

ECHO PARK NEIGHBORHOOD COUNCIL
BOARD OF GOVERNOR'S MEETING

Minutes

Tuesday, March 26, 2019,
7:00 P.M.

Echo Park United Methodist Church
1226 North Alvarado Street
Los Angeles, CA 90026

1. Administrative items

a. Call to Order

The meeting began at 7:12pm with 15 Board members present. Sachin Medhekar, Chief Information Officer, is chair.

b. Roll Call

Attending Board Members:

Devin McCutchen, Secretary
Sachin Medhekar, Chief Information Officer
Michael Galano, Treasurer
Paul Bowers
Tyan Schesser
Mo Najand
Lauren Buisson
Cheryl Ortega
Hsing I Bird
Kevin Brennan
Jim Brown (arrived late)
Pascal De Maria
Joselyn Geaga-Rosenthal (left early)
Luiza Padilla-Mavropoulos
Tad Yenawine
Darcy Harris

Non-Attending Board Members:

Mike Jolly
Bill Shapiro
Connie Acosta
Thomas DeVoss

c. Adoption of minutes

Tad Yenawine made the motion. Joselyn Geaga-Rosenthal seconded the motion.

VOTE
13-0-2
PASSED

Yes Votes:

Tad Yenawine
Darcy Harris
Devin McCutchen
Sachin Medhekar
Michael Galano
Tyan Schesser
Mo Najand
Cheryl Ortega
Hsing I Bird
Kevin Brennan
Pascal De Maria
Joselyn Geaga-Rosenthal
Luiza Padilla-Mavropoulos

No Votes:

None

Abstentions:

Lauren Buisson
Paul Bowers

2. Community/Government reports:

a. Government agencies and officers

Julien Antelin, Neighborhood Council Advocates, Department of Neighborhood Empowerment (DONE), Julien.Antelin@lacity.org, (213) 978-1551, www.EmpowerLA.org:

He mentioned the EmpowerLA awards event at City Hall on Friday night. Please RSVP as soon as possible if you'd like to attend.

He said that the Homelessness Resource Fair at Grand Park event gathering resource providers for the homeless has been rescheduled to April 20 and will happen from 9am to 1pm.

He discussed Planning 101, a course on planning and land use issues. The Department of City Planning and the Department of Neighborhood

Empowerment (DONE) will host the series. It begins May 2 at 6:30pm at Los Angeles City College. The second class will be held at a different location on May 13.

Tad Yenawine asked Darcy Harris is this what you wanted to get into the bylaws? Harris said we strongly encourage new Board members to attend trainings. Julien Antelin said everyone should attend. He added that the transition after your elections will be discussed later tonight.

Separately, he said that now you can report improper parking via the City's 311 app. You can also do this via telephone or their website.

c. Treasurer Report

Treasurer Michael Galano said we have about half of our budget remaining. Lauren Buisson asked is the MER up to date? Galano said we will vote on that tonight.

d. Other Committee Chair and liaison reports

Homelessness Committee: Mo Najand spoke about the SELAH homeless action forum. The SELAH Neighborhood Homeless Coalition serves Silver Lake, Echo Park, Los Feliz, Atwater Village, East Hollywood, Glassell Park and Cypress Park.) The church will provide a room during the daytime. We have activities on showers. We spoke to shower people. We want the church to allow them to park here. Thomas DeVoss has looked into purchasing showers for about \$5,000.

Schools, Libraries and Community Organizations Committee: Cheryl Ortega said we are making contact with 7 schools in our area. We want to encourage them to apply for NPGs (Neighborhood Purposes Grants). We will begin an engagement with parents.

Mo Najand added that there is a resource event at the library every 3rd Thursday of the month. We bring in services for the homeless. We have provided \$5,800 in funding for this. We are writing articles to advertise this.

Public Works, Public Safety Committee: Joselyn Geaga-Rosenthal said the presentation will be deferred from tonight's agenda about climate change. We were to present a motion to fund the Lotus Festival and save half of the waste but this has not been done correctly. So, it will be postponed to next month. I'm heartbroken.

Darcy Harris commented that committee chairs will remain until after the new Board is seated. Also, non-Board members can be chairs so Joselyn Geaga-Rosenthal can continue her work.

