



Approved General Board Meeting Minutes

Thursday, October 15, 2009, 7:00pm

Hamilton Senior High School Cafeteria

2955 S. Robertson Blvd., Los Angeles, CA 90034

I. Call to Order & Roll Call

SORO NC President Doug Fitzsimmons called the meeting to order at 7:22 p.m.

Board members present: Brian Bergman, Bette Billet, Harold Bock, Robyn Braun, Paul Del Piero, Doug Fitzsimmons, Gary Garcia, Terrence Gomes, Anne Gross, Ann Hammond, Barry Levine, Jon Liberman, Marj Safinia, Paula Waxman, Adam Wheeler

New Board members seated during meeting: Kimber Smith, Joseph Gjonola, Gerald Chavarria, Caitlin Lowe, Baila Romm

Board members absent: Sue Burden, Nahed Guirguis, Roy Nwaiser

Guests: Yamileth Bolanos, Elissa Leonelli, Elizabeth Carlin, Brooke Powers, Oliver Summers, Eineve Fulgencio, Nika Hllahvendi, Derek Leavitt, Mario Gonzalez

Doug Fitzsimmons
President

Jon Liberman
Vice-President

Ann Hammond
Secretary

Terrence Gomes
Treasurer

II. Election of new Board Members

Doug explained the election procedure that would be followed. Each Board member and each applicant received a copy of a ballot indicating which applicant(s) were candidates for which positions. For each open seat for which there was at least one candidate, Board members also had the choice of "None of the above."

Each candidate was then invited to speak, in the order of consideration of the open seats:

Yamileth Bolanos, Applicant, Zone 2
Kimber Smith, Applicant, Zone 2
Joseph Gjonola, Applicant, Zone 8
Gerald Chavarria, Applicant, Business 4
Caitlin Lowe, Applicant, Student 1
Elissa Leonelli, Applicant, At Large
Baila Romm, Applicant, At Large

There were no applicants for the open Zone 1 and Zone 10 seats.

Board members received and completed written ballots. These were tallied by the Vice President and Secretary, Jon Liberman and Ann Hammond, during the Community Reports section of the agenda (see Annex), and Doug then announced the results. Those elected and seated immediately following Community Reports were: Kimber Smith, Joseph Gjonola, Gerald Chavarria, Caitlin Lowe, and Baila Romm.

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III. Review of sexual harassment training video.

In the interests of time of the guests present, this item was postponed until later in the meeting.

IV. General Public Comment

Gary Garcia apologized for Hamilton High fire alarms ringing that disturbed neighbors near Canfield. He explained the hardware had malfunctioned, technicians finally found the problem, and the problem has been fixed.

V. Old Business

Draft General Board Meeting Minutes of September 17, 2009 (Hammond/GB101509-1). Harold moved to approve the draft minutes; Doug seconded. **Vote: Y-9, N-0, A-6. Minutes approved.**

VI. Community Reports

a. Office of Councilmember Wesson (Carlin). Liz Carlin invited all to the Councilmember's masquerade ball October 30th; proceeds go to charity. She reported that Community Beautification projects are all in danger of being unfunded. She congratulated Paula Waxman on her work with the compost bin project.

b. Office of Councilmember Koretz (Davis). No report was made as no representative was present.

c. Office of the Mayor (Badger). No report was made as no representative was present.

d. Office of Senator Price (Bernal). No report was made as no representative was present.

e. LAPD Report (Gray & Gonzalez). Mario reported on recent crime and upcoming events.

f. Robertson Recreation Center Report (Powers). Brooke reported the Rec Center is offering free community yoga on Wednesdays at 7 p.m. The Halloween Carnival will be held October 31st, 12 noon to 4 p.m., and volunteers are needed to help at this free event. She asked Board members to support the proposed grant on the agenda.

g. DONE Report (Ibanez). No report was made as no representative was present.

(New Board members seated.)

