



President: Bob Gelfand
Vice President: Leonard Shaffer
Secretary: Daniel Wiseman
Treasurer: Glenn Bailey

WEBSITE (Minutes, Documents, etc.): www.lanccoalition.org

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DRAFT MINUTES of March 3, 2012 MEETING

**Hollywood Constituent Center
6501 Fountain Avenue
Los Angeles, CA 90028**

1. The **MEETING was CALLED TO ORDER** at 10:18 am by LANCC President, Bob Gelfand
2. The Chair asked all **PARTICIPANTS and GUESTS** to (voluntarily) identify themselves and to (voluntarily) sign-up for minutes and notices on the sign-up sheets.

There were 21 NC ACTIVE STAKEHOLDERS (NCASHs) who “signed up” and
38 NCASHs in attendance (by “nose count”)

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Three Guests: Jan Perry, Council Member (CD 9)
Helen Kim, L.A. Redistricting Commission Commissioner
Bong Hwan Kim (DONE – GM)
Graycie Liu and Bong Hwan Kim (DONE)
Dr. Gloria Zuurveen (Pace News Online)
Victoria Crowley (DWP)

3. The **AGENDA was reviewed and passed** once the opportunity for PUBLIC COMMENT during the Lightning Round was re-confirmed.
4. Glenn Bailey offered to serve as LANCC Treasurer and Daniel Wiseman offered to serve as LANCC Secretary. They were both approved, as requested, by voice vote.
5. **LIGHTNING ROUND** – COMMENTS AND REPORTS

6. REVIEW OF RECENT E&N MEETINGS

The EDUCATION & NEIGHBORHOODS COMMITTEE (E&N) is now composed of
Bernard Parks (Chair),
Jan Perry (Vice Chair) and
Dennis Zine (Member).

E&N scheduled FOUR REGIONAL MEETINGS:

THURSDAY – MARCH 1, 2012 – 6:00 pm

Constituent Service Center – South Los Angeles
8475 South Vermont Avenue
Los Angeles, CA 90044

MONDAY – MARCH 5, 2012 – 6:00 pm

Braude Constituent Service Center – Room 1B – Van Nuys
6262 Van Nuys Blvd.
Van Nuys, CA

THURSDAY – MARCH 8, 2012 – 6:00 pm

Downtown City Hall – Room 1010
200 North Spring Street
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Chairperson Parks began the each meeting by offering the NCASHs the opportunity to dialogue with the E&N on issues that concerned the NCASH. There would be no time limits ... **no “Thank you, next speaker”** ...and there was active cross-questioning on many of the issues, below. He said he wanted to hear the similarities and differences on the issues as expressed by NCASHs in various parts of the City.

It appeared that the Neighborhood Council Active Stakeholders (NCASHs) would have the opportunity to fully air and fully discuss their concerns with receptive elected City Council Members.

Issue #1: DEFINITION OF A NC STAKEHOLDER

Most NCASHs favored “...lives, works and/or owns property...” (only) and that “...affirmation of a factual basis...” allows literally anyone to buy a cup of Starbuck’s coffee and go vote in an NC Election. What happens on the rest of the 2-4 years, between elections, was not discussed.

Issues #2 - #5: MR. KREKORIAN’s FOUR COUNCIL FILE MOTIONS (“in process”)

A series of speakers commended Paul Krekorian, the previous E&N Chair, for his leadership in calling town hall meetings and the creation of four Council Files (proposed Ordinances) to reform NC activities:

CF #11-1020: Quality Control for the financial transactions of the NCs (**FUNDING PROGRAM**) The requirement for regular (monthly) review of every NC’s financial transactions (by DONE) has not been met because

- #1 - There is no unified reporting system. A computer-based accounting system would be easy to create and far more efficient than the current methods.
- #2 - DONE's staff is limited and DONE is falling further and further behind in their tasks.
- #3 - The offerings of the NC Treasurers (many of whom are experienced bookkeepers and qualified accountants) have not been translated into a real, active program.

