

Westlake North Neighborhood Council
Regular Board Meeting
Thursday, August 8, 2019

Central City Neighborhood Partners Conference Room

6:30 PM - Call to order by Board President Ernesto Castro

- AGENDA ITEM #1
- Vice President calls role

AGENDA ITEM #2

- LAPD Senior Lead Officer speaks on crime statistics for Westlake North area/southern end of Echo Park area
- Officer James Chong not able to attend
- Senior Lead Officer will speak to statistics covered by other officers as well
- robberies down in one area, up in another
- 118 robberies in total area to date this year
 - SLO stresses that any seizure of property involving force constitutes a “robbery,” so not all 118 robberies are as “dramatic” as the word might suggest
- 18 total sexual assaults in the area to date this year
- property crime in the area is roughly even with last year
 - ~70 vehicle thefts
 - ~200 instances of small property theft
 - SLO asks attendees to “hide it, lock it, keep it” to prevent property crime from cars; many cars left unlocked
- if attendees would like to meet with SLO outside of board meetings, board members have his contact information
- Attendee question: Attendee lives in a secure apartment building with keyed entry to building; a strange man was able to get into the building and was knocking on doors this weekend. The attendee called 911 three times but nobody showed up. What should the community do about this?
 - SLO answer: SLO is not privy to the contents of the dispatch call; stresses that police are obligated to respond to every call, and that perhaps the officers responding to the call did not make themselves known. The Rampart division takes every call very seriously, encourages attendee to contact division with any concerns or suggestions. Always call 911 first with any concerns.
 - Attendee response: She called three times, called the desk first
- Board President Ernesto Castro asks about statistics for arrests within the area
 - SLO says he can come prepared next time with specific stats by area
- VP wants to know specific stats about break-ins/home invasions
 - SLO does not have specific stats but can email them

- VP wants to know how WNNC can be more helpful or supportive about specific crimes in the area
 - LAPD posts on Next Door to keep neighborhood updated on specific safety threats in the area
- President asks about other apps/social media platforms that SLO recommends for community to stay updated on safety threats
 - VP suggests that Board could post about local crime on Facebook page
- Board member asks about an increase in gang activity this year that she has felt locally
 - SLO says homicides are at an all-time low this year; LAPD making strides in violence, gang reduction. Suggests that the board member's feeling of increase may be related to gang graffiti in the area. It's always good to be aware.
- Rampart division is holding a barbecue event with CD 13 and a pool party event at the Echo Park Pool. Board is welcome to place board agenda at the police station.
- Board member asks about someone who is using fireworks to kill cats in the area; SLO says to contact LAPD about this.

AGENDA ITEM #3

- Representative Luis Gonzalez from Council Member Gil Cedillo is here with announcements
- Next week 8/15: Know Your Rights Immigration Information Session will be held in CCNP to offer local residents services related to immigration
- They are creating Know Your Rights information cards that residents can carry in their wallets reminding them of their rights in situations with police/ICE
- 8/21: first Westlake Farmers Market will be held at 6th/Columbia at 2pm. Fresh fruits and vegetables will be distributed to community along with information on healthy food. Plan is to hold Farmers Markets every other week in the future.
- Plans for improving 6th Street from Loma to Alvarado: working with Central American communities to include them in 6th Street public works improvements. Suggests that this could be discussed further in ad-hoc meeting.
- At 3rd/Westlake, Casa Azul housing for former and current homeless individuals is available
 - stresses this is nicer than a shelter, feels like an actual home. Invites board members to tour the location if they would like. It is currently at full capacity, but social workers are available to find permanent housing for individuals experiencing homelessness.
- Question from President asking about location of Casa Azul
- Question from Board member about how many spaces are available
 - Answer: 43 spaces, for women and children, currently at capacity
- Question about digital version of Know Your Rights Card
 - Answer: digital version is available on Gil Cedillo website/Facebook page
- Question about the 6th Street improvement project details
 - Answer: Discussion of renaming for that area of 6th Street in order to include the community that lives there, plans for murals to go up. The Council Member's office will work with vendors on this strip of 6th Street to help them to comply with city and county codes so that they can continue to operate there.

