

LANCC

Los Angeles Neighborhood Council Coalition

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

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

WEB-BLOG (Notices, etc.): lanccreports.blogspot.com

Send emails (questions, comments, etc.): Info@lanccoalition.org

DRAFT MINUTES of August 4, 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 34 NC ACTIVE STAKEHOLDERS (NCASHs) were in attendance.

3. The **AGENDA was reviewed and passed** with the following modifications: The presentations of Special Guests (Frederick H. Pickel, R.P.A. and City Controller Wendy Greuel) were heard first to accommodate their schedules
4. The **MINUTES of the RECENT MEETINGS of June 2012 and July 2012** were **NOT reviewed.**
5. **PUBLIC COMMENT – LIGHTNING ROUND – COMMENTS & REPORTS**
 - a. **Humberto Comacho** thanked the LANCC members for their support on the new Convention Center & Stadium. There are discussions aimed at protecting the neighbors from glare (bright lights), losing parking in front of their homes and traffic control for construction trucks.

- b. **Heinrich Keifer** spoke of the MetroLink Rail Yard in North East L.A. near the new High School with much ground pollution.

Friends of the SouthWest Museum is having a Fund Raiser August 11, 2012. There is a \$ 25

- c. **Katelyn Neehouse** (California Common Cause) spoke about City Elections campaign reform which will assist people who are not wealthy to run for office. Ethics Commission is recommended a 4:1 matching fund in place of the current 1:1 matching fund.
- d. **Chuck Ray** spoke of a Motion, consistent with a Motion by the DWP Advocacy Committee and passed by Mar Vista NC, opposing diminished fund of the DWP Office of Public Accountability. For more information, call Chuck.
- e. **The Field Deputy for the Southern California Democratic Party** told of the opening of their office on Venice Blvd. in Culver City. She invited all to the Grand Openng, August 20th.

6. **SPECIAL GUEST PRESENTATION by FREDERICK H. PICKEL (C.E.O. of the DWP Office of Public Accountability and the DWP RATEPAYER's ADVOCATE – RPA)**

Secretary's Note: The concept of Ratepayer's Advocate was originated 3-4 years ago by NC Stakeholder, Jack Humphreville, as a way to justify or refute the DWP's almost annual proposals for Electric Power and Water Rate increases. The idea worked its way through the City Council Ordinance (Council File) process establishment of a "DWP Office of Public Accountability" (OPA) which includes the DWP Ratepayer's Advocate (RPA) was overwhelmingly passed as a City Charter Amendment in March 2011 to "...provide public, independent analysis of DWP actions as they relate to Water and Electricity Rates..." The last round of increases were left unapproved by City Council pending the RPA's (establishment and first) report.

Mr. Pickel introduced the "Schedule for the RPA's (his) Review." His reports go directly to the DWP Board of Governors without any requirement that they accept his recommendations. He is appointed (at will) by the Mayor with the advice & consent of City Council but does not report to either of them. He started to work in February 2012. His reports are not audits (those are done by the Controller) but pre-approval reviews for DWP before their recommendations are sent for approval/rejection by the City Council (Energy & Environment Committee) and, if approved, the signature of the Mayor.

His reviews are "forward looking" more than "reviews" and concern the following areas:

- (1) Rates (revenue requirements and revenue expectations)
- (2) Rate Structures (changes deferred to the current review cycle)
- (3) Annual, Multi-year and Long-term Planning Process
- (4) Other duties as assigned in the Charter (complaint review, etc) which is beyond the capacity of the OPA, now.

DWP provided specially-developed (publicly available) information on their financial activities and rate processing. He has been discussing these rates with DWP since they came out and will hold more Public Meetings. He expects that his first public report to be released on August 20, 2012

with formal presentation at the DWP meeting, September 8, 2012 with a City Council/Mayor process which could permit Rate Changes in November 2012.

The Office of Public Accountability is in Figueroa Plaza (Twin Towers), Room

7. SPECIAL GUEST PRESENTATION by Controller Wendy Greuel

Wendy Greuel's current office, the Controller, and the Rate Payer's Advocate have already started to work together on DWP and citywide government transparency and accountability issues.