CF #11-1017: Plans for an **IMPROVED TRAINING PROGRAM** for NC Board Members and Community Stakeholders have never been translated into a real program because

- #1 - DONE has not yet presented its proposal for a Training Program.
- #2 - There was great hope for a real solution to this issue when Dr. Carol Baker Tharp became the DONE GM. Shortly after Dr. Baker's death, the DONE-based "NC training programs" were renamed the Dr. Carol Baker Tharp Academic Institute. A group of academics and other active, concerned NC Stakeholders went to DONE and offered to establish and, if approved and implemented by DONE, to administer a NC-focused curriculum with educational goals validated by a formal educational/evaluation system ... but DONE did not continue the process.
- #3 - While it is State Law, applied to the L.A. NC Board Members by the City Attorney, that new NC Board Members must complete Ethics Training shortly after assuming office and, regularly, thereafter, many Board Members have never taken Ethics Training. There is no enforcement of this requirement.

CF #11-1018: Receiving and fairly resolving **Stakeholder's COMPLAINTS & GRIEVANCES** is still a major, unresolved issue. It is generally agreed, that the current "system" in which a Grievance against a NC Board is adjudicated by that Board, is improper and unfair to the grieving party.

Problem Resolution Programs which involve mediation and then impartial "finders of fact" were first presented to E&N in 2003. Another "new" set of recommendations has been prepared in the last few years by the DONE-sponsored NC GREIVANCES TASK FORCE. Implementation of any of these plans awaits specific DONE support and a system of NC Governance to support it.

CF #11-1019 requests DONE to develop proposals for a new system of **NC GOVERNANCE based in SEVEN NC REGIONS** but DONE's proposals are not public, yet. This issue, more than any other, focuses on the limits of DONE to act in support of the NCs. All present recognized and many spoke of the decreased funding, the decreased staff and the lack of consistency in DONE's efforts and policies regarding the NCs.

Issues #6: NC BOARD ELECTIONS – locally based or City Clerk assisted

The last NC Elections were held in 2010, administered by the City Clerk, at the cost of \$ 1.4 million. Additional funding, which was to assist in publication and general community outreach were withdrawn as an economy measure. More recently, the City Council voted to delay the next NC Elections to 2013 or even 2014. Current Board Member's terms of office have been increased

from two to four years.

NCASHs expressed their concern for NC ByLaws revisions, unaccepted "selection" and interminable "election" procedures. They were concerned that that may result in bulk resignations of NC Board Members and their replacement by appointees from those who remain. All of this may threaten the public's right for opened or representative NC Board Members.

Although the mechanics of holding elections and counting the votes was done more or less effectively by the City Clerk, the participants favored returning the responsibilities for elections to the NCs, themselves ... and soon.

Issue #7: NCs role as ADVISORS has now moved on the being ADVOCATES

The NCs were created to increase the public participation in Los Angeles City Government. The Charter and the Plan both define the two main activities of the NCs as

- (1) the improvement of the Quality of Life in their Community and
- (2) an "ADVISORY ROLE" for our City's Government.

Perhaps, nowhere has the advisory role been expanded as much as in the NEIGHBORHOOD COUNCIL BUDGET ADVOCATES. The Mayor calls on these NC-elected representatives, each year, to advise him on his budget preparations. In the past 3-4 years, these NC representatives, dug into and processed so much City Budget material that the Mayor said they were no longer "the Mayor's NC Budget Advisors" but they were "**the NC's BUDGET ADVOCATES (NCBAs).**" NCBAs were the first NC representatives to give formal testimony (not just 1-2 minute "Public Comment") at a formal City Meeting (the March 2010 Regional Budget Meeting) and then, twice, in April 2011, the NCBAs presented and defended their (White Paper) budget recommendations before the City Council. We give thanks, to Mr. Parks, then Chair of the Budget & Finance Committee, who made the City Council appearances possible.