- Question about plans for parking on 6th Street
 - Answer: Parking is being looked at, currently in planning stages.
- Question about sanitation/trash on 6th Street
 - Answer: 6th Street is very challenging for sanitation. A few hours are beyond control in regard to trash. 6th Street improvement project will involve hiring a sanitation crew specifically for this area on 6th and surrounding streets. This project has already passed public works committee. Hopes that crew will begin cleaning in October.
- Question about more information on 6th St improvements online
 - Answer: Still in early stages, not ready to release information to public
- Luis Gonzalez thanks WNNC for attending movie night
- Suggests that WNNC could hang a banner promoting council meetings at 6th & Columbia

AGENDA ITEM #2B 7:06

Juan from CD 13

- Has information clarifying boundaries of areas under SLO supervision
- There is an ongoing film series in Echo Park
- As part of this, event will be held at Echo Park Lake in collaboration with Echo Park Rising on 8/17
 - All-day event with activities and entertainment in the park culminating in screening of *A Hard Day's Night*
- Community meeting on or around 9/12 with LAPD and DOT engineer coming out to Lupita's Corner Market to discuss
- Safe Routes to School at Union Elementary implementations hope to be completed by the fall. These have included safety improvements to 3rd Street. Some funds may remain for further improvements to the area. Board/community should communicate with CD 13 about safety improvement ideas for remaining funds. Estimates \$1,000,000 total budget for safety improvement projects including Safe Routes to School/3rd Street improvements
- Attendee question: There was a proposal to put a flashing light on 3rd at Crown Hill, and community members have asked about a stoplight, and attendee remembers a representative from DOT saying that the stoplight had been approved a year ago - does representative know anything more about this?
 - Answer: Representative will follow up about this. LAPD officer adds that a similar proposal for a light in the area was not successful because LADOT found that there would not be enough distance between traffic lights. Representative does not have enough information about this particular situation but will follow up.
- Attendee question: What can be done about holes and bumps in the sidewalk due to trees?
 - Answer: Community should report individual issues with photos to CD 13. Studies have been done on specific sidewalk damage areas about whether trees need to be removed, roots cut etc. Sidewalk from Alvarado & 3rd all the way down to Beverly will have been addressed soon. Cost is a concern in addressing all of these

- Illegal dumping is an issue in the area. Sanitation has increased outreach about 311 recently. Best way to report illegal dumping is to send a photo to CD 13.
- Board member question: Is there a way to engage with building managers to help address the issue of illegal dumping:
 - Answer: Specific issues with building managers can be brought to special Sanitation investigation unit. Hotspots in certain locations might be addressed with cameras, but not particular property owners.
 - Board member clarifies about a specific dumpster overflow
 - Answer: This is a Building & Safety issue
- It's best to open a ticket on RecicLA with sanitation complaints online or over the phone.
- Board member question: Board member thanks rep for planting trees on 2nd Street. Have any studies been done about utilizing bridge/diverting traffic?
 - Answer: No changes to traffic flow planned.
- Board member question: On 3rd Street between Whitmore & Lucas, stores are closing. Does rep know anything about this?
 - Answer: Reports that a developer is starting to buy up some properties on this strip, but no one has reached out to his office with plans.
- Board member question: Is there any way to get pedestrians across area to Marionette Theater better?
 - Answer: This area is on a Council District border. Issue will have to wait until after bridge is completed because study cannot be conducted while pedestrian access is blocked by construction. Situations on border can be easier to resolve because both departments can split cost.
- Board member question: People dart across Beverly frequently, can anything be done about this?
 - Answer: Beverly Boulevard is third corridor in order of priority.
- Board President ends report for time and thanks rep for coming.

AGENDA ITEM #4

Officer Ulloa will address scooter issues

- Motorized scooters cannot use sidewalks
- Considered vehicles; to operate a scooter, you need a driver license.
- Collision in the area recently involving scooter riding against traffic.
- A woman was recently charged with DUI for operating a scooter under the influence.
- Fatality in West LA recently when two cars collided and one hit a scooter.
- 10 felony hit-and-runs involving injuries this year to date.
- Tuesday was National Night Out.
- Felony hit-and-run Tuesday, 15-year-old was dragged three blocks. LAPD has some leads, getting close to finding vehicles.
- Often driver involved in hit-and-run will flee, then report their car stolen. LAPD will use DNA tests.

- Officer encourages community to report anything they see.
- Issues with victims and witnesses refusing to cooperate with police due to immigration status; Officer stresses
- Rampart division is still holding at 5 traffic fatalities for the year to date.
- Kids returning to schools soon will result in increase in traffic.
- Board president question: How is information about scooter laws being communicated to students/kids under 18?
 - Answer: Apps are supposed to ask for a driver license, and some of the companies include stickers on scooters explaining rules/laws.
- Board president question: Is information being distributed to schools directly about scooter safety/laws?
 - Answer: Possibly
- Parents are not allowed to active scooters for their children
- Board president question: Has LAPD seen any improvement in scooter return compliance?
 - Answer: No, but San Diego has begun impounding scooters and are seeing success with companies collecting scooters more.
- Board member question: Did Bird say 311 was involved with scooter return issues?
 - Answer: 311 calls go to DOT
- Officer brings up issue of liability in accidents involving scooters - if scooter operator is at fault, is the company liable?
- Board president thanks Officer Ulloa for his time.

