

MEETING MINUTES
LOS ANGELES NEIGHBORHOOD COUNCIL COALITION
A Coalition of 96 Neighborhood Councils
aka LANCC

Mark Ridley-Thomas Constituent Center
8475 South Vermont Avenue, Meeting Room
Los Angeles, Ca 90044

The meeting was called to order at 10:10 am by President Terrence Gomes
Terrence Gomes commented that work is in progress for Neighborhood Councils to be able to have their offices in city property. There is no Council File as of this date but the NCs can forward their concerns as a Resolution to the attention of the mayor and to each member of the City Council.

Steven Box is the Outreach chair for the Department of Neighborhood Empowerment, and there is an expected change in the approach that can be exemplified in the new name, to be Neighborhood Council centric, to have the brand of **Neighborhood Councils Empowered by the Department of Neighborhood Councils.**

Every Neighborhood Council, (and board member) is strongly encouraged to be more Proactive in their community.

Presentations

1, Dr. Fred Pickel, of the Office of Public Accountability (OPA) spoke about the rate increase anticipated to be effective on April 1, 2016, IF.

The If relates to: a tight timeline of required deadlines.
December 15, 2015, DWP water rates are recommended
January 5, 2016, the Office of the City Attorney to finalize and detail the exact wording for the Water Ordinance
(January 19, 2016, complete lengthy report by Dr. Pickel, Ratepayer Advocate)
February 24, 2016, after review by the Council Committee on Energy and the Environment there will be two votes taken by the City Council
April 1, 2016, the rate increases go into effect
July 1, 2016, an update and retroactive increase for the fiscal year 2016-2017 goes into effect

We all do understand some of the costly needs for the DWP to raise rates, such as repairs to existing pipes, and replacements on antiquated pipes for safe water delivery and ultimate sewage removal, of which both are `critical to the health of the large population of the City of Los Angeles.

However, it is also important to realize that the dollar increase that is anticipated for the use of electricity is about 5%, and the rate for water (a drought rate) is anticipated at about 8%. (During normal seasons of rainfall, the rate increase for water averages about 5%.) An often overlooked point is that rate comparisons with other major city utility usages is that the cost in Los Angeles is still lower than other metropolitan usages.¹

Another ***However*** is that the burden of the rate increase is on property owners. It is estimated that about 63% of the population rents the residence where they live. The renters do rent single family houses, condos, apartments, etal. How is the rented usage rated? ² The question is, “Is the Single Family Homeowner overpaying?”

(Take special observance in the wording of WHAT IS PROPOSITION 218? which was voter-approved on the ballot for November 1996. See Attached.)³

Dr. Pickel will address the above issues in the 4-page Executive Summary that he will release in December 2015.⁴ **Go online to www.OPA.lacity.org or call phone number @13-978-0220, or send email to OPA@lacity.org for a Draft of the Report to be released mid-January 2016 by Dr. Fred Pickel.**

President Gomes observed the intense depth in the work of Dr. Pickel and the OPA, and he asked about the cost to expand the staffing of the OPA to strengthen Outreach. (He also suggested that we can be Proactive by going to MyLADWP.com to research the water rules and rates.)

President Gomes is also active with the NC Budget Advocates, and related that some of the issues are being researched by the Budget Advocates as they look forward to the publication of their next White Paper.⁵

2. The next presentation on the agenda was from Jay Handal.⁶

¹ See attached Draft of Current and Proposed DWP schedule for Single Family Residential Water Rates.

² Rental usage is a point to watch in the wording of the Ordinance and the activity of the City Council committee and vote.

³ Remember approving Proposition 218? A brief statement is attached from California Tax Data.

⁴ Watch email for access to the Executive Summary from the Ratepayer Advocate, Dr. Pickel, to prepare ourselves for being Proactive and share information with the stakeholders.

⁵ Go to NC Budget Advocates to learn more of the work being done as preparation for the White Paper to the mayor and City Council develops the next City Budget for 2016-2017.

⁶ Jay Handal previously co-chaired the NCBudget Advocates. Now he is employed by the Office of the City Clerk to handle the citywide NC Elections, where he has the zeal to change the pattern of Underpromise- to -Overdeliver to support the NC-Elections.

Jay Handal takes his challenge seriously and wants to help each Neighborhood Council to a stunning success. There are 12 Election Regions and each region will have an Independent Election Administrator (IEA) who will be available to assist every NC in their assigned Region to have a robust and successful election.

