

WESTSIDE NEIGHBORHOOD COUNCIL  
GOVERNING BOARD

Minutes of Meeting February 12, 2004

**Call to Order**

The meeting was called to order at 7:04 PM in Community Room A at Westside Pavilion by Chair Terri Tippit.

Board Members attending:

Steve Spector – Seat 3  
Jean Shigematsu – Seat 4  
Mary Kusnik, alternate for James Lynch – Seat 5  
Mona Strassburger, alternate for Gretchen Lewotsky – Seat 6  
David T. (Ty) Vahedi – Seat 7  
Terri Tippit – Seat 8  
Alan James Levine – Seat 9  
Richard S. Harmetz – Seat 10  
Tracy Wolin, alternate for J. François Nion – Seat 11  
Stacy L. Antler – Seat 12  
Robert Guerin – Seat 13  
Karen Weiss – Seat 14  
Sam Skootsky – Seat 15  
Melissa Kenady – Seat 16  
Jan C. Gabrielson – Seat 17  
Paul Backstrom – City Council District 5

Board Members absent:

Nancy Catullo – Seat 1  
Seat 2 - vacant  
Senior Lead Officer Mario Gonzalez, LAPD  
Representative from LAFD

**Minutes of Previous Meeting**

The minutes of the meeting of January 8, 2004 were approved as corrected by a vote of 12 - 0, with 1 abstention.

**Agenda Items**

- a) Election of officers for 2004 term.

Jan Gabrielson reported that, as required by our Bylaws, Terri had appointed a Nominating Committee consisting of him, Karen Weiss, and François Nion. The Committee asked the Board members for anyone interested in running for an office for 2004. There were no responses. The current officers were willing to continue to serve for a second term. The Committee nominated:

Terri Tippit – Chair  
Steve Spector – Vice-Chair  
Jan C. Gabrielson – Recording Secretary  
Robert Guerin – Treasurer  
Karen Weiss – Corresponding Secretary

It was moved, seconded, and passed 15 - 0 to elect the nominated slate of officers.

Terri Tippit announced procedures for the meeting, reviewing a list of guidelines that she emailed to Board members before the meeting, a copy of which will be filed in the record for this meeting. In summary: no sidebars, Board members to stay at their seats, cell phones off, and limits on discussion time.

c) Westwood Charter School playground improvement project

Jane Paul, a parent at the school, spoke on behalf of Principal Stephanie Schulman, who was unable to attend because of an illness in her family. Jane showed plans and distributed a one-page summary of the project, which will cost around \$200,000. Part will be paid by LAUSD and part by the parents.

It was moved, seconded, and passed 15 - 0 to endorse the plan.

e) Briefing on street maintenance

Bruce E. Jones, Chief Coordinator, Resurfacing & Reconstruction Division, Bureau of Street Services, Department of Public Works, City of LA spoke. Until World War II, there were 2,500 miles of streets in the City of LA. Now there are 6,500. The City's budget provides for funds to resurface 121 miles of street each year. One thousand miles of street have failed and need complete rehabilitation. To repair and rehabilitate all the streets that need it would require doing 350 miles of streets each year for 10 years. If they concentrated on resurfacing the worst streets, they would never catch up. The cost to rehabilitate a failed street is five times the cost of repairing a street that has not failed. Those that have failed have failed; they will not get worse from neglect. Therefore, some resources are devoted to resurfacing streets that have not yet failed but are in danger of failing. Eighty percent of resources go to maintenance and 20% go to rehabilitation. Pothole repair is a different matter. There is a truck with a crew of two for every 250 miles of streets that repairs potholes. They try to respond within 24 hours. For service requests, call 1-800-CITY or 311. Bruce's phone is 213-485-5691. While he doesn't mind being called, he emphasized that it is

essential to call the main number so that a record of the request gets into the system.

f-1) Proposed DWP rate increase

Jerry Gewe, DWP Assistant General Manager for Water Services spoke. He is the head of the entire water operation for DWP. LA's water infrastructure is 100 years old. DWP has survived for 10 years on borrowing but no longer can without its bonds losing their rating and causing huge increases in security costs. DWP has had huge increases in security costs since 9/11, which it has absorbed to date but no longer can. The Federal government is requiring DWP to take old reservoirs out of service because of algae. "Algae plus chlorine equals cancer." Hollywood and Stone Canyon reservoirs are out of service other than for emergencies. DWP is asking for a total increase of 18%, 11% when the City Council adopts the ordinance and another 7% next January that they can draw on as needed. For the median household, the increase would result in a monthly increase of \$2.40 per month. Water is now 15% - 25% of a DWP bill. The increase would affect only that portion. Comparisons of the cost of water to DWP customers with that of other cities need to take into account different conditions. For example, DWP provides the service of transporting water to LA, treating, and distributing it. The City of San Fernando gets all of its water from wells and so has no transportation cost. Chicago gets its water from Lake Michigan, so it has no transportation cost, but has treatment costs. Boston's situation is similar to ours. The issues raised by Laura Chick were about long-term water and power. The report is on the website at [ladwp.com](http://ladwp.com).