Planning and Land Use Committee (PLUC): Darcy Harris said that on April 9, the Committee will consider projects that include a CUP (Conditional Use Permit) for a coffee and wine bar on Sunset, as well as two apartment buildings on Alvarado:

Planning and Policy Committee: Darcy Harris said that the next meeting will be Tuesday at 6pm.

Homeless Committee: Darcy Harris said that there is a glitch on the agenda regarding \$5,000. Hopefully, it will come to the next meeting. It was for shower trailers. If every school brings an NPG application next month that will be \$5,600.

Treasurer Michael Galano said we have \$29,000 in our bank account. We have outstandings. So, there is between \$10,000 and \$15,000 of money to use. Sachin Medhekar said there is about \$3,000 to \$4,000 for elections that has not been spent. Galano said that the final spending deadline for the fiscal year ending in June is June 10.

Secretary Devin McCutchen said that I've been behind about letters and CIS' (Community Impact Statements) for the past two months. Now Sachin Medhekar and I have a pretty good handle on it. I apologize to the Board.

3. Public Comment on Non-Agenda Items

Courtney Ross, a Community Relations Manager:

He said he wants to do a full presentation soon. The City's 311 app is now live and active. We've tested it. Please use the app and send photos. We're moving into a year-long pilot program. We want to be an internal advocate for community needs. She works with all neighborhood councils.

Chris Ellington:

The City is no longer taking parking lots for shelter. Now they are taking parking lots to build low income housing. People on the Board called me a fool for wanting to protect space for kids. What do you guys think? That's less acceptable to me than taking the space for the homeless. Sachin Medhekar said the public comment period can't be for discussion.

A Man:

He reminded the Board that, in his opinion, there are four categories of the homeless: the hobo; the druggies and the mentally ill; people in economic peril

who don't know how to be homeless; and, the elderly and crippled. You can't put them all in the same pile.

Luiza Padilla-Mavropoulos:

She began to speak but was interrupted by Julien Antelin who warned that Board members can't make public comment.

4. Administrative items

Discussion and/or possible action on the following:

- a. Organizing board members to create introductory materials for newly elected/appointed board members to help those new members acclimate to and understand the workings of the board faster.

Sachin Medhekar said that he wants to create guidelines for new Board members to explain how things work.

Tad Yenawine said that former Board member Ida Tallala has been a big fan of a handbook. We should use the first new Board meeting as an opportunity, an orientation of the bylaws. The Brown Act discussion can be a part of that. If we can take Cliff notes on that meeting, that can be the basis for a pamphlet. Darcy Harris urged to add standing rules. Read the bylaws and standing rules before your first meeting, she suggested.

Lauren Buisson said we want to raise the roll. We want training done so people can vote. She wants to do a retreat, perhaps after the Lotus Festival. I found that really helpful.

Devin McCutchen expressed concern. What concrete things will happen before the next Board meeting? Do we need people to commit to this? Sachin Medhekar responded that this is on the agenda. Table this. Harris said that once the Board is certified, DONE sends an information email with training. Antelin said we will send documents about the neighborhood council system and the role of Board members.

Lauren Buisson likes the idea of a welcome page. Ask them to get a separate email. That can be done before they come to their first meeting. That can help set a tone of welcome going forward.

5. PLUC

Discussion and possible action on the following:

- a. [PLUC 5-0] Letter of partial support for proposed remodel of existing single-family dwelling at 2107 Park Drive, Los Angeles, CA 90026, in R1-1VL Zone,

Hillside Area. Case No. ZA-2018-2961- ZAA-ZAD. Recommendation to support requests for ZAD to allow additional height for 3rd story (39 ft 2 inches), 3 walls each within front and side yard setbacks; ZAD to allow 10 new and existing retaining walls; ZAA for front yard setback of 0 ft; side yard setbacks of 3 ft 3.5 inches; 5 ft 4 inches. Opposition to request for ZAA allowing 3981 square feet of residential floor area in lieu of the maximum 3,622 square feet of residential floor area.

Harris explained that this project is the remodel of an existing single family house. The project came to us in November. We asked them to redo their plans. They addressed the majority of our issues. The Committee had voted 5-0-0 to partially support the project.