However, the point here is that NC Stakeholders are becoming recognized as resources and authorities in many City Government issues and may be expected to take an ever-increasing, formal role in City decision-making

Issue #8: LIMITS IMPOSED ON THE NCs by the CURRENT ECONOMY and the CITY's ECONOMIC SITUATION

Our City's financial dealings work much better in times with the General Economy is improving. Even so, in the best of times, the City should be run more efficiently. Unfortunately, times are tough, right now. \$ 3 billion of our \$ 7 billion dollar budget is Special Funds; funds which must be spent for specific purposes designated by their grantors ... and employee compensation can't be paid from Special Funds. 85% - 90% of the General Fund is dedicated to the City's 32,000 employee's compensation and these obligations are fixed by 1-5 year contracts. Recent cutbacks (of 3,500 fewer employees, 10-15% across-the-board Departmental cuts, increased Contributions by Employees to their Pension Plans, etc.) have helped but very little discretionary savings ("wiggle room") are left.

The NCs have seen their annual allocations go from \$ 50,000 to \$ 45,000 to \$ 40,500 per year and there is talk, recently, of a decrease to \$ 25,000, next year.

Mr. Parks encouraged the NCs to create budgets which reflect the goals and activities of each NC; one NC might focus creating "green spaces," another in frequent (monthly) side-walk clean

ups, another in Senior Citizen programs, another in community-spirit events, etc.

Issue #8: The RALPH M. BROWN ACT and its effects on the NCs

Mr. Parks asked if the Brown Act was a help or a hindrance to NC activities. The answer was, "BOTH."

Those who have read and understood the Brown Act were not intimidated by it. It does give legal teeth to maintaining "opened and transparent" processes in NC governance. The Brown Act becomes a hindrance when is it abused by Stakeholders, DONE and the City Attorney's office to inhibit or cancel meetings and activities.

One speaker emphasized that the 1960's-based Brown Act didn't fit into the 21st Century Electronic Age where there is so little privacy and when communications between everyone ...and between NC Board Members... is so easy, so much a part of our daily lives (social networks), so often invasive (frequent telephone offers to clean you carpets, received at dinner time), etc. The City Council has "staff" to do the leg work. NCs do not. Mechanisms like "Ad Hoc" Committees and "Task Forces" used to evade the Brown Act are just that ...mechanisms. Intimidation still prevails. To remain "opened and transparent," we may need to create some kind of universal, electronic "bulletin board" (webpage, blog, social network, etc.) where work in progress can be shared and legitimate preparations for Committee and Board Meetings will be facilitated.

Everyone knows that NCs have too many issues to process, too much to consider on each issue and too little time ...they are, after all, volunteers with "real" lives outside of their NC participation.

Acceptable and legal interpretation, usage and modification of the Brown Act provisions is the key.

Issue #9: REDISTRICTING AND THE NCs

The "final maps" which propose 15 "new" City Council Districts have been drawn and made public by the L.A. Redistricting Commission. Contrary to the Commission's claims that they kept 60 of the 100+ identifiable NCs "whole," the NCs which were "split" were split indiscriminately and for the obvious purposes to connect otherwise-unconnected areas and City "assets." The 4,500+ Public Comments all asked that their NCs be kept whole but all too many were split in two and even three parts. Finally, the wishes of the three councils who wanted, for very valid reasons, to be split were ignored and several NC were pushed out of the areas where, previously, they thought they belonged.

The final decisions rest with the City Council. Perhaps the NCs views will come to the City Council via the "new" E&N Committee.

7. **NC ELECTIONS 2012 – UPDATE** Grayce Liu spoke for Bonghwan Kim (GM) DONE -
 - a. The Ordinance placing the NC's Elections in the City Clerk's Office remains unchanged.
 - b. NCs should start planning their elections, pending enabling actions by the City Council.
 - c. \$120,000 is available from DONE for IEA's, outreach, etc. Optimally, the NC elections could start in August. DONE is working with Jerry Kvasnika and Steven Box to secure Independent Election Administrators (IEAs).