b) AYSO program

Larry Davis did not appear, so the matter was dropped from the agenda.

d) Impact on the neighborhood of the Catalina Pacific Concrete plant

Renato Romano reported. He owns Piazza Europa at 2490 S. Sepulveda. From 7 to 9 am, then again at 2 pm, trucks taking materials to the plant line up on Sepulveda. He met with Councilmembers Weiss and Miscikowski to ask that the plant be shut down. It also creates a dust problem. Terri recounted some of her problems with the plant. Basil Ortiz, operations manager for the plant, appeared and attempted to speak. The plant was built in the 1920's and the city has grown up around it. Terri said the plant does not give back to the community and cited as an example when her HOA improved the Exposition right of way, the plant, which is next to the right of way, was asked to help, but refused to donate concrete, or even give a discount. Nadine Heinrich, an employee at the plant, said the plant has made contributions for the benefit of the community and has a list of them. Terri asked for the list. Nadine will give it to her. Terri will set up a meeting to address the problems raised.

g) Follow-up on USC Visioning Study

Alicia Kitsuse and Mark Elliot reported. They showed a Powerpoint presentation and handed out a report, building on the Pico Village concept that arose from our workshop. They recommended we form a standing committee to keep the issue alive and develop it. There was talk of the Outreach Committee setting a Pico Blvd. street festival. They also handed out a report, resplendent with color photos, which will be in the record for this meeting.

**Public Comment**

Annette Mercer said the concrete plant and the Expo right of way were both there before the people who want them eliminated. She also said that public comment on agenda items should be allowed on agenda items. Several Board members expressed agreement. Jan Gabrielson said our standing rules provide for it, but are not clear as to when during that meeting that comment is allowed. Terri said that those who filled out a speaker card, stating what issue they wished to speak on were allowed to speak on agenda items, but during public-comment period only. Terri pointed out that allowing back-and-forth debate with the public prolongs the meetings.

Kevin Singer spoke in opposition to the proposed DWP rate increase. He said that sewer charges had just increased, that DWP puts money into the City's general fund, that DWP contributes to affordable housing, and spends \$175,000 every year on a Rose Parade float. Terri said we should find out how our stakeholders feel about the proposed increase.

It was moved and seconded that we send a letter to Jack Weiss opposing the full 18% rate increase proposed by DWP, supporting the 11% increase, but opposing any further increases unless DWP satisfies the City Council that the points raised by Laura Chick's audit have been satisfactorily addressed.

The motion passed 12 - 1 with 2 abstentions.

[There was a 10-minute break.]

f) Proposed ban on fund-raising by City commissioners

Terri reported that the LA City Ethics Commission voted 5 - 0 to urge the City Council and the Mayor to ban City commissioners from fund-raising on behalf of City officials and candidates.

It was moved and seconded that we support the ban. The motion passed 12 - 0 with 3 abstentions.

## **Executive Board Report**

Terri Tippit reported. The Executive Board met on February 5, 2004.

Laura Chick wants a liaison from each Neighborhood Council to meet with her. Terri will be our liaison. The first meeting will be February 21, 2004 at 10 am.

Councilmembers LaBonge and Zine are trying to exempt Neighborhood Councils from the Brown Act because we are only an advisory body.

Terri asked Barbara Broide the status on the letter regarding trimming of trees along Pico. Barbara said the letter was done but not delivered. Jan, Ty, and Stacy said they are still willing to deliver them personally.

A meeting on an experimental sound wall is coming up. Flyers were available at our meeting.

The hearing on the Westside Too project is set for March 15, 2004 at 9 am at the West LA Civic Center.

A meeting on the City budget will be held on March 19.

## **Budget Committee Report**

Treasurer Bob Guerin reported. We have \$3,958.93 on our card, \$437 cash, and a few small liabilities.

## **Policies and Procedures Committee Report**

Jan Gabrielson reported. The Committee had its first meeting of the term on January 20, 2004. Those who attended and joined the Committee are: Stacy Antler, Jan Gabrielson, Richard Harmetz, James Lynch, and Ellen Ruben. Jan Gabrielson was chosen to chair the Committee for the 2004 term.

The Committee reviewed the work of last year's Committee, and also reviewed issues of concern to members of the new Committee. The Committee considered a number of issues, which were summarized in a written report emailed to the Board before this meeting. That report, which will be in the record for this meeting, contained several recommendations for the Board to consider and adopt by motion.