(Note: Jim Brown arrived about 7:40pm.)

Harris made the motion with the amendment that the very last clause on first page be stricken. Let them figure out how to comply with square footage. Luiza Padilla-Mavropoulus seconded.

Paul Bowers said I attended meeting and I'm a neighbor of the applicant. This is partial support. This is something that some of us may not have known was as an option. Go to PLUC training to feel like you know what you're voting on. This will allow the Board to feel more empowered. A house on Park Drive is asking for more square footage. We had an architect on PLUC make suggestions to mitigate issues but applicant didn't take them.

Tad Yenawine said this isn't necessarily a new idea or third way. Saying no gets ignored by city. Finding a way to say yes while getting our concerns heard is a great way to contribute.

VOTE
16-0-0
PASSED

Yes Votes:

Devin McCutchen
Sachin Medhekar
Michael Galano
Paul Bowers
Tyan Schesser
Mo Najand
Lauren Buisson
Cheryl Ortega
Hsing I Bird
Kevin Brennan

Jim Brown
Pascal De Maria
Joselyn Geaga-Rosenthal
Luiza Padilla-Mavropoulos
Tad Yenawine
Darcy Harris

No Votes:
None

Abstentions:
None

6. Budget and Finance Items

Discussion and possible action on the following:

a. Approval of MERs from February '19 and March '19

Yenawine made the motion. Galano seconded.

Galano discussed the January and February MERs (Monthly Expense Reports). In January there were \$1200 in expenses. In Yenawine noted that March is not included. This is for January and February, he said.

Galano said that the February MER is about \$3,800, including several months of rent. We also paid a grant to the Edendale library friends.

Julien Antelin asked has the December MER been approved by the board? It's not on the dashboard.

Yenawine suggested to put the November, December and March MERs on the agenda for next month as a precaution.

VOTE for January and February MERs

16-0-0

PASSED

Yes Votes:

Devin McCutchen
Sachin Medhekar
Michael Galano
Paul Bowers
Tyan Schesser
Mo Najand
Lauren Buisson
Cheryl Ortega

Hsing I Bird
Kevin Brennan
Jim Brown
Pascal De Maria
Joselyn Geaga-Rosenthal
Luiza Padilla-Mavropoulos
Tad Yenawine
Darcy Harris

No Votes:
None

Abstentions:
None

7. Outreach and Elections

Discussion and possible action on the following:

a. Request to allocate up to \$1,500 to rent block party venue space

Kevin Brennan said we are seeking a location for a block party. However, the library needs a permit. We are waiting to hear from the church. It's coming down to the wire. There is also a matter of insurance. Any vendor or entertainer needs to have a \$1 million plan on file with the City. However, food vendors do have their insurance on file with city. Baby Blues will be involved. Everyone who votes will get a ticket which can be exchanged for food at Baby Blues.

The champagne room is available for \$1,500 at the Taix restaurant. Sachin Medhekar said that renting space is a new expense. On April 6, the church will have an event.

Kevin Brennan made the motion. Mo Najand seconded.

Chris Ellington said it's about the election. What are the rules? Antelin referred him to the Elections Handbook on the City website. There is a 100 foot range around the entrance to the polling station where electioneering is not permitted. Buisson asked who monitors that space? Antelin said the City Clerk monitors the polling place. They are in charge.

Luiza Padilla-Mavropoulos noted that if you advertise election on your t-shirt, you will be asked to hide it.

VOTE
16-0-0
PASSED

Yes Votes:

Devin McCutchen
Sachin Medhekar
Michael Galano
Paul Bowers
Tyan Schesser
Mo Najand
Lauren Buisson
Cheryl Ortega
Hsing I Bird
Kevin Brennan
Jim Brown
Pascal De Maria
Joselyn Geaga-Rosenthal
Luiza Padilla-Mavropoulos
Tad Yenawine
Darcy Harris

No Votes:

None

Abstentions:

None

- b. Request to authorize Outreach Chair or his designee to submit application for EPNC booth and/or Dragon Boat Race at Lotus Festival (July 13-14) up to \$200.

Harris explained that \$100 is for a booth and \$200 for the dragon boat race.