VII. Committee Reports

a. Executive (Fitzsimmons). Doug praised Terry's work on the Budget Congress. He said much of that meeting was about the upcoming NC elections. Next month, a representative of the City Clerk's office will attend the SORO NC Board meeting to speak about the election, which will be held Sunday, April 11th. Doug said the Board should strive for an orderly transition of power. Doug also reported that there is progress on the



website; it now has content. He reminded Board members to send to Marj their contact information and a short bio sketch; to date, Marj has only received three responses to her urgent requests. Doug asked new members to stay after the meeting to review a few administrative items, including the online ethics training, which is good for two years.

b. Treasurer's Report (Gomes / GB101509-2). Terry reported the rollover of funds from the previous fiscal year is in limbo because of the findings of improprieties of a few other NCs; he added that LAPD has arrested the individual NC members allegedly responsible. Doug clarified it is expected that the full rollover amounts will ultimately be released. Terry reported some of our disbursements had been delayed because some of our demand warrants were just sitting on desks at DONE; those are now in process, since Terry visited DONE to follow up on them. Doug asked that, when motions are submitted, ALL paperwork be ready to go forward with it, i.e. the thank you letter, letter of impact, and demand warrant. Terry said he is available to help anytime. Marj suggested we add these documents to our website so the community will know what is required; Baila said that was an excellent idea, and she would have appreciated knowing in advance of the event she organized.

c. Land Use & Economic Development (Bergman). Brian reported that the Committee's work this month is reflected in the motion on the agenda.

d. Education (Levine & Braun). Barry reported that Fresh Fruit on Fridays has a proposal for \$5,511 to continue, for 22 weeks, providing Shenandoah Elementary with the program. Anne asked why Fresh Fruit is educational. Barry replied that it teaches children about nutrition, geography, and food production, and it is run through schools. He also reported that Bill Ring attended the Education Committee meeting and has reconstituted the Parent Community Advisory Board for District 3. Eric Desobe of the Del Rey NC also attended and has a blog to which he would like educational discussion to be directed: www.drnceducation.blogspot.com. Barry said Eric is hoping to get NCs, as a group, involved in education issues.

e. Green Team (Waxman & Hess). Paula reminded Board members that compost bins must be pre-ordered; she invited everyone to forward the email about this that she had sent to anyone who lives in LA. Paula reported she is also trying to set up field trips, perhaps for Castle Heights and Hamilton students.

f. Public Safety (Bock & Hammond). Harold reported he is currently working with Engine Company 58 to identify priorities and outreach activities; he will report at the next SORO NC meeting.

g. Outreach (Safinia). Marj said the last Outreach meeting was devoted to working on the SORO NC website. She reiterated Doug's request for Board members to submit their information as soon as possible. She announced the next Outreach meeting would be held October 26th, co-sponsored with Public Safety and with representatives of all neighborhood associations within SORO boundaries invited. She extended a specific invitation to Baila and Gerald to attend. Gerald offered to translate the SORO NC website information into Spanish.



h. Board Development (Hammond). Ann announced that this ad hoc Committee had met October 8 and agreed on several steps to recruit Board members in advance of the 2010 elections. She distributed the list of steps. Gary noted that the Board should allocate funds to have a bilingual written announcement hand-delivered to every home and apartment in SORO.

VIII. New Business

a. Motion to nominate a C-PAB representative (Hammond/GB101509-3). Ann introduced the motion. Baila confirmed that C-PAB is always looking for new members. Ann clarified that the motion was simply for the Board to decide if it wanted to have a representative to C-PAB and, if so, a motion for a specific individual would be presented at the next NC meeting, following the model of how SORO's representative to DWP was selected. She invited interested Board members to let her or Harold know of their interest before the next Public Safety Committee meeting. Marj clarified that this process is consistent with Brown Act requirements. Baila and Terry said they were interested. Doug moved to approve the motion; Marj seconded. **Motion unanimously approved.**