The Controller is the City's check writer; responsible for payroll, vendor payments, financial reporting and auditing for the City.

The Controller's Annual Report (March 1, 2012) **predicts a slow, Post-Recession economic "non-recovery" with City Revenues increasing ay (only) 1.0% to 1.5%.** The Controller's Preliminary Financial Report (PFR) will be released within a month. The PFR summarizes the FY2011-2012 financial activities and highlights what went right and some of what went wrong.

Last year, Ms. Greuel opposed firing 220 LAPD employees because she believed that we could find the \$ 18 million necessary to keep them from efficiencies in other parts of the City Budget. She proposed using City Council Member's Discretionary Funds (Pipeline Franchise Fees, Street Furniture Funds, Special Parking Revenue Funds, Property Sale Funds, etc.) but City Council did not accept her suggestion. City Council delayed these 220 layoffs by six months (from July 1, 2012 to December 31, 2012).

Ms. Greuel introduced and supported conversion to Performance-based Budgeting; which includes clear prioritized Value Statements for every Department, estimated service demands, defined service costs, rewards for meeting goals and penalties for failures. Implementation of Performance-based Budgeting in FY2012-2013, in the Bureau of Street Lighting and the Planning Department is to be following by implementation in all departments.

Ms Greuel believes that responses to and implementation of the recommendations in the Controller's 50 outstanding Audits could save up to \$ 130 million. One recent audit related to fuel (gasoline) usage: \$ 7 million of the \$ 28 million spent in one year went to "unidentified" vehicles. (The gas pumps are supposed to sense the vehicle – police care, fire engine, ambulance, etc. – which is receiving the gas.) One LAPD gas station at 105th and Western was found to be selling (City) gas to private parties. An audit of a Comprehensive Disaster Plan found that the City Parks did not have the shelters required to respond to the disaster. Parks & Rec. started to install them. An audit of the Convention Center concluded that demand-based pricing would work, the Convention Center switched to demand-based pricing and the Convention Center booked more events in "slow" time and earned millions more in revenue. The Controller has received and expects more responses from the audited Departments documenting their responses. The Controller's "Score Cards" seem to be working.

Ms. Greuel paraphrased President Clinton and said, "There is nothing wrong with Los Angeles that can't be fixed by what is right with Los Angeles." She mentioned our problems with chronic budget deficits, building and safety code inconsistencies, the need to attract and keep new businesses and the real potential for NCs to participate in solving these problems. "We have to do

a better job, together ... sometimes not always getting along ... NCs need to make and act on their own decisions.” It is more than coming to an Official Meeting and getting 2 minutes to talk ... it is about coming to the table and working out the problems, together.

Questions and interaction:

- a. **Jack Humphreville** asked Ms. Greuel to discuss the “Live within our Means” Charter Amendment. She favors the concept and has other plans to balance the City Budget. We must bring more business into L.A. (increase income) and control expenditures (employee salaries). The latter will take a great deal more negotiation with the City’s Labor leaders. Deferred (employee) compensation is an unfunded liability that must be eliminated. Health Care and Pension Benefits need basic and comprehensive review and reform. Tourism and the Port of L.A. are our major revenue generators. And, it means making adequate allowances/allocations to repair, maintain and construct City infrastructure.
- b. **Jerry Robinson** asked what can be done about the lack of parking in West L.A. ... it is hurting businesses, particularly small businesses (especially on Venice Blvd.). Ms. Greuel pointed out the complex balance between auto and public (bus) traffic in many parts of the City. More and more Angelenos are taking the new and the old bus lines.
- c. **Dede Audet** asked about Water Policy ... L.A.’s right to water vs. Mammoth Lakes “right-to-exist.” The big issue is a total package of water conservation/usage. We have to capture, purify and reuse the water in our City. We have to decontaminate the East San Fernando Valley aquifer.
- d. **Yolanda Gonzalez** asked about moneys in the (closed) Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA) that should have gone to rehabilitate blighted properties and apartments. There were funds to help provide affordable housing in these areas. Where are those funds, now? Ms. Greuel pointed to her CRA audit. Essentially all of the \$ 46 million which came to the City when the CRA was closed down, went to balance the Budget ... none to fulfill its original purposes.
- e. **A Stakeholder** asked about our Financial Data Management System (a new system) which is now online. Confidence in the new system allows “sunsetting” a “parallel” payroll system (used for many, many years to assure payroll accuracy) and will save \$ 800,000, this year.
- f. **Bob Gelfand** asked if the current or future or might install an Ombudsman to receive complaints. Ms. Greuel pointed to the “Fraud-Abuse Hotline” (“whistleblower”) service available in the Controller’s Office.
- g. **Humberto Camacho** asked about the plans to manage traffic control (flow-by, approach, parking and leaving) for the new Convention Center & Stadium. Ms. Greuel agrees that this needs to be negotiated with the developers.
- h. **Jacqueline Hamilton** would like to see a re-activation of the Neighborhood Prosecutor Program which helped contain minor crime and blight the areas around Exposition Park and which, she believes, was worth the cost. Ms. Greuel agrees that it was effective and efficient. She said some good programs have been cancelled because the elected official who first proposed them is no longer in office.

