

# South Robertson (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

## General Meeting Minutes March 12, 2008 at 6:45 p.m. Hamilton Senior High School - 2955 S. Robertson Blvd.

### I. CALL TO ORDER, ROLL CALL

The meeting was called to order at 6:56p.m. by Victoria Karan.

**Board members present:** Christine Aghassi, Harold Boch, Robyn Braun, Doug Fitzsimmons, Gary Garcia, Terrence Gomes, Anne Gross, Nahed Guirguis, Ann Hammond, Victoria Karan, Barry E. Levine, Jon Liberman, Roy Nwaiser, Marjan Safinia, Sandra Willard

**Board members absent:** Brian Bergman, Bette Billet, Daniel Fink

**Guests present:** Jennifer Badger, Jenny Wood, Barry Stone (late)

### II. GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment.

### III. READING OF THE MINUTES AND APPROVAL

- a. There are no draft minutes from the January 9 or February 13, 2008, General Board Meetings to approve at this point; they will be sent out electronically to Board members as soon as they are available. Victoria said payment cannot be made for the Robertson Activities League (RAL) program evaluation until the draft January 9<sup>th</sup> minutes are approved, as DONE will not process a payment without a record of approved minutes of the meeting at which the Board approved the expenditure. Sandra and Ann offered to work on the draft January Board Meeting minutes. Ann moved that there be a special Board meeting on Sunday, March 13<sup>th</sup> at 5:00 p.m. to approve a revised draft of the January 9<sup>th</sup> meeting minutes, so that payment for RAL can proceed. Victoria seconded. Jon suggested the motion be amended to include the SORO Goals 2008 at the same meeting, if it were possible to do so. There was discussion. **The amended motion passed: Yes-13; No-0; Abstentions-2.**

- b. Draft minutes for the February 13<sup>th</sup> meeting may have to be recreated. Terrence has had discussions with the company hired to prepare minutes and will continue to try to obtain from that company whatever record exists.
- c. Terrence Gomes requested that the draft minutes from the November 28, 2007 General Board Meeting be revised to correct the spelling of his name and to correct the amount approved for development of a new SoRoNC logo to “up to \$1,300.” Victoria moved to accept the minutes with amendments. Christine Aghassi seconded. **Motion passed: Y-14; N-0; A-1.**

#### IV. ELECTION OF NEW BOARD MEMBERS, SECRETARY & OUTREACH CO-CHAIRS

- a. **Election for New Secretary:** Robyn Braun has resigned as Board Secretary. Ann Hammond volunteered to become the new Secretary and was unanimously approved by the Board.
- b. **Election for Outreach Co-Chairs:** Marjan Safina and Christine Aghassi have volunteered and were unanimously approved as Outreach Committee co-chairs.
- c. **Applicant for Board Seat (Business 3):** Linda Rosen introduced herself to the board. Her prime focus will be the Robertson Boulevard corridor. Victoria moved to approve her application. Marjan seconded. **Motion was passed unanimously.**
- d. **Applicant for Board Seat (School 1):** Gina LaBeaud introduced herself as an 11th grader at Hamilton High School. Victoria moved to approve her application. Robyn seconded. **Motion was passed unanimously.**

#### V. ADVISORY REPORTS

- a. **Office of Assemblymember Karen Bass:** Jenny Wood from Assemblyman Bass’ office announced that Assemblymember Bass will be the next Majority Leader of the House in Sacramento and noted she will be the first African-American in this post. Jenny added that Assemblymember Bass appreciates the support of the NC. Jenny distributed a list of Majority Leader Bass’ Key 2008 Legislation, and announced that April 12<sup>th</sup>, a Green Jobs and Economic Forum will be held at 10:00 a.m. at Holman United Methodist Church.
- b. **Office of Councilmember Jack Weiss (CD5):** Councilman Jack Weiss’ Aide Jennifer Badger distributed the March Weiss Wire and reported the following: (i) Radio Shack has been told to take down its billboard, but it may appeal. Community pressure should be applied to those sponsoring unwanted advertising; (ii) over-sized vehicles parked on Robertson are illegal after 72 hours but little can be done. Board members asked if Jack Weiss would support restrictions and strict enforcement; (iii) Jennifer showed Council photos of public street furniture that will be posted according to contract, noting that Councilmember Weiss is questioning the legality of some sites. She asked the Board to communicate its preferences, but noted plans will go forward regardless of public support as the City needs the revenue. The Board’s Outreach and Land Use Committee will discuss, and Board members were asked to send their views to Jennifer via e-mail, as the Councilmember needs views before the SORONC Board next meets. Christine asked for clarification on how the community decides what is posted in the area; Victoria noted that SORONC would like to have approval on all advertising in its area.
- c. **Office of Councilmember Herb Wesson (CD10):** Victoria reported that Elizabeth Carlin was unable to attend the meeting, so there was no report from Councilman Wesson’s office.

- d. **LAPD:** Terrence reported that Officer Sharif was not able to attend the meeting but had asked him to convey the following: (i) there were only six crimes reported last week, and this is a big reduction; and (ii) graffiti is way up – Westside locals are marking their turf and, last week, LAPD’s gang unit picked up a minor with a gun. Jon added that a local merchant, held up and beaten a week ago, now wants to leave the area. Jon and others are trying to convince him to stay. Victoria noted that it has been a while since Officer Sharif has been able to attend the Board meetings, and it would be helpful to have LAPD come more often. She will contact LAPD to request its consistent presence at Board meetings.
- e. **DONE:** Terrence reported for Barry Stone about the Public Safety March. When Barry arrived, he distributed the Mayor’s budget survey results. Area representatives met on March 8th to discuss priorities: there will be an estimated 1500 layoffs of City employees and an estimated \$500 million shortfall, which will result in infrastructure cuts – but not in the area of safety – over the next couple of years.