Harris made the motion for up to \$200. Geaga-Rosenthal seconded.

A Man noted that last year lots of people who'd paid for spots at the Lotus Festival did not show up. Their booths were empty. A Woman urged to please make sure your booth is not clustered in the non-profit section. Chris Ellington said he'd be happy to work at the booth to get people to come to meetings. Sachin Medhekar encouraged everyone to attend the next Outreach Committee meeting.

A Man commented about powering up. It wouldn't cost the City much to run chords. Harris said this budget item has always been a nonprofit. The non-profit fee is \$100. If we move, the cost could be higher. Padilla-Mavropoulos said that last year our booth was next to Council Member

Mitch O'Ferrell's booth. Our information needs to be near the politicians' booth.

Devin McCutchen said we should also consider authorizing additional money for t-shirts. There was high demand. A Man suggested offering beer, wine and sushi.

VOTE
16-0-0
PASSED

Yes Votes:

Devin McCutchen
Sachin Medhekar
Michael Galano
Paul Bowers
Tyan Schesser
Mo Najand
Lauren Buisson
Cheryl Ortega
Hsing I Bird
Kevin Brennan
Jim Brown
Pascal De Maria
Joselyn Geaga-Rosenthal
Luiza Padilla-Mavropoulos
Tad Yenawine
Darcy Harris

No Votes:

None

Abstentions:

None

8. Bylaws/Standing Rules

Nothing.

9. SLCO

Discussion and possible action on the following:

- a. [No recommendation] NPG application for up to \$3,000 for Homies Unidos

Cheryl Ortega said one of our applicants is here. The other is due to arrive soon.

a. Homies Unidos

Yenawine said this is about the Central American youth conference. We've supported this in the past. The group is very effective.

A Representative for Homies Unidos said this is the fourth year that we welcome immigrant youth in Central America fleeing violence. We take kids from the area and neighboring high schools. We want to continue those efforts. I invite you all to have a booth at the conference at Los Angeles Trade Technical College. These are not Dreamers or DACA kids. These kids are in survival mode. They are dropping out of school.

One of the Homies Unidos youth, Raul Lopez from El Salvador, said that he came to the US as an unaccompanied minor. He now works for Homies Unidos. He thanked everyone for helping the organization. There was applause.

Yenawine made the motion. Harris seconded.

Tyan Schesser said I support it.

Harris asked has anyone answered this on our NPG guidelines? It's too high for our guidelines. I support this but this is not local to Echo Park. We should contribute. She wants to amend the motion to \$2,000.

Padilla-Mavropoulos said youth from Echo Park are being served by this. Temple Beaudry kids go there. Our youth is our future. I'm pissed that people come here for help and we don't support them. Let's put our money where our mouth is. She expressed concern about the \$800 cap.

Yenawine said that he is totally convinced that all questions are answered in the affirmative on the application. What is your total budget? The Representative said that \$37,000 includes food. We provide tents (the venue is over \$5,000) This is the only neighborhood council supporting us this time. Others are going through transition. They did apply to other neighborhood councils but there has been little response. We didn't have the time to nurture relationships with them.

Yenawine asked if we lower the amount, how would that affect the event? The Representative said we need more than that. We're reaching out, trying to get sponsors, selling booths. We hope you will give us that amount.

Geaga-Rosenthal urged that in serving food, don't use single use plastics.

Cheryl Ortega said I want to support at the current amount. When you look at issues of Central Americans coming and how we can help, this is important. Mo Najand said the NPG guideline is \$800. I don't see this being a legacy project for Echo Park. This amount is very high.

Lauren Buisson said I represent District 5. There are lots of Central American youth there. We've made a commitment to support things in our district. If you'd come with information about how this project serves Echo Park, I'd be more supportive. The ask is too high. The project is worthy.

McCutchen asked how much do we have and how much can rollover and how long can we spend. Yenawine said we have about \$13,000 to spend.

Paul Bowers said that during candidate forum we said we really need to focus on outreach. It makes sense to have a good discussion about this one-time event and how much to allocate for a one-day event. I appreciate Yenawine's question about the percentage of budget as we think about NPGs. I support further discussion about a reduction in the amount.

