several SORO NC members also had a meeting with the USC School of Public Policy.

WRAC Representative. Terry: Wendy Greuel will be coming to the West LA Civic Center to give a State of the City address in the near future. The Public Safety committee will be planning an event to coincide with the California ShakeOut drill. WRAC had a representative from Public Works come to present about a plastic bag ban. Out of the 9 attendees, 8 were opposed to the motion as written.

Doug: SORO NC had taken a position on this earlier.

VI. New Business

Resolution to recognize Craig McCain and his efforts in the battle against copper wire theft. (Lynn / GB021612-6).

Mike: There has been a rash of copper wire thefts throughout the city of Los Angeles, including in the South Robertson area. We have a citizen who stepped up as a key person in helping to solve a major copper wire theft in our area. Therefore SORO NC would like to thank Craig McCain for helping to stop a major copper wire theft in progress.

Mario Gonzalez: I want to thank Craig for going out and doing things for the community – he is always keeping me updated, and this is something we in the police department are always advocating. When Craig was walking down by National and Venice, he approached a copper wire thief while the crime was in progress. Craig called the police, and the police arrived quickly and took the thief into custody. The police department does the best that it can, but involvement like Craig's is what helps us to keep the community safe.

Craig McCain: I love this community, because our elected officials care about us, listen to us, and take action!

- Mike moved to approve the resolution; Nahed seconded.
- **Motion vote: Unanimous. Resolution approved.**

Motion to approve \$4999 for the Fresh Fruit on Fridays for Shenandoah Elementary School (Levine / GB021612-7).

Terry: For how long have we been funding this program?

Barry: Two years.



Terry: So the fifth graders that have been in the program for two years and the fifth graders are just as obese as they were before? We're throwing money after this, but are we making a real dent in childhood obesity? Or could we be funding programs that actually work?

Marj: A piece of fruit a week is unlikely to change a child's physique, but it offers them the opportunity or open a way of thinking which might change the child's life in the future. This doesn't mean that the children won't make better choices in the future.

Terry: But this is how this program has been sold to us.

Barry: It's an educational progress that's long term, and it takes time.

Bette: The point is well taken that there should be an evaluation of the program at some time. It's clear that this hasn't been going on for long enough to demonstrate long-term change. Two years isn't long enough to constitute a trial. I don't understand what you (Terry) think is wrong with this.

Terry: We're putting hard-earned taxpayer money out there, for what?

Bette: It's an educational program, and encourages students to make healthier choices.

- Meredith moved to vote; Brian seconded.
- **Vote: 13-Y, 1-N, 4-A. Motion approved.**

Motion to approve \$3000 for the Fresh Fruit on Fridays for Shenandoah Elementary School (Levine / GB021612-8).

- **Motion withdrawn.**

Motion to fund \$3500 NPG for KCET Departures program (Smith / GB091511-9).

Marj: You have heard Outreach talking about the We Are SORO project for quite some time. Kimber met Juan, the Director of Production at KCET, and they have a program called *Departures* which tells the stories of LA neighborhoods. We have talked with Juan about making their program the first step of the We Are SORO program.

Juan (KCET): We're the largest independent public television channel in the US, and we're trying a lot of new things since we split from PBS. One of the things we're doing to highlight the cultural history of neighborhoods here in LA is our program called *Departures*, which tells the past, present, and future stories of specific neighborhoods. I was excited when Kimber approached me after a meeting, as we haven't spent much time in this area. This is an opportunity to jump-start the project, and this could be the start of a long-term project.

Marj: We're working on a small project to bring together representatives of different constituencies in our community – we'll work to bring together these groups in a workshop, where we'll discuss stories based on place and community issues. Then, we'll have a second day of shooting, wherein we'll record these stories. The program reaches 60,000 to 70,000 people per month. It will allow us to bring community members together to tell their own stories. The \$3500 Neighborhood Purposes Grant will go to KCET to cover the process of researching the area and identifying the key stakeholder groups, leading the educational workshop, and coming back and doing the videotaping. KCET will also take on the lion's share of the post-production and



publishing on their website. This is a very complete NPG application – all of the required forms are present.

Brian: This is great! We appreciate you (Juan) allowing us to operate on a smaller budget. How did the funding come together for the other projects?

Juan: Funding comes from many different sources – Boeing, for example, has interest in environmental issues and has funded the LA River and Arroyo Seco projects. Adobe also funded the segment filmed in Venice. We also have partnerships with council districts, and other smaller organizations. One of the reasons why we have decided not to do a TV show is that the funding would go much further with the Internet-based project. We have a tried and tested template that can be replicated for future projects like this.

Marj: This is the first time that KCET has formed a key partnership with a neighborhood council – therefore, this is another first for SORO NC.