- d. DONE & the NCs still need to “standardize” procedures. Handouts (dated February 9, 2012) on dates and deadlines were made available.
- e. NC Elections may be clustered in the 7 Planning Districts or in the 9 - 12 City Clerk-created Election regions, possibly taking 7 - 12 weeks, one election/region per week. Online Voting and Vote by Mail is a time consuming & expensive process (probably beyond the capacity of DONE and/or the NCs).
- f. Ethics training and Election concepts may be offered at the NC CONGRESS (Sept. 22, 2012)
- g. Regarding the “Selection format” and “Election format” --- both are possible and an NC can opt out of a “formal” election process, with a simple vote, if no one opposes the incumbent “slate.”
- h. Election funding timeline handouts provided.

(SECRETARY’S NOTE: If you understand this presentation of the NC Election Process, please, explain it to me.)

8. **REDISTRICTING – WHERE ARE WE? – WHAT’S NEXT?**

- a. **Ms. Jan Perry (City Council Member, CD 09)** opened the discussion by saying that this round of redistricting was “...the absolute worst in her 30 years of City service...” It failed to recognize and use the Public testimony. It lacked the required “racially polarized voting study.” She believes that CD09 must include “downtown Los Angeles” to create the economic “value” or “money assets” necessary to keep the rest of CD09 out of poverty. Likewise, CD08 has had all of its high-paying, high-tax producing communities removed and put into CD10 ... an obvious “land grab.” She and Mr. Bernard Parks may be filing a specific legal action to correct these problems. She encouraged all to voice and write-in their views, submit proposals and appear, in large numbers, at City Council and Committee meetings.

Daniel Wiseman asked if Ms. Perry was considering submitting an alternate map to the Redistricting Commission’s map. Ms. Perry has drawn CD08 and CD09 maps but not maps for all 15 CDs. Dr. Wiseman said that he and several others have created maps for all 15 CDs.

Glenn Bailey asked how the County’s needs to “reset Precinct lines” impacts the time table? Ms. Perry didn’t know. Mr. Bailey wondered whether the Redistricting Commissioners received all of the Public Input (especially the written input). It wasn’t on the Commission’s website or in the “final report” to the City Council. Ms. Perry asked as many people as possible to raise the issue before the Committee and City Council meetings.

Mr. Bailey compared the several sets of maps (prepared by NCASHs) that split only 5 – 10 of the 101 NCs to the Commission’s maps which split ~30 NCs.

Dede Audet spoke of Bill Rosendahl’s strong support to keep all of Westchester in CD11. Ms. Perry said the Commission called that “...an inadvertent error...” and a move to adequately “populate” CD10 and to meet V.R.A. (racial) requirements.

- b. **Redistricting Commission Commissioner Helen Kim** said she was surprised that so many Commissioners were more intent on retaining or acquiring “assets” or “jewels” in their districts than on establishing compact, contiguous Districts which connected and sustained real, working Communities of Interest and that so many Commissioners were passive in the process.

She described the recent meeting, when Raphael Sonenschein described the (Brown Act-imposed) isolation of the three groups that created the initial three five-district sections. She said that the Valley array was created by the Valley Commissioners, first, and it became immutable ...unchangeable...and that set the boundaries (or at least the pattern) for all the city-side NCs, as well.

She admitted that she (a Commissioner) had trouble searching for and finding many maps and written documents. She mentioned the "Minority Report and Recommendations of the Los Angeles City Council Redistricting Commission" (written and submitted by Commissioners Robert Ahn, Bobbie Jean Anderson, Helen B. Kim and David Roberts). It includes and expands on many of these issues and concerns. It is available at redistrictingla.com, the Commission's website and at <http://www.thecitymaven.com/2012/03/01/redistricting-minority-report-says-commission-ignored-public-input-relied-on-race-to-draw-district-lines/>.

- c. **Carol Sidlow** spoke in opposition to the division of Bel Air Beverly Crest NC between CD05 and CD04 (along Coldwater Canyon Blvd). She asked, "How many NCs were contacted by the Redistricting Commission in the course of its activities?" Ms. Kim reported that, even though they were asked to do so in Public Comment (Nov.28, 2011) and they had the DONE "Leaders List," the Redistricting Commission staff did not use DONE's list or try to directly contact or inform the NCs in any other way. Only two direct contacts related to possible map impacts were made with NCs by the Redistricting Commission staff. The staff did not contact any of the Regional NC organizations or PlanCheck.