Buisson said requests were made to other neighborhood councils. If this is going to be annual, we look forward to working with you to get more pan neighborhood council support. I can make that commitment. This is something that we need.

Kevin Brennan asked do we have to vote tonight? McCutchen said we want to make sure that we have zero dollars in our account at fiscal year-end. Spend everything that we have.

Joelle, a representative of the branch library, said that at the previous meeting, we're in an awkward position regarding the \$800 cap. If there's a cap and policy, you must stick to it. You can't be arbitrary about this. A Woman said we have brought over 60 kids from the neighborhood to this event every year.

Mo Najand made a motion to amend the motion to \$800. Buisson seconded.

Chris Ellington commented that consistency is good. Padilla-Mavropoulos decried the lack of flexibility. When you have a proven program does that not make any difference? Ortega said the amount asked for should also consider the size of the event. There should be proportionality.

Yenawine said it's not a cap, it's a guideline. We have funded at higher levels in the past. He's happy to fund at any level. It is good to stick to guidelines. However, proportionality can be a factor.

Galano said I really appreciate this organization and the work that they do. I want to support them throughout year. Maybe support them with \$800 every quarter or six months? He's comfortable allocating \$1600 for this event.

Bowers said this is a good discussion. To reassure the public, with a short timeline, it's appropriate to fund at \$800. It's in our guidelines.

Padilla-Mavropoulos commented that with the things happening to our youth today, to fund at \$800 is sad. We have the opportunity to do something better. Anytime it comes to our kids, we always talk big but when it comes to money we give the bare amount.

(Note: Joselyn Geaga-Rosenthal has left the meeting.)

VOTE
5-8-2
FAILED

Yes Votes:

Paul Bowers
Mo Najand
Lauren Buisson
Pascal De Maria
Darcy Harris

No Votes:

Cheryl Ortega
Jim Brown
Tyan Schesser
Devin McCutchen
Michael Galano
Sachin Medhekar
Hsing I Bird
Kevin Brennan

Abstentions:

Tad Yenawine
Luiza Padilla-Mavropoulos

Galano made a motion to amend to \$1600. Jim Brown seconded. Yenawine warned that we're limited to two amendments by law. Ortega asked if the \$1,600 amendment fails, it's \$3,000? Medhekar said yes.

VOTE for \$1,600 amendment

14-0-1

PASSED

Yes Votes:

Devin McCutchen
Sachin Medhekar
Michael Galano
Paul Bowers
Mo Najand
Lauren Buisson
Cheryl Ortega
Hsing I Bird
Kevin Brennan
Jim Brown
Pascal De Maria
Luiza Padilla-Mavropoulos
Tad Yenawine
Darcy Harris

No Votes:

None

Abstentions:

Tyan Schesser

There was confusion about the vote so they voted again. Bowers noted that a vote for \$3,000 could also fail, leaving the organization with no funding from the neighborhood council.

VOTE for amendment to \$1,600 (Second vote)

11-0-4

PASSED

Yes Votes:

Devin McCutchen
Sachin Medhekar
Michael Galano
Paul Bowers
Mo Najand
Lauren Buisson
Kevin Brennan

Jim Brown
Pascal De Maria
Tad Yenawine
Darcy Harris

No Votes:
None

Abstentions:
Tyan Schesser
Hsing I Bird
Luiza Padilla-Mavropoulos
Cheryl Ortega

**VOTE for amended motion of \$1,600
15-0-0
PASSED**

Yes Votes:
Devin McCutchen
Sachin Medhekar
Michael Galano
Paul Bowers
Tyan Schesser
Mo Najand
Lauren Buisson
Cheryl Ortega
Hsing I Bird
Kevin Brennan
Jim Brown
Pascal De Maria
Luiza Padilla-Mavropoulos
Tad Yenawine
Darcy Harris

No Votes:
None

Abstentions:
None

b. [Supported] NPG application for up to \$800 to support the Mayan Women's Project in Echo Park.

Cheryl Ortega explained the Mayan women's project. A group of Guatemalan high school girls will have a photographic exhibit. Some of them are going to Guatemala in a few weeks.