Doug: A technical note – some of you may have an NPG application that may not have an expected completion date. It is there in the actual application, which is 9/30/2012.

Juan: Since this is the beginning of our relationship with SORO, we are always looking for blog columnists with interesting things to say from different places.

Marj: We are interested in this being a partnership going forward, and some of the skillsets of our board members lend themselves to this production.

Paula: Is there any chance that this would be broadcast in any form?

Juan: We do have a television component, but that is not really the focus – it is a different form of engagement. You generate more stories online, while TV is more of a one-way street. If we receive funding, we will have several one-minute spots which will be scattered during our prime-time lineup. We use TV that way in this project.

Marj: It allows projects to be expanded and developed over time.

Juan: We also have recently published field guides to Highland Park and other areas, as this project has continued to evolve. It would also be great to do a guide for this area.

- Marj moved to vote; Martin seconded.
- **Vote: 16-Y, 0-N, 2-A. Motion approved.**

Motion for \$2500 to Purchase Emergency Equipment and Supplies (Lynn / GB021612-10).

Mike: One of the big objectives of the public safety committee has been working on emergency preparedness. A big part of this plan is procuring emergency equipment to be stored in the SORO NC storage container at the Robertson Recreation Center. This is to enable members of our Neighborhood Team program to perform basic emergency services. This will buy 275 emergency meal rations, 10 50-gallon water barrels, backboards, stretchers, tarps, lighting, and miscellaneous materials. We would like to start out with \$2500.

Bette: From whose experience did you draw this list?



Mike: The recommendations came from Larry Bogatz and Andrew Leavenworth, as well as LAPD Officer Jackson. Gerald Chavarría also contributed to this proposal.

Bette: Have you been in touch with other neighborhood councils who are doing this sort of thing?

Mike/Terry: The only others doing this are members of PICO NC, with which Larry is affiliated.

Bette: In order for this purchase to be other than hanging around for a long time, a plan for its use needs to be made. Participating groups should be informed.

Terry: Andrew Leavenworth has been leading this, bringing in Beverlywood, Crestview, and Reynier Village areas.

Mike: These materials also may be used in CERT trainings, disaster drills, and other such events. These supplies will be integral to the training of rescuers, so they will be aware of what supplies we have and where they are.

Marj: We have about 45,000 people in the community, and this will provide for just a sliver. Given that there is likely to be a level of panic at the time of a disaster, how do we decide who gets supplies and who doesn't? Also, what is the plan for physical presence at the Robertson Recreation Center? How do we ensure that we are able to make use of this when push comes to shove? I think it's great to have supplies, but it's important to address how they will be allocated.

Mike: We're here to be the calm in the storm.

Marj: If your home is burning, will you leave and be at the Robertson Recreation Center to distribute the resources?

Mike: Basically yes, but this hierarchy will develop as neighborhood teams form.

Terry: The two teams that have formed know our central meeting location, and we also have the emergency notification signs to go to the Rec Center in case of an emergency. We will have the neighborhood teams available to allocate the supplies. The people who are injured or need materials will go to the recreation center. We will be able to pump water out of the barrels, and we will also perform medical triage. We will be acting according to how CERT operates, as well as County Fire. We take care of our families first, and we then go to our pre-assigned areas to guide those who are hurt. We will then start developing search teams to go door-to-door and block-to-block.

Marj: Is there a plan for approaching the time when the supplies expire?

Terry: The food lasts for 25 years, and the water will need to be rotated once a year.

Harold: Most of the materials won't expire over time.

Mike: We're talking mostly equipment in the storage container.

Meredith: Is the emergency training class contingent upon having the equipment passed from this first motion?

Terry: Backboards, stretchers, and other supplies are required for training.

Mike: The classes in the next motion are unrelated to this motion, however.



- Mike moved to vote; Nahed seconded.
- **Vote: 14-Y, 1-N, 4-A. Motion approved.**

Motion for \$1250 to Sponsor CPR/AED/First Aid Classes for SORO (Lynn / GB021612-11).

Mike: This motion is a start. We need to have our personnel and our residents trained in CPR and first aid, as it is crucial in an emergency. However, to get certified in CPR is expensive – it costs between \$50 and \$75 per person. Luckily, because we have a former board member (Gerald) who is willing to give a significant discount, we can get more residents trained for a low cost. For \$1250, we could get 50 people trained. The participant would need to pay for a \$15 instruction manual – this would be their “co-pay” to reflect a commitment on the part of the participant. CD5 and CD10 are checking on additional funding to expand the program. There is a large demand for this in the community, and this is just the start. We’d love to keep it going and train more people every year.

Meredith: Does CPR training ever expire? How often is retraining necessary?

Terry: Every two years. Requirements for the process change.

Doug: As someone who has taken this training, it is essential to have as many people trained in first aid as is possible. This is a good use of our funds.

