

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
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Robyn Braun
Secretary
Terrence Gomes
Treasurer

General Meeting Minutes February 13, 2008 at 6:45p.m. Hamilton Senior High School - 2955 S. Robertson Blvd.

I. CALL TO ORDER, ROLL CALL

The meeting was called to order by Victoria Karan.

Board members present: Christine Aghassi, Brian Bergman, Harold Boch, Robyn Braun, Daniel Fink, Doug Fitzsimmons, Gary Garcia, Terrence Gomes, Anne Gross, Ann Hammond, Victoria Karan, Barry E. Levine, Jon Liberman, Marjan Safinia, Sandra Willard

Board members absent: Betty Billet, Nahed Guirguis, Roy Nwaiser

Guests present: Jennifer Badger, Liz Carlin, Barry Stone, Jenny Wood, Terry Schoenwald, Avi Schoenwald, someone from K-9 Camp, someone from Modative?

II. READING OF THE DRAFT MINUTES AND APPROVAL

Draft minutes of the January 9, 2008, meeting were discussed. As several Board members had extensive comments, it was agreed that the minutes would be returned to Apple and corrected and reconsidered at the March Board meeting. **Vote to revise and defer consideration to the March Board meeting: Unanimous.**

III. ELECTION OF NEW BOARD MEMBERS

- a. Diane Hirsch-Garcia—Applicant for Board Seat (Zone 6). **Vote to approve: Unanimous.** Diane joins the Board.
- b. Gina LeBeaud, Applicant for Board Seat (School 1), was not present so no action was taken.

Victoria noted that five Board seats remain unfilled and committed to send an email

to Board members specifying which seats are vacant.

IV. GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT

The new librarian at the South Robertson Public Library spoke, providing details about the Library's priorities and operations, expected funding cuts due to City budget constraints, and need for book donations.

V. ADVISORY REPORTS

Council District 5/Councilmember Jack Weiss : Victoria introduced Jennifer Badger, representing the office of Councilmember Jack Weiss. Jennifer explained that she would be taking the lead on liaison with the Board, but Katherine Hennigan would continue to follow developments closely as well. Jennifer spoke to the issues of the strip club "Skin" and the Pico/Olympic proposal, and she assured Board members that the Councilmember understands these are important issues to the Board. Jennifer distributed copies of a letter Councilmember Weiss wrote to the Police Permit Review Panel on January 29, 2008, noting the motion he introduced that would require the Planning Department to prepare an ordinance that would prohibit adult entertainment businesses within 500 feet of a school travel route and asking for several clarifications before closing the public record.

Council District 10/Councilmember Herb Wesson, Jr.: Liz Carlin distributed the Winter 2007 issue of "Eye on the Tenth," Councilmember Wesson's most recent newsletter, as well as a copy of an "order to comply" issued by Mayor Villaraigosa's office with respect to the Municipal Code violation by "Skin" by not removing the temporary banner by January 6, 2008.

LAPD: Officer Sharif is not present, and no report is available.

DONE: Barry Stone reported that many new SoRo Board members attended the orientation session for new Neighborhood Council Board members at Councilmember Wesson's office on January 24th. He also reported there will be a meeting on February 23rd to decide on the City's budget, and he distributed a copy of the Mayor's community budget survey.

VI. EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE REPORT

a. **President's Report:** No President's report.

b. **Treasurer's Report:** Terrence distributed a report summarizing SoRo NC Board expenditure approvals and payments from July 12, 2006 through January 31, 2008. He reported that, of the \$175,000 appropriated, a balance of \$87,535.06 remained and, of that balance, \$26,056.62 had been allocated.