Every member of every Neighborhood Council citywide is encouraged to keep the following resources available for help on the progress of their Elections. Jay Handal has a staff of 20 persons with 12 IEAs to assist in these Elections. Use email to contact the office of Jay at:

Jay@EmpowerLA.org or call #310-466-0645 or visit the office on the 20th floor of City Hall

Every Elections Committee Chair should now have the name and address for economically priced Election Pole Banners with the Banner Fee waived for the first year. Jay is now getting another 68 bus benches for Election ads. He has a range of pre-designed templates for mailers and flyers wherein the NC will enter the Council name, location, and other specific Council data. Jay has the tools and we just have to use them.⁷

One of the biggest tools is NATIONBUILDER. This tool provides to each NC the list of all registered voters from the Los Angeles Registrar of Voters so that each NC can access ways to contact every registered voter. Some 30% from the Registrar of Voters will have email addresses included. The balance of some 70% will have postal addresses for actual mailers. Each NC has to download their own database.

This is a powerful tool. (Easily, with online voting in place we might project a minimum of 1000 votes per NC, and that total would be over 96,000 voters. That is a projection of success.) As Jay Handal said, “The Power you (get) is the Power you take”.

As to mailers, Jay indicated that the more you contact voters the better, but that every address in the area of the NC should get at least one Election mailer. In other words, Jay urges the challenge to **SPEND BIG** to stimulate success in the Elections.

Jay also spoke about the Elections as our biggest Outreach opportunity. He said that the NCs are not designed to support charities but to stimulate participation of the stakeholders in the process.

The Online Registration citywide opened on December 1, 2015. There are 35 of the 96 Neighborhood Councils using the online registration. This is a test. Our success can predict a way for citywide and nationwide voter participation to be increased. The

⁷ A tool to advertise with Yard Signs and the cost is attached.

City will be watching us. To be successful we must accelerate the Election Campaign for 2016.

In going online to Register to vote, the applicant must provide an authorized government issued Photo ID with the current residence address. Remembering the definition of Stakeholder as resident, business, or employment, the applicant has to be sure of using the authorized proof of eligibility to register. Go online to EMPOWERLA and find the list of NC Election Acceptable Forms of Documentation.⁸

For the conventional and traditional voting procedure, the voters can come to the poll location. There will be NO paper ballots at the poll location. All of the voting will be done electronically.

There have already been 16-different Election Workshops, with another one scheduled for Sunday, December 13, 2015 at 8700 Van Nuys Boulevard. Go to EmpowerLA to get the scheduled time for this workshop.

Every Neighborhood Council will be sent a detailed Excel spreadsheet from Jay Handal for NCs to better prepare to Budget the Elections. This should be received by Tuesday, December 8th.

The IEAs will help each NC to make sure that the JOB is done. They will help to CALL for candidates, MEET with candidates, and VOTE for candidates.

FURTHER— —the NC can hire an ELECTION MANAGER and pay for assistance from open to close of the process for the cost of from \$1,500 to \$2,000. This is worth considering.

Reports

Len Shaffer, president of the Board of Neighborhood Councils (BONC) spoke about the General Services Department (GSD) has not completed the property inventory. There is to be a motion for Neighborhood Councils to have use of Public Space for the storage of property, as some 45 of the 96 NCs do not have any office space.

Len said the next BONC meeting on December 21st at 1pm at City Hall will consider the preparation and maintenance of Board Meeting Minutes and will use the word Shall in the language. The use of the word **shall** makes it mandatory, whereas the use of the word **Should** means that the action is a best practice.

Len said that the BONC will hold its Retreat on Saturday, January 30th, and it will

⁸ Seventeen page Online Voting Guide with sample templates is attached.

be open to all the NCs.

Lydia Grant, BONC commissioner spoke about needing the support of the Alliances and all seven of the BONC members to get certain issues passed. It seems that when the City draws up a lease agreement and charges a non-profit (or an applicant) the total of \$1.00 per year, then that the money is never collected and that entity should be evicted for non-payment.

Len Shaffer added that if there is no space in city property, (or other meeting space available) that then according to the city attorney, the NC can hold meetings outside the boundaries of the Council.

The meeting was adjourned approximately 12:30pm.

Respectfully submitted by

SARAH RAMSAWACK, Interim Secretary

Member of

NORTH HOLLYWOOD NORTH EAST NEIGHBORHOOD COUNCIL since 2007

LAND USE Committee Chair

#818-765-2202

Attachments:

Draft Graph of Current and Proposed DWP Water rates

California Tax Data—Statement on Proposition 218

YARD Sign Program with costs

Online Voting Guide and Tools