Carla, the Representative, said that she was born and raised in this neighborhood. She will show a video about the inspirational program. This is the first such program in her 25 years as a licensed social worker.

All the photos in the video are of girls from John Marshall High School. The project is in Lincoln heights. It's open to all LA girls who identify as Mayan. Many girls are conflicted. Some wanted to say they were American or Mexican. Many of them didn't have their traditional cortes.

Ortega said that when they came to do their presentation, her idea is also to do an exhibit here in Echo Park, maybe at the library or another public space? Carla said it would be a celebration of this culture and community.

Buisson noted that the amount on the agenda and the amount on the application are different. Sachin Medhekar said the amount on the agenda is correct.

Najand asked how much does this cover? Carla said not much. There are five women travelling to Guatemala. They also went to the Boyle Heights Neighborhood Council. They are trying to raise the \$12,000 budget. Each girl was to raise \$200. They are seeking out different organizations for funding.

Carla said that she is a clinician at John Marshall High School. We are trying to figure out how to prevent suicides. I made a flier with my daughter and we recruited young girls. Many of them didn't want to identify as being Guatemalan.

Yenawine said there are two components here. I'd like to support this at a higher level. He urged them to reapply. Galano said there is some paperwork that needs editing. He wants to support the project at \$100 per girl.

Harris asked have you approached the Los Feliz Neighborhood Council? Carla replied I don't have a relationship with them. Padilla-Mavropoulos said thank you. Culture is so important. She said that she was punished for speaking Spanish and for being brown when she was young. I carry those injustices with me to this day. What this lady is doing, I wish someone had done a long time ago.

Ortega made the motion. Yenawine seconded.

Chris Ellington said that consistency is good.

Luiza Padilla-Mavropoulos said that she'd like to make an amendment but know that she can't ask for a higher budget than what's on the agenda. Medhekar encouraged them to reapply for additional funds for the second part of the project.

VOTE
15-0-0
PASSED

Yes Votes:

Devin McCutchen
Sachin Medhekar
Michael Galano
Paul Bowers
Tyan Schesser
Mo Najand
Lauren Buisson
Cheryl Ortega
Hsing I Bird
Kevin Brennan
Jim Brown
Pascal De Maria
Luiza Padilla-Mavropoulos
Tad Yenawine
Darcy Harris

No Votes:

None

Abstentions:

None

Someone noted that Carla is related to Jackie Goldberg, who is a School Board candidate.

10. Homelessness & Housing Committee

Discussion and possible action on the following:

a. Approval of letter of support for Los Feliz Supportive Housing

Najand said this is a bridge housing letter. The bridge housing would be on Riverside Drive, near the gas station and the fountain. Los Feliz Neighborhood Council voted unanimously for it and is seeking our

support. This was approved in Committee. This is going to Council Member David Ryu for approval.

Yenawine made the motion. Kevin Brennan seconded.

Harris asked where is this? Najand said south of Riverside by the Friendship Auditorium. It's bridge housing.

Kevin Brennan asked why is this a letter not a CIS? Najand replied that's what they asked for.

VOTE
15-0-0
PASSED

Yes Votes:

Devin McCutchen
Sachin Medhekar
Michael Galano
Paul Bowers
Tyan Schesser
Mo Najand
Lauren Buisson
Cheryl Ortega
Hsing I Bird
Kevin Brennan
Jim Brown
Pascal De Maria
Luiza Padilla-Mavropoulos
Tad Yenawine
Darcy Harris

No Votes:

None

Abstentions:

None

b. Approval of Letter of Commendation to businesses supporting the Source

Najand said it's a way to get outreach and to thank people. There's no cost. Mazda, the Mohawk Bend restaurant, Starbucks, the New California Barbershop and other businesses are supporting this. Joelle said that it would help to get letters of recommendation, to show that it's a civic group activity, not just us with our hat in hand.

Medhekar said this is a great event. McCutchen noted that we've had issues in the past. Sending emails is easy. We want to send an in-person letter. We want the Committee to help make that happen.

Harris said if you have email addresses, that is easiest. If not, physically deliver them. Yenawine said this has been a conversation for several years. This is a really relevant thing to discuss.

Buisson asked who does this letter go to? Businesses only? Najand explained that this is just a letter to the businesses. The library can use it for their promotions.