(BOTTOM LINE: the promised (and expected) outreach to NCs did not occur.)

- d. **Cindy Cleghorn** spoke of how Sunland-Tujunga, Foothill Trails and Sun Valley NCs were split and put into CD07 and CD06 against the obvious and expressed wishes of their Stakeholders. **Nina Royale** added that she was offended because the Chair took no Immediate action when she was called a "racist" during the discussion of her area, at the Commission Meeting.
- e. **Sid Gold** wanted to know how the meetings were run? ... Who set the rules? Ms. Kim said that the Redistricting Commission lacked pre-stated guiding principles...none were ever approved.
- f. **ACTION:** The following MOTION was proposed/amended (Sidlow/Gold). It passed by a UNANIMOUS vote.

The motion was to be sent, forthwith, to all of the LANCC participants and submitted to accompany Council File #11-0187-S3. LANCC suggested that the 95 NCs consider adopting the language of this MOTION and sending a Community Impact Statement of their position.

Whereas, the current redistricting map was created in a manner that does not conform to law and does not serve the interest of the public, LANCC opposes the current map

(The full text of the motion is appended at the end of the minutes.)

9. WHAT IS A REFERENDUM? WHAT DO WE DO WITH IT?

LANCC President Gelfand described the past advice of Zev Yaroslavsky and Tom Maudlin ??? that NCs have more power than they think and their power is demonstrated by NCs ability to interfere with (block or delay) City Governmental actions. He suggested that we consider initiating a Referendum to oppose this redistricting proposal (if it is approved by City Council). This may be by filing an AMICUS BRIEF which needs a lawyer (expense) but that expense may be born by partnering with Mr. Parks' and Ms. Perry's legal actions. (They are in a "closed shop" phase of their preparations for their law suit.) The AMICUS BRIEF would ask the City to show cause why they should not delay action on the Redistricting Proposal or why they should not be required to consider the matter further.

A referendum takes 27,000 signatures and usually costs ~ \$ 40,000 ... The start may be a Writ of Mandate to prove that the City & its Redistricting Commission did or did not do what it should have done.

- a. In addition, **Sid Gold and Cindy Cleghorn** spoke (separately) of a mass appearance before City Council, on March 16th, by a large number of NCASHs with a large document (a petition opposed to the Redistricting maps) and lots of signatures.
- b. **Glenn Bailey** proposed that NCs (which meet within a week) put out position papers based on the above document. (calling Special Meetings, if necessary)

(SECRETARY'S NOTE: The LANC Coalition Resolution opposing the Redistricting Commission's map is the 03/14/2012 Public Comment. On Council File #11-0187-S3. Bel Air Beverly Crest and West Hills NCs have submitted Community Impact Statements for CF #11-0187-S3. There are multiple, other "Public Comments" submitted/registered from Glassell Park, Highland Park, other NCs and individuals in opposition to the Redistricting Commission's proposal.)

Mr. Bailey then announced the next several Rules & Intergovernmental Relations Committee Meetings (Herb Wesson, Chair) which are the last hearings before the Redistricting Commission's "final recommendations" go to City Council (Friday, March 16th).

- MONDAY – March 5 @ 4 pm – Port of Los Angeles Bldg., San Pedro
- TUESDAY – March 6 @ 4 pm – Van Nuys City Hall, City Council Chambers
- WEDNESDAY – March 7 @ 4 pm - (downtown) City Hall, City Council Chambers
- FRIDAY – March 16 @ 8:30 am – (downtown) City Hall, City Council Chambers

11. **LANCC AS AN ACTION ORGANIZATION** – discussed by President Gelfand, above.