b. Motion to pledge \$3,000 in matching funds for a LA City Community Beautification Grant, to build a sustainable learning garden on the campus of Hamilton High School (Waxman/GB101509-4). Paula introduced the motion. She said that funds are drying up for next year. There are 180 volunteers available through the RAL program, Hamilton High School is behind the proposal, and the students are behind it. So with this widespread support, she encouraged the Board to approve the motion. She added that the initial garden design incorporates indigenous, drought tolerant plants; they also want to have the option of a vegetable garden. Anne asked if parents are involved; Paula said it is now students only, simply because of the short time that has been available for preparing this proposal, and assured all that they would be getting parent involvement. Paula explained that, normally, it takes a year to put together such a grant proposal, but they had only two weeks to do so. Kimber asked what is involved for the students; Paula described the three phases. Jon clarified that the school administration is in favor of this grant. Baila asked how much would be California planting. Barry asked about financing arrangements; Terry clarified that it would be a pledge until grant funding is received. Marj complimented Paula on the proposal. Robyn moved to approve the motion; Barry seconded. **Motion approved unanimously.** Paula passed around a sign-up for anyone who wants to volunteer.

c. Motion to approve revised budget as requested by DONE (Gomes/GB101509-4). This motion was tabled.

d. Motion to consider variances for 2624 Cullen St. (Bergman/GB101509-5). Brian introduced the motion, explaining that the Committee had not been able to come to a position on whether or not to support the proposed variances. Additional information was distributed. Questions raised included details about the proposed setback, the definition of "affordable" housing, and steps for "greening" the building. The property is zoned as multi-family. Paul spoke as a representative of the zone in which the project would be housed and as one who attended the Land Use



Committee meeting; he urged the Board to approve the request for variances. Jon pointed out that the more projects we approve like this, the more projects we will see, which means fewer single-family homes. Bette disagreed and noted there are a lot of art galleries there now. Terry noted we already have too much traffic. The representative of the property noted that, in fact, it is not primarily single-family residences and that it is zoned multi-family; it includes small, two and three family buildings. Brian moved to amend the motion from “consider” to “support” the project and the five specific variances requested; Doug clarified that, if approved, the Board would prepare a letter of support with the specifics. Jon seconded the motion to amend. **Vote: Y-16, 1-N, 3-A. Motion to amend approved.** Harold moved to approve the motion, as amended; Barry seconded. **Vote: 14-Y, 4-N, 2-A. Motion approved as amended.** Brian will prepare the letter of support.

e. Motion to request that the South Robertson community be included entirely in one Los Angeles City Community Plan (Bergman/GB101509-6). The motion was tabled.

All Board members present watched the City-mandated sexual harassment training video.

IX. Adjournment

Doug adjourned the meeting at 10:10 p.m.

Vote for Board Candidates



Board Member	Zone 2	Zone 8	Business 4	School 2	At Large
Adam Wheeler	Smith	Gjonola	Chavarria	Lowe	Leonelli
Ann Hammond	Bolanos	Gjonola	Chavarria	Lowe	Leonelli
Anne Gross	Smith	Gjonola	Chavarria	Lowe	Romm
Barry Levine	Smith	Gjonola	Chavarria	Lowe	Leonelli
Bette Billet	Smith	Gjonola	Chavarria	Lowe	Romm
Brian Bergman	Smith	Gjonola	Chavarria	Lowe	Romm
Doug Fitzsimmons	Smith	Gjonola	Chavarria	Lowe	Romm
Gary Garcia	Smith	Gjonola	Chavarria	Lowe	Romm
Harold Bock	Smith	Gjonola	Chavarria	Lowe	Leonelli
Jon Liberman	Bolanos	Gjonola	Chavarria	Lowe	Romm
Marj Safinia	Smith	Gjonola	Chavarria	Lowe	Romm
Paul Del Piero	Bolanos	Gjonola	Chavarria	Lowe	Leonelli
Paula Waxman	Smith	Gjonola	Chavarria	Lowe	Leonelli
Robyn Braun	Smith	Gjonola	Chavarria	Lowe	Romm
Terrence Gomes	Smith	Gjonola	None	None	Romm