VOTE
15-0-0
PASSED

Yes Votes:

Devin McCutchen
Sachin Medhekar
Michael Galano
Paul Bowers
Tyan Schesser
Mo Najand
Lauren Buisson
Cheryl Ortega
Hsing I Bird
Kevin Brennan
Jim Brown
Pascal De Maria
Luiza Padilla-Mavropoulos
Tad Yenawine
Darcy Harris

No Votes:

None

Abstentions:

None

11. Public Safety, Sustainability

Discussion and possible action on the following:

- a. Allocate up to \$15,000 towards achieving 50% diversion of trash for Lotus Festival 2019

This is a motion to postpone. DONE recommended that.

VOTE to postpone
15-0-0
PASSED

Yes Votes:

Devin McCutchen
Sachin Medhekar
Michael Galano
Paul Bowers
Tyan Schesser
Mo Najand
Lauren Buisson
Cheryl Ortega
Hsing I Bird
Kevin Brennan
Jim Brown
Pascal De Maria
Luiza Padilla-Mavropoulos
Tad Yenawine
Darcy Harris

No Votes:

None

Abstentions:

None

b. Adoption of the Mobility Bill of Rights Declaration

Bowers mentioned a presentation by DONE representative Steven Bax. We want the Board to support this Mobility Bill of Rights. We are asking for approval.

Galano made the motion. Harris seconded.

Harris asked what does this mean? Bowers said we'll send it to City for adoption. Other neighborhood councils have done so.

VOTE
15-0-0
PASSED

Yes Votes:

Devin McCutchen
Sachin Medhekar

Michael Galano
Paul Bowers
Tyan Schesser
Mo Najand
Lauren Buisson
Cheryl Ortega
Hsing I Bird
Kevin Brennan
Jim Brown
Pascal De Maria
Luiza Padilla-Mavropoulos
Tad Yenawine
Darcy Harris

No Votes:

None

Abstentions:

None

12. Planning Policy Committee

Harris said the first meeting with the Silver Lake and Elysian Valley Neighborhood Councils will be in mid-May. We need outreach to put the word out.

13. Dodgers Ad Hoc

Richard Courtney is not here.

14. Board-wide

a. Board retrospective on past term and upcoming transition to new term

Hsing I Bird advised to be compassionate and approach everything with love. Regardless of your skills and experiences she said that everyone has something to offer.

Jim Brown said that he is enthusiastic about work of the Homeless Committee. He is not seeking re-election. He hopes that Echo Park does something to reverse the extreme gentrification process.

Tyan Schesser commented that the person facilitating the meeting will need skills to be quick and understanding rules and procedures and how to interact. However, I hope that person facilitating meeting would be also

try to be mindful of their leadership and how impactful their comments may be and not just focused on procedure.

Regarding a manual, she said we should also have a buddy system or mentorship or matching system with new people and veterans. It's hard to get up to speed quickly. She recommends that during retreat, a third party should be facilitator, not the chair.

She's noticed that what often happens during meetings we're trying to remember and teach process in addition to voting on items. I've heard language that can be discriminatory. There are different learning styles. People get rushed while they are still processing information. She wants to raise awareness about that.

Pascal de Maria said that a mentorship program would be helpful, someone to explain how things work. I would love for Darcy Harris to be my buddy. A handbook or manual that doesn't require sitting in front of a computer reading the bylaws, where you can be easily distracted. Maybe a 2-3 hour educational thing would be useful. He wants something more personal. He would be willing to help with that.

Regarding the candidate fora, he said they were not a success, though tonight's forum was successful with lots of community participation. There were only three people in attendance at the previous forum who were not candidates. There are people running for this Board who can't make time to come to the fora. It's a bummer that people who are running don't show up. 15 candidates – some didn't attend tonight's forum. That's a slap in the face.

McCutchen said I didn't attend any candidate fora. My wife and I are leaving Los Angeles. I'd sent an email to the Board about this. It's too late to remove my candidacy but I encourage voters to vote for others.

What we are doing here is a cross section of lots of things that aren't very pleasant. This is a volunteer organization. Most of them don't have fun. Community meetings aren't usually fun. There's a huge incentive for all of this to fail, for people to get burned out and leave, that's the biggest Achilles Heel, burnout.