VII. NEW BUSINESS

Motion ED021308-4: Proposal to fund up to \$500 for Shenandoah Elementary

School Literacy Night. Barry Levine proposes the Board approve funding for the purchase of books to be used by the school to encourage reading among the Literacy Nights attendees. This proposal responds to a request from the school principal. Other local schools have not shown similar interest in requesting funds, and they are relatively better funded overall than Shenandoah, which is the only Title 1 school in the SoRo neighborhood. The questions of whether this was an appropriate expenditure and what entity would own the books were referred to Barry Stone. **Vote: Motion carried. Cost: up to \$500.**

Motion EX 021308-5: Proposal to establish a storage space for property owned by SORO NC. Jon Liberman proposed rental of a storage space close to the SORO community to store assorted items of property purchased over the past three years, including materials for the Green Team. Board members asked for a list of items and whether these items could be stored elsewhere. Others replied that items were currently stored in homes of Board members, and it was agreed that this was not a desirable arrangement. The facility identified is near David and Venice, and would cost \$180 per month; additional costs would include a rental truck (\$50) to move the items and a combination lock (\$20) to secure the storage area. The question was raised as to whether this constituted a contract and needed to be arranged through the city. **Vote: Motion carried.**

Motion LU021308-6: Proposal to take a position in opposition to the granting of a police permit for Skin Cabaret. Brian Bergman proposed that, in light of the community's strong showing of opposition at the January 28, 2008, Police Board hearing at Hamilton High School, the SORO NC Board send a letter to the Police Permit Review Board opposing the granting of a permit for Skin to operate. **Vote: Motion carried.**

Motion LU021308-7: Proposal to send a letter to the Police Permit Review Board endorsing certain restrictions on Skin Cabaret's operations: Brian Bergman proposed that, in light of the community's strong showing of opposition at the January 28, 2008, Police Board hearing at Hamilton High School, the SORO NC Board send a letter to the Police Permit Review Board opposing the granting of a permit for Skin to operate and, if a permit is granted, to set restrictions on its operations. The ad hoc No Robertson Strip Club (NRSC) group of South Robertson neighborhood residents, which has extensively researched the issues and circulated a petition in the community, has already sent such a letter and has now invited the SORO NC Board to send a similar letter. Marjan summarized a suggested amendment to the motion and proposed the Board officially endorse the same restrictions supported by the 350 stakeholder signatures on the petition. She reported that more than 600 stakeholders presented themselves at the January 28 meeting, opposing the issuance of an operating permit for Skin Cabaret and asking that a specific list of restrictions be placed on the club's operating permit, should it be granted. The Board discussed procedures for issuing letters. **Vote: Motion carried.**

Motion LU021308-8: Proposal to support Modative's request for a variance for its Venice/Sherbourne development project: Brian Bergman proposed the Board

support the application for a variance for its development at 8732, 8734 & 8736 Venice Boulevard & 3202 Sherbourne Drive. He noted that Modative has taken great care in considering the neighborhood concerns and goals and has developed a plan responsive to the community. **Vote: Motion carried.**

Motion LU021308-9: Proposal to support Cage Free K9's request for a CUP and variance: Brian Bergman reported that Cage Free K9 is seeking approval for a variance from parking requirements and a Conditional Use Permit (CUP) be allowed to have a dog care operation within 500 feet of a residential zone. A copy of the Office of Zoning Administration's Notice of Public Hearing to Property Owners on February 28, 2008, was given to Board members. The Land Use Committee recommends the Board support this request. **Vote: Motion carried.**

Motion LU021308-10: Proposal to oppose the LADOT Olympic West/Pico East proposal: Doug Fitzsimmons proposed the Board oppose the LADOT's proposal for Olympic West/Pico East proposal, given the community's concerns. He summarized concerns that research about the probable impact on traffic flow, residents, pedestrians, and business owners had been insufficient. Both Land Use and Public Safety Committee members have considered the situation, agree the proposal should be opposed, and agree LADOT should be urged to consult further with community leaders and residents. Terry and Avi Schoenwald reported on a recent hearing and urged the Council to oppose LADOT's proposal. Anne Gross observed that one-way corridors had worked in other cities to relieve congestion. Doug pointed out that the goal of improving traffic flow wasn't in question; rather, community opposition was focused on the plan's failure to address business parking issues and overflow into residential areas. **Vote: Motion carried.**