It was moved and seconded that the Board approve the following statement of purpose for the Committee:

Encourage respect for the WNC and make it an effective body so that stakeholders and other entities attending a meeting want to participate and

contribute. Encourage the City and others to take us seriously, seek our approval, and work with us. Develop and implement procedures that give structure to our organization, taking care that the structure not become its own end.

The motion passed 13 - 0.

It was moved and seconded that at Board meetings, the Board's table be arranged in a an arc, a U, or other shape that allows Board members to see each other and the Chair to see other Board members.

The motion passed 14 - 0.

By general consensus, all of Recommendation #3 in the report was referred back to the Committee for further study and a more detailed recommendation, taking into account procedural problems encountered at this meeting, including speaker cards, time limits on speakers, and timing of public comment on agenda items.

It was moved and seconded that although membership in standing committees is open to any stakeholder, only a Board member may serve as chair.

The motion passed 15 - 0.

It was moved and seconded that a copy of all official correspondence from the WNC to other persons or entities be transmitted to the Recording Secretary for filing with WNC records.

The motion passed 15 - 0. In response to a question by Ty, this motion was clarified as not applying to contacts by a Board member with his or her stakeholders, only to official communications in the name of the WNC.

### **Public Safety Committee**

Stacy Antler reported. She contacted Jonny Joseph about the condition of the streets west of Overland, south of Expo. They will meet with Theresa Tracy at 7 am one day next week to walk the streets. Susan Bursk thought that the Westside Regional Traffic Task Force that we are trying to set up should be broader than just our district. As a result, it became a sub-committee of the CPAB Traffic Committee. But we will still have an ad-hoc traffic task force for our district.

### **Land-Use Committee**

Rich Cahalan reported. The Committee met on January 27<sup>th</sup> and introduced its newest member, Jason Utas, to the Committee. The Committee received an update report on the Westside Too renovation project. The Committee also began to develop

its list of speakers who could attend Committee meetings and educate Committee members on land-use issues. Next meeting will be March 23<sup>rd</sup>.

### **Outreach Committee**

Alan Levine reported.

1. Alan distributed a superb brochure describing the WNC and raised the issue of how to distribute them. They cost 12 cents each. Some Board members thought it could be done for even cheaper. Alan asked for comments on the accuracy of the information in the brochure. Ideas for distribution were discussed. On March 10, Sam will speak at Overland Avenue School. We should take brochures to candidates' meetings, HOAs, and tenants in Westside Pavilion.
2. Alan asked that next meeting's agenda include the issue of a website for the WNC.
3. On two Saturdays, the Committee wants to have a table at each shopping center with a sign, brochures to hand out, and people to answer questions about the WNC.
4. Pico Village special event. We should set up a committee to implement the visioning study.

### **Council District 5 Report**

Paul Backstrom reported, and followed up on issues raised at the last meeting.

Condo project on Thayer. They met with the developer on the project that was discussed at the last meeting. The developer was cooperative and agreed to downsize it.

Request for a traffic light at Sepulveda and Richland. It will take three months to finish looking into it.

Motor and Pico. When the re-striping is done, there is a 90-day trial period, then adjustments are made. A DOT crew goes there three times a week to check it and observe traffic queues.

### **Next meeting**

March 11, 2004, 7:00 pm, same place.

**Adjournment**

The meeting adjourned at 9:44 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

\_\_\_\_\_  
Jan C. Gabrielson, Recording Secretary

Approved at Meeting of: \_\_\_\_\_

Without correction \_\_\_\_\_

As corrected \_\_\_\_\_

**CUMULATIVE GLOSSARY OF  
ESOTERIC ACRONYMS, ABBREVIATIONS, AND BUZZ WORDS**

Brown Act	The Ralph M. Brown Act
CD5	City Council District 5 (Jack Weiss)
CEQA	California Environmental Quality Act
CERT	Community Emergency Response Team
CPAB	Community Policing Advisory Board
CRA	Community Redevelopment Agency
CUP	Conditional Use Permit
DONE	City of Los Angeles Department of Neighborhood Empowerment
DOT	Department of Transportation (LA, California, or federal)
EIR	Environmental Impact Report
Executive Board	The officers of the WNC: Chair, Vice-Chair, Corresponding Secretary, Recording Secretary, Treasurer
HOA	Homeowners Association
MND	Mitigated Negative Declaration
NOD	Neighborhood Oriented District
NTM	Neighborhood Traffic Mitigation
PACT	Police and Community Together
PLUM	Planning and Use Management Committee, LA City Council
SLO	Senior Lead Officer
SUD	Supplemental Use District
TIMP	Traffic Improvement Mitigation Plan
WNC	Westside Neighborhood Council