This could be completely awesome. Community building among ourselves is important. We usually don't have a full Executive Committee. The way things work in our bylaws is well thought out.

We need a full board and full committees. The Schools and Libraries Committee can't make quorum. I really like the idea about a paid staff. This all volunteer run group is held to the same legal consideration as

every other civic body. Planning Commission members don't have to tape agendas at library doors.

I learned so much from serving all of you. I believe that what's missing the most is space for interpersonal joy between Board members and also the community. We need a space where we can just look each other in the eye for conversation, to create friendship.

Harris said she wants to thank everyone who has served for years. Everyone has great intentions. She also thanked others who had been Board members like Andy Griggs. She thanked Yenawine for running meetings. He's changed the culture. This is the first time in years that this Board is functioning.

The mentorship idea is really good one. When you come in fresh, you're excited. Before you say, I don't like this and I want to change it, be informed. You may be disrespecting the work that people have done.

Administrative stuff is a huge hang-up. You get burnout. People take on too much and get discouraged. Give everyone a little task and ask them to get others involved. Many hands make light work. We made a lot of strides towards our goals. We can always do better.

Sachin Medhekar said that Connie Acosta isn't here. She was the first person to invite me to a PLUC meeting. He thanked Devin McCutchen and Michael Galano for making the Executive Committee happen. This is a volunteer thing. People show up and spend hours doing things. There is a lot of real community spirit here. It's a great organization.

Luiza Padilla-Mavropoulos said I'm the oldest member here as a founding member. We met at the Hollywood City Hall back then, she recalled. We were trying to sit down and write bylaws. I wasn't crazy about this. The bylaws were written by another group that opposed what neighborhood councils do. Our Echo Park Improvement Association is bigoted.

She mentioned the two previous Board Presidents, Ari Bessendorf and Kwasi Nkrumah. We were certified in 2002. I'm still here. The work can be done. The problem is outside issues coming in and throwing rocks. My husband died two months ago. I want to continue with committees. For Outreach, there must be a way for this neighborhood council to heal old wounds when people were rejected by prior neighborhood council Boards.

Our minority communities were done a lot of harm in the early years of this neighborhood council. People have not forgotten that. We must heal memories of that past. Hurts are not being addressed. We haven't

stopped gentrification. Most people are gone. I hope that the new people who come in remember that they were elected to help people in the street. You represent the people out there. I've been called a crazy bitch. I take it proudly. There was applause.

Tad Yenawine said that 16-17 years ago this Council was formed. My hats off to you Luiza Padilla-Mavropoulos. I took this on as my baby. I saw that there were lots of structural issues that could be changed to encourage better behavior.

He noted that he created the Dodgers Committee. The community can solve its own problems. We just need to facilitate that conversation and know what's going on. That's what Yenawine said that he learned from others.

When 40 people are here yelling, we have to be able to filter that out to represent the entire community. Most of you haven't been here for more than 16 months. When you're not here for very long, you must try to get a perspective on why rules are as they are. I got upset a few meetings ago when people tried to throw out rules.

People must show up. To get people to come back to the neighborhood council we can't pull a Kavanaugh or a Trump, we must be consistent. If rules are messed up, let's fix them. If you want to be mentors, try to fit in.

One thing that sets this board apart, we have few incumbents run for elections. We've done a lot of healing in a short amount of time. This organization has to be empirical and transparent and not make exceptions.

Kevin Brennan said that he's disappointed that we didn't put on a show in a barn, in response to a comment from Yenawine. He offered shout out's to DONE representative Julien Antelin, to the note-taker, and to Sachin Medhekar for running the meetings.

Cheryl Ortega said I'm proud to be among this group of people. This is my first neighborhood council group. The three preceding councils were a mix of corruption and ineptitude. There were racist and offensive comments. This is civil group now. Roberts Rules of order keep this going civilly. She thanked Yenawine and Harris for writing the rules.

She belongs to many organizations that are stricter around rules. The two issues that make me most proud: we were meeting at a church someplace about gang injunction. It was very contentious, very ugly. We opposed the injunction.

She is also proud of