## VI. EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE REPORT

- a. **President’s Report:** Victoria reported that Doug will prepare and distribute a survey to board members to rate issues of importance on a scale of 1-5. They will study it and proceed.
- b. **Treasurer’s Report:** Terrence gave the Treasurer’s Report: \$43,216.84 in account. Ann asked for clarification regarding how much had been received, allocated and spent since the Board was created. Terrence clarified that the Board has received \$175,000 and spent \$88,000 since the NC was founded. Victoria said she will review expenditures with the Executive Committee at its next meeting, and report back to the Board at its April meeting. Terrence said he will prepare new tent name signs for Board members for the April meeting.

## VII. NEW BUSINESS

- a. **Motion BL031208-8.** Victoria moved to approve the previously distributed bylaw revisions. Nahed seconded. Discussion followed about whether Robert’s Rules of Order or some other procedure governs process at Board meetings. It was noted that bylaws are normally kept broad, with meeting procedures stipulated separately, so that it is easier to make adjustments as needed. **Motion passed unanimously.**
- b. **Motion EX031208-9.** Terrence introduced a motion to fund up to \$1,000 for the printing of Board manuals. Christine recommended adding the word “contents of” before “binders” in the proposal. Victoria moved to approve the change. Robyn seconded. **Motion passed unanimously.**
- Since there a was discrepancy in pricing, Terrence will continue to research, then report to Council next month and propose a motion.
  - It was suggested that this project be quickly completed, as some members are feeling disenfranchised without a binder. A buddy system was recommended where those with binders will lend to others without.
  - Barry gave Gina a DVD from the previous board orientation.
- c. **Motion EX031208-10.** Jon Liberman presented a motion from the Public Safety Committee to set up a program wherein the SORO NC can recognize and congratulate deserving stakeholders with certificates of achievement, for a total cost

of less than \$100 per year. Victoria moved that the Council fund and implement this program. Sandra seconded. **Motion passed unanimously.**

- d. **Motion PS031208-11.** Jon and the Public Safety Committee recommended that the Board authorize the purchase of up to four cell phones with walkie-talkie features for Hamilton High, which would increase the previously approved cost of up to \$1,000. Victoria moved to authorize the funding and implementation of this program with an amended dollar amount of up to \$1,500. Harold seconded. **Motion passed: Y-17; N-0; A-1.**
- e. **Motion PS031208-12.** Jon and the Public Safety Committee recommend that the SORO NC purchase 300 Neighborhood Watch signs at \$3.50 each, costing a total of \$1,050. Steel posts for sign placement would not be provided due to increased costs. Victoria moved to authorize the funding and implementation of this program. Robyn seconded. **Motion passed unanimously.**
- f. **Motion GB031208-13.** Barry Levine spoke for Brian Bergman in presenting a proposal that SORO NC provide \$1,000 to pay for a rental bus to take community members to and from the Police Permit hearing on Skin's permit. Victoria moved to amend the proposal to read "up to \$1,000 for buses." Jon seconded. **Motion passed unanimously.** Victoria so moved the amended proposals. Jon seconded. **Motion passed: Y-17; N-0; A-1.**
- g. **Motion GB031208-14.** SORO NC decided to begin future General Board Meetings at 7:00 PM.

## VIII. COMMITTEE REPORTS

- a. **By-Laws:** Roy said that there was nothing to report beyond the proposed bylaw revisions that had just been approved.
- b. **Education:** Barry Levine reported that 21 children are now being mentored by 18 mentors, and he will ask local schools to send representatives to attend SORONC Board meetings. Barry Levine also clarified that DONE had advised following the last SORONC Board meeting that books purchased with City funds cannot be given to individual students, but rather to the school, which had been the intent all along. Gary reminded Board members that March 26<sup>th</sup> is Career Day at Hamilton High School, from 9:00 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. For further information on Career Day, e-mail: [aojena@aol.com](mailto:aojena@aol.com)
- c. **Green Team:** No report was given as there is no chairman of this Committee.
- d. **Land Use:** The Committee is looking at proposals for a Bay Street project and for a six-story development on the southeast corner of Washington and Robertson.
- e. **Outreach:** The new co-chairs, Marjan and Christine, reported that the SORO NC logo is being finalized and the new website is moving forward. There are still a few open places for the NC Board; this will be discussed further at the next meeting.
- f. **Public Safety:** Gary reported there had been a meeting with LAPD about school safety and suggested there should be such meetings periodically to exchange

information and plans. Gary added that he would like to propose in future that there be a project to paint murals on both sides of the Cattaraugus Avenue overpass, as studies show painted murals cut down on graffiti, and he invited suggestions for potential sources of grant funds for this purpose. For graffiti problem input, he invited people to come to the Public Safety Committee meetings, held the first Monday of each month.

- g. **Ad hoc Board Development:** Harold will prepare an agenda in the next two to three weeks.
- h. **Ad hoc Inter-NC Committee:** Doug will prepare an agenda in the next two to three weeks.

## IX. ANNOUNCEMENTS

Victoria asked that all members keep Bette Billet in their thoughts, and she asked for a brief pause in the meeting to send good thoughts to Bette.

Roy questioned why all NC materials are e-mailed to Board members twice.

## X. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 9:00p.m.