8. **TOPIC: The NC CONGRESS – SATURDAY morning – September 22, 2012 – Downtown L.A. City Hall** was described by Heinrich Keifer. Preparations are almost complete.

There will be Plenary Sessions, Break-out Sessions and 20+ Workshops. Online and “hard copy” applications to attend will be distributed, soon. Many City Officials and Electoral Candidates (for Mayor, for other City Offices, for State Legislature, for Congress) have been invited.

9. **TOPIC: LANCC RECOMMENDATIONS for the FUTURE DONE and the NEXT DONE GM**

- **Joanne Yvanek-Garb** said that it takes at least 60 days to receive an idea, issue or recommendation from LANCC, introduce (agendize) and (sometimes) get it through a committee and then into a MOTION to be passed by her NC. (This would delay the responses of many LANCC Representatives and many NCs beyond the time for effectiveness.)

- **Dede Audet** would like some history of the Office of the DONE GM. She would like to see BONC assume a more active function to be a “ruling” organization and DONE could become more of a supportive organization. She would like a report of how the 95 NCs respond when “important” issues appear. She thinks DONE should be keeping score. She wonders if LANCC or any other Alliance has some data on their effectiveness.

- **Heinrich Keifer** suggested formation of an LANCC Ad Hoc Committee to formulate these concepts.

- **Len Shaffer** stated that BONC is the “policy-making” group for NCs. It certifies NCs. If, after “exhaustive efforts” by DONE, a NC fails to perform, BONC may decertify the NC. BONC has no enforcement power over its recommendations. DONE, however, is a “cheer leader,” promoter and enforcer of NC Activities.

- **Bob Gelfand** said that one of the functions of LANCC is to give “feedback” to the operations and activities of DONE and BONC; seeking a proper balance of independence and attachment to the City Government.

- **Ken Draper** asked if the LANCC Participants present, today, really wanted to have a hand in the selection of the next DONE GM? They indicated that they do but they were not as enthusiastic to have NC Boards take this role. He has met with the Mayor’s Office and secured their interest in having LANCC weigh in on the selection of the next GM. He said that LANCC should engage the Regional Alliances in this opportunity to recommend NC leaders for the new GM position.

- **Len Shaffer** reminded us that the Committee of 2 NC Representatives and 2 “City Types” did not participate in the search process but only in the selection of the “finalists.” He endorsed the idea of NCs and NC Stakeholder having a greater involvement in the selection of the “large list” of candidates.

- **Randy Waller** asked Len Shaffer, as a BONC Member, whether BONC will have “a large role” in the DONE GM selection process ... because it is their primary responsibility to oversee DONE.

Len Shaffer answered that the responsibility for appointing GMs falls to the Mayor ... not to the BONC ... and he, personally, thinks the advocacy should come from the NCs. He mentioned the recently recommended "Standards of Practice for NCs" as evidence for BONC's NC support and he predicts a more aggressive outreach from and a more collaborative relationship between BONC and the NC's in the future.