Motion PS021308-11: Proposal to fund a cell phone system for security officers at Hamilton High School: Jon Liberman proposed the Board approve up to \$1,000 per year for the purchase of up to five cell phones, to be used by Hamilton High School security patrol and administrative staff to improve communication when groups of students are observed doing something that requires intervention by the school. The community could call a listed number and immediately be connected to the school security patrol or administration who could then, depending on the nature of the reported activity, take appropriate action quickly. Discussion focused on precisely how the system would work and whether this would be considered a purchase or a contract. It was agreed that more research was needed and the Board would consider this proposal at its March meeting.

Motion PS021308-12: Proposal to send a letter to the City Attorney regarding Skin Cabaret: Jon Liberman proposed that, in light of the community's strong showing of opposition at the January 28, 2008, Police Board hearing at Hamilton High School, the SORO NC Board send a letter to the City Attorney opposing the granting of a permit for Skin to operate and, if a permit is granted, to set restrictions on its operations. The NRSC has already sent such a letter and has now invited the SORO NC Board to send a similar letter. **Vote: Motion carried.**

Motion PS021308-13: Proposal to send a letter to Chief Bratton regarding Skin Cabaret: Jon Liberman proposed a letter also be sent to Chief Bratton, on the same grounds as the letter to the City Attorney. **Vote: Motion carried.**

Motion PS021308-14: Proposal to establish the selection process for the Sergeant at Arms: Doug Fitzsimmons proposed the Sergeant at Arms position, which has been vacant for some time, be filled by Board members on a rotating basis. Every three months, a Board member's name would be drawn during the Board meeting. The short term would reduce the burden on any individual Board member. **Vote: Motion carried.**

Motion GB021308-15: Proposal to add the Sergeant at Arms to the Executive Board: Doug Fitzsimmons proposed the bylaws be amended to define the selection process, term and status as executive officer the Sergeant at Arms position. He said that this would help meet the expressed desire of members of the SORO NC Executive Board to have more Board members involved in the steering process. He noted that this proposal would require approval of two thirds (2/3) of the total Board members and would be subject to approval by DONE. The motion was opposed in absentia by Roy Nwaiser, and Doug outlined Roy's objections. Marjan Safinia proposed tabling the motion until the By-Laws committee had a chance to re-examine the issue, which was seconded. **Vote: Motion tabled.**

Motion GB021308-16: Proposal to create an ad hoc committee to initiate and facilitate inter-NC discussions: Doug Fitzsimmons proposed an ad hoc committee to meet the need of reaching out to other Neighborhood Councils to discuss issues of common interest and share best practices. He said that SORO NC clearly does not act in a vacuum and that the Board have a stronger voice and be more effective if it acts in liaison with other Neighborhood Councils on issues of common concern. He suggested that an ad hoc advisory committee would be the most appropriate mechanism for creating ongoing relationships and dialogue. This committee would then bring before the Board issues and recommendations for action as appropriate. The Committee would be comprised of Board members, fewer in number than the quorum level established by the bylaws. **Vote: Motion carried.**

VIII. COMMITTEE REPORTS

a. By-Laws

In Roy's absence, there was no report. Victoria stressed the need to work on revisions of the bylaws to ensure sections on Board elections reflected the needs of SORO NC and DONE.

b. Education

Gary reported that March 26 will be Career Day at Hamilton High School and invited Board members to participate.

c. Green Team

Victoria reported that the Green Team is still in need of a chair.

d. Land Use

Brian reported that the several motions considered by the Board at this meeting reflected the work the Committee has been doing.

e. Outreach

Victoria asked for Board members to volunteer to chair or co-chair this committee.

f. Public Safety

Jon invited new members. He noted a meeting on Thursday, February 21 at 7:00, regarding Neighborhood Watch.

IX. BOARD MEMBER COMMITTEE SELECTION

New Board members announced their selections for committee memberships.

X. ADJOURNMENT

Meeting adjourned at 10:00 p.m.

4/19/10 12:22 PM