- Board president asks for Governmental Department/Agency reports; Mario says no reports today

AGENDA ITEM #2d Community Organizations 7:48 PM

- CCNP representative speaks about improvement project area for Wilshire & 7th
- Meetings will be held to discuss this project with the goal of presenting proposal to the city in January with hope to get \$500,000 for improvements
- Health Fair will be held in October
- Vision Zero project will do pop-up events in the area

AGENDA ITEM #3 General Public Comments on Non-Agenda Items 7:50 PM

- Public member Lawrence Reed speaks
 - Reed moved into the area recently. He will be starting a company to supply secure mailboxes to low-income and homeless individuals so that they can receive mail about benefits, etc.
- Board president adds that he met Lawrence recently and invited him to the meeting

AGENDA ITEM #4 Possible motion to appoint Homeless Liaison 7:52 PM

- Board President calls for Board member to make a motion
 - Member Elise makes the motion
 - Board member seconds the motion
- Mario says Liaison will attend quarterly meetings
- At recent meeting, LA City presented update on the count and updates on 2020 HHH funds
- Presentation at recent meeting about how to include homeless individuals on 2020 census
- Homeless Advocate Board to focus on issues leading to homeless and hoping to provide solutions and ideas for how to deal with those issues. This will not be a group to complain about problems, but to provide solutions. They will be tasked with writing a white paper to present to the city.
- Board member asks if the committee will be composed of liaisons from each neighborhood council
 - Answer: The committee will start as liaisons from each neighborhood council
- Board President says Christine was interested in this position, but was not able to attend meeting.
- Board president asks if anyone is interested
- Board VP asks if there can be two Homeless Liaisons
 - Mario says that some councils appoint two
- Board member asks if someone can be appointed at another time.
- Board president says that Christine could be appointed at a later time since she expressed interest, asks if an alternate can be appointed.
 - Mario says yes
- Lawrence Reed says he would be interested
- Board member says that it would be good to have an alternate in the event that Christine cannot attend.
- Board President calls for further discussion. No further discussion.
- Board President calls for a vote to assign Board member Christine Johnson and Lawrence Fried as two homeless liaisons for this fiscal year
- Motion passes unanimously

AGENDA ITEM #5 Possible motion to approve funds to purchase computer equipment 8:01

- Board has been provided with information on computer
- Idea is that if Board can secure space at CCNP, Board members can have equipment to use to create advertising materials
- Board president calls for motion to approve up to \$3000 to purchase this equipment
- Board member motions
- Board member seconds
- Board president calls for questions

- Board member asks if \$3000 will be enough
- Board member asks why the proposal is for an Apple laptop as opposed to a PC, because Apple computers are more expensive
 - Board member suggests that Apple products are higher quality and have better support
- Board member suggests purchasing a refurbished Apple laptop and utilizing an external hard drive to conserve computer processing power
- Board member expresses concern about cost of Office 365
- Board president says main purpose of this item is to approve funds to purchase a computer, a printer, and software that would enable council to create documents; other details can be worked out later, but he is all for saving money.
- Board member suggests that a laptop could be brought to events to sign attendees in, etc.
- Board member asks if board members who are eligible to educational discounts could use those to save money on equipment
- Board member suggests free online alternative to Adobe products
- Board member asks if utilizing Google Drive shared documents would constitute a violation of the Brown Act
- Mario suggests reaching out to Christina Smith, webmaster, for ideas on how to store flyers, documents, etc., and to make them accessible to the public in a read-only format. Equipment is up to the Board to decide as long as it is stored securely. Mario believes the department has a Canva account already for council use, as well as a NextDoor account.
- Mario suggests postponing the item until the next meeting, and until then Board members can do research about specific equipment and bring it to that meeting.