- **Bob Gelfand** said that it was the LANCC officer's report (June 2012), that the LANCC is not bound by the Brown Act, that the usual requirements for notification and transparency are often impediments to prompt action and, therefore, that representatives from the various NCs are encouraged/allowed to vote their conscience and/or their NC's best interests when they are deliberated at LANCC. These votes are not binding on their NC's but may be submitted to individual NC's for their consideration and specific action (support/opposition). Other similar groupings of NCs include:

- = the Valley Alliance of NCs (VANC),
- = the West L.A. Regional Alliance of NCs (WRAC),
- = the North-East L.A. Alliance of NCs (NELALAC),
- = the North Central L.A. Alliance of NCs (NECLAAC), (??)
- = the South Los Angeles Alliance of NCs (SLAANC) and
- = the Harbor Alliance of NCs (HANC).

LANCC has started to work more closely with all of these groups; especially on this kind of issues.

He agreed that the LANCC should appoint an Ad Hoc Committee to address the definitions and issues of seeking and selecting the next DONE GM. He would like to have their suggestions as part of the September 8, 2012 LANCC Meeting Agenda.

Items to be considered by the LANCC Review Committee could include:

- (1) LANCC's and the various Alliance's expectations of the "new" DONE
- (2) Relationships between the "new" DONE and the NCs (Vision Statements, areas of authority, independence, guidance, support, collaboration, disciplinary actions, etc.)
- (3) Defining the qualifications and characteristics of a "new" DONE GM
- (4) Specific Recommendations – Persons whom LANCC would be likely to support.
- (5) Narrowing the Field – Review Bodies (within the Mayor's Office, LANCC, elsewhere...)
- (6) Applicant (self and supporter's) advocacy.
- (7) LANCC involvement in the "Final Selection Process."

The **LANCC Ad Hoc Committee on the Selection of the Next DONE** GM was formally proposed (a MOTION was made) and passed by acclamation.

Chairperson: Ginger Damon.

10. **TOPIC: OFFICER'S MEETING UPDATE** was given by **Chairperson Bob Gelfand**

For the last 3 months, there have been meetings of the LANCC Officers and others to prepare the agendas ... (These meetings are opened to all interested NC Stakeholders.)

- a. A **RAPID RESPONSE** issue was triggered a few days before the July LANCC Officer's meeting: The E&N Committee was to consider taking money from the NCs to cover DONE's expenses in administering NC elections and we didn't know (at that point) how much money might be taken. Many responses came (by emails) from the LANCC Representatives and a few NCs which had meetings that week passed specific motions related to this issue. (That is the Rapid Response Process.) By the Officer's Meeting, we knew that \$ 1,515 would be taken from any NC holding an "Election" and \$ 450 would be taken from any NC holding a "Selection." Later, and possibly because of the furor among the LANCC Representatives, the E&N Committee suggested that these monies would only be taken from the NCs if the allocated \$ 650,000 which DONE has to administer the elections proved to be inadequate.

This was our first experience in using the Rapid Response process. Future Rapid Response events can be **triggered (any NC Stakeholder may do this)** by an email to any LANCC Officer and acceptance by a majority of the officers.

- b. The Chair expressed his dislike for "Call-the-Question" motions because, according to Robert's Rules of Order,
- "Call the Question" cuts off debate, possibly depriving the group of important information,
 - the person making that motion must be recognized and make the motion
 - someone must second the motion,
 - the whole group must vote (2/3 majority required for passage),
 - then the Motion comes to a vote, immediately.
- This process is rarely shorter in time than just letting all speak who wish to do so.
- c. Len Shaffer announced the new "Mail Chip" now being used to send out meeting notices and asked for comments on it. (xxx@yyy.zzz) This site permits all to sign up for, withdraw from and recommend others to receive our notifications.

11. **ADJOURNMENT**

- a. NEXT MEETING: September 8, 2012 @ 10:00 a.m.
Date changed from Sept. 1 to avoid Labor Day
the DWP Advocacy Committee will meet on 9/8, too.

LOCATION: Hollywood Constituent Center
6501 Fountain Avenue
(Fountain & Wilcox, West of Cahuenga Street)
Hollywood, CA 90028