12. **ADJOURNMENT**

- Next LANCC Meeting: Saturday, April 7, 2012 10:00 AM
The D-W-P Bldg., 111 N. Hope St., Los Angeles

(Parking TBA)

SPECIAL GUEST: **BERNARD PARKS, Council Member CD8**
(newly appointed Chair, E&N Committee)

13. **APPENDIX #1 – LANCC opposes Redistricting Commission’s Map**


Los Angeles Neighborhood Council Coalition

President: Bob Gelfand
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PUBLIC STATEMENT

On February 4, 2012, the LANCC voted to oppose the “first draft” of the maps which were made public by the Los Angeles City Council Redistricting Commission (LACCRC) on January 25, 2012. The recently prepared (February 25, 2012) “final” map (“the map”) of the LACCRC was presented and discussed, in detail, at the regular meeting of the Los Angeles Neighborhood Council Coalition (LANCC) on March 3, 2012.

These deliberations raised a series of concerns for the procedures and practices of the LACCRC by which they arrived at this “new” set of City Council Districts (the map) for the City Council. LANCC recognizes that the map is the core recommendation of the Commission to the City Council.

1. LANCC is concerned that the “first draft” of the “final” map was made in three parts, each part proposed five City Councils. These three sub-groups did not coordinate their efforts, citing Brown Act concerns.
2. LANCC is concerned that the first of the three groups created five San Fernando Valley Districts which remained unchanged and apparently “unchangeable.” This limited the flexibility necessary to create the remaining ten City Council Districts.

3. LANCC is concerned that this “final” map shows so little change from the “first draft.”
4. LANCC is concerned that it was the LACCRC’s practice to limit the time for each speaker in the Public Comments section of the Commission’s Public Meetings to 1-2 minutes.

Often, the Commission chair did not allow speakers to complete their “last” sentences in a purported effort to “hear everyone.” It is true that the Brown Act requires that Public Comment be a part of all California governmental committees but there is no requirement that the committee do anything with the testimony received. The LACCRC listened to over 4,500 Public Comments and over 6,500 people attended their 22 Public Meetings but very little of this massive testimony was evident in their map.

5. LANCC is concerned that reports from many NCs and from several Commission members, themselves, testify that the full array of written testimony and proposed maps was not readily available and, in a number of instances, may not have been placed into the public record, at all.
6. LANCC is concerned that only a very few NCs were contacted by LACCRC staff or by the Commissioners during their deliberations. Therefore, an important and valuable exchange of information related to and effecting the processing of the proposed boundaries was absent...
7. LANCC is concerned that, before the Commission began to develop the map, the LACCRC Outreach Committee recommended that the NCs be considered as an important “Community of Interest” and urged that maximum care be taken to avoid dividing NCs between two or more proposed Council Districts.

LANCC believes that the map and the Commission’s own data show that 32 of the 101 NCs were divided, that small pieces of one NC were often used to connect larger (“assets” or “jewels”) areas and the fact that at least 4 NCs were placed in CDs where they did not want to be and where they had specifically told the Commission that they did not want to be is strong evidence that the LACCRC did not act on the advice of its own Outreach Committee or with respect to the wishes, the relationships or the integrity of the NCs.

8. LANCC is concerned that the LACCRC guidelines, published on January 11, 2012, were not in adequate detail, were not publicized and were not effective in establishing legal, opened and transparent guidelines for the Commission's actions.
9. LANCC is concerned that the proposed City Council Districts show more evidence that they were created with the apparent intention of gathering “assets,” often referred to by several Commissioners as “jewels”. These “assets” or “jewels” tended to be voting blocks, economic centers and tourist attractions, etc. rather than neighborhoods which had common interests and identifiable needs.
10. LANCC is concerned that, in at least one case (that is; CD08), changing the boundaries resulted in a decrease in an African-American potential majority (CVAP of 65.7%) to below 50% ... a possible violation of the Voting Rights Act.

After hearing these concerns the LANCC made and PASSED by a UNANIMOUS MAJORITY the following MOTION:

Whereas, the current redistricting map was created in a manner that does not conform to law and does not serve the interest of the public, LANCC opposes the current map.

DRAFT