AGENDA ITEM #6 Approving Outreach Flyer 8:13 PM

- President calls for a motion to approve flyer
- Board member motions
- Board member seconds
- Cassandra says she made the flyers quickly, suggests that version with only Spanish text is easier to read, and Spanish is more important. Flyer is designed to show community where the borders of the WNNC district are. Her experience so far with outreach is the best way to get people involved is with physical paper outreach because many residents do not have email.
- President says that information WNNC gives out at community events has been largely verbal, and it would be good to have a physical handout.
- Cassandra suggests a version of flyer with English on one side and Spanish on the other
- Board member likes the simplicity of the flyer: where we meet, what the boundaries are, when we meet, website. She likes the idea of having a double sided flyer.
- Cassandra could not find the exact official boundaries of WNNC, asks Mario to send higher quality image of the boundary
- Suggestion is made of a star
- Suggestion is made to put map section on the top of the flyer, text on the bottom

- Mario says something might be in the budget to allow for print and distribute flyers
- Board member suggests including very brief information about what the WNNC is concerned with
- President calls for public comment
 - Orange stands out more
 - Text can be moved out of the map
 - Including that there will be food at meetings will draw more people
 - Lawrence Fried suggests making sure the map is oriented to North, and to make sure the time is clearly marked
- President calls for a vote to approve a flyer with the corrections
- Motion carries

AGENDA ITEM #7 Approving rental of office space 8:23 PM

- President calls for a motion to rent space at CCNP
- Motioned, seconded
- President asks if there are questions
- President question: He thinks it would benefit WNNC to have a space/base of operations. He likes option #2 is better cost-wise.
- Question: How much is the storage space each month?
 - Answer: \$107
- Comment: Benefit of renting space at CCNP is that it would benefit the community.
- Question: Would it be possible to hold office hours at CCNP?
 - Answer: yes
- Question: For option #2, would it be negotiable to remove one parking space to save cost?
 - Answer: parking is based on square footage, so the parking is not included in cost
- Question: Would printing/copying access be included in rent?
 - Answer: Not currently, but she will look into it. It is possible that CCNP will track printing and then charge according to the amount of use monthly
- President likes option of access to conference room for subcommittee meetings.
- Question: Is the office large enough to have committee meetings?
 - Answer: Yes, but conference room access is easily scheduled
- Question: Would WNNC have access to the office any time during business hours?
 - Answer: Yes
- Board members take a tour of the potential office space
- President asks for any other questions
- In option #1, everyone has access to the printer
- Question: would it be possible to hold meetings in the office instead of the large space to save cost?

- Answer: As a tenant, the \$75 fee when meetings exceed 8:30 would be waived
- President calls for a motion on either option
- Board member Cintron motions for option #2
- Board member seconds
- President calls for a role call vote
- Motion passes
- Question: When does board want to move in?
 - Discussion of end of storage rental month

AGENDA ITEM #8 Discuss WNNC issues of focus 8:42 PM

- Hope was for WNNC board members to raise issues that they feel board should focus on this year
- Mario suggests putting together a town hall and inviting the community into the discussion
- Question: Can board members prepare goals separately for the next meeting?
- President likes the idea of the town hall, asks to start conversation right now
- opens the floor to board members
- Street beautification, street safety - especially at Glendale intersection with bridge
- Educating homeless people on trades to get them trade certificates so they can get into the workforce, working alongside trade schools to fund a few individuals' trade education; holding a job fair
- Community impact statements
- Quarterly cleanups - huge events that community will know is happening
- Event around holidays partnering with other groups in the neighborhood to educate people about what a neighborhood council does
- Connecting community members to feel pride and connection to community - might include many of these ideas; commissioning public art to instill pride in the neighborhood
- Create a bridge between neighborhood council and local schools - organize a WNNC-sponsored event inviting students from local high schools to educate them about how city/local government works
- Get neighborhood council more involved in homelessness issues
- Special quarterly meeting at different high schools explaining how to get involved in local politics
 - Board member suggests holding special meeting during high school hours might get immigrant parents more involved
- Mario says department just finished a program called Civic Youth to educate school-aged students about the process of local government; suggests connecting with Cal State LA
- Board president tables conversation due to time

AGENDA ITEM #9 Board & Committee Reports

- President's report:

- Board member seat is still vacant, applications are available
- President is a budget advocate, plans to do a presentation on that during September meeting
- Vice President's report:
 - no reports
 - city has resources for planting more trees
- Secretary's report:
 - question about emails
 - President's email may have been hacked, be aware of unusual emails from president's email address
- Treasure's report:
 - numbers for September will be discussed at the next meeting
- Committee reports:
 - Bylaws Committee will hold a meeting this month
 - Homeless Liaison was appointed today
 - Ad-Hoc Committee is researching land use in the neighborhood
 - More committees need to be created: Planning & Land Use, Public Safety - these are listed in the bylaws
- Public comments:
 - National Night Out event recently was a very large event; Board member Don Lee attended, reports "it was wild." Free food lines wrapped around the police station.
 - President suggests promoting council meetings at next year's event

AGENDA ITEM #10 Board Member Comments 9:05 PM

- none

AGENDA ITEM #11 Adjournment 9:06 PM

President calls for motion to adjourn
Motion passes