Bette: This is a combination of CPR and First Aid?

Mike: It combines CPR, First Aid, and AED training.

Terry: I’ve had to use this training twice on shooting victims in the neighborhood.

- Harold moved to vote; Terry seconded.
- **Vote: 17-Y, 0-N, 2-A. Motion approved.**

Motion to approve Green Team expenditures for maintenance and improvement of the Hami Garden (Waxman / GB021612-12).

Paula: I have a motion to approve some expenditures for maintenance and improvement of the Hami Garden. The garden is used for more than just providing food – the student garden club uses it and the teachers give classes in it. Neighborhood classes are also given by the master gardener. We’ve started a dialog with some school departments. In order to maintain the garden and improve it, I had asked for \$1400, but there are some changes. \$500 will go to a 3-bin composting unit, and we’ll need a little extra to maintain the garden. We have around \$4900 remaining in the budget, so this still leaves a lot of unspent Green Team funds. We want to build raised beds to cut down on evaporation, so we don’t have to continually be replenishing the soil. Hopefully we can also get one bed high enough to make the garden wheelchair accessible. We also need to purchase some garden tools, to a total purchase of \$231. The total now comes to \$2331.

- Robyn moved to vote; Nahed seconded.
- **Vote: 17-Y, 0-N, 2-A. Motion approved.**

VII. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 9:40 p.m.



Current Committee Membership

Board members must attend at least 7 committee meetings within a 12 month period.

Note that Bylaws, Econ Revitalization, and Board Development meet infrequently. Those three ad hoc committees may only have 6 voting members.

Committee	Edu- cation	Green Team	Land Use	Out- reach	Public Safety	Finance	Exec	Bylaws	Econ Revital	Board Dev	Parks & Rec
Rachel Lester		█									
Kimber Smith				█		█					
Harold Bock	█				█						
Robyn Braun					█						
Bette Billet			█	█				█	█		
Michael Lynn					█	█					
Nick Burkhart					█	█	█		█	█	
Zone 8											
Paula Waxman	█	█				█					
Armando Roman		█									
Meredith Levine											
Nahed Guirguis											
Terry Gomes			█		█	█	█	█	█		
Brian Kite			█			█	█	█			█
Barry Levine	█	█		█		█			█		
Troy Richardson				█							
Marj Safinia			█	█		█			█		
Sam Jagger			█								
Martin Epstein		█									
Sue Burden			█								
Victor Mitry			█								
Organization 3											
Doug Fitzsimmons				█		█	█	█	█		█
School 1											
Erick Morales	█	█		█						█	



Vote Tally

1: moved | 2: seconded | Y: yes | N: no | A: abstain | R: recuse | X: missed vote
C: passed by general consent

Motion	01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	10	11	12	13	14	15
Rachel Lester	C	C	C	Y	C	Y	A	A	A	A	A				
Kimber Smith	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--				
Harold Bock	C	C	C	Y	C	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y1	Y				
Robyn Braun	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	Y	Y	Y1				
Bette Billet	C	C	C	Y2	C	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	Y				
Michael Lynn	C	C	C	Y	C	Y1	Y	A	Y1	Y	Y				
Nick Burkhart	C	C	C	Y	C	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y				
Zone 8															
Paula Waxman	C	C	C	A	C	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y				
Armando Roman	C	C	C	A	C	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y				
Meredith Levine	C	C	C	Y	C	Y	Y	Y1	Y	Y	Y				
Nahed Guirguis	C	C	C	Y	C	Y2	Y	Y	Y2	Y	Y2				
Terry Gomes	C	C	C	Y	C	Y	Y	N	Y	Y2	Y				
Brian Kite	C	C	C	Y	C	Y	Y	Y2	Y	Y	Y				
Barry Levine	C	C	C	Y	C	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y				
Troy Richardson	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--				
Marj Safinia	C	C	C	Y1	C	Y	Y1	Y	Y	Y	Y				
Sam Jagger	C	C	C	Y	C	Y	Y	A	A	Y	Y				
Martin Epstein	C	C	C	Y	C	Y	Y2	Y	Y	Y	Y				
Sue Burden	C	C	C	Y	C	Y	Y	Y	A	Y	Y				
Victor Mitry	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--				
Organization 3															
Doug Fitzsimmons	C	C	C	Y	C	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y				
School 1															
Erick Morales	C	C	C	A	C	Y	A	A	A	A	A				

Votes taken

1. Committees and absences
2. Draft meeting minutes: December
3. Draft meeting minutes: January
4. Draft financial report
5. Permanent change of meeting location
6. Resolution commending Craig McCain
7. KCET Departures
8. Fresh Fruit on Fridays
9. Emergency supplies
10. CPR training
11. Approval of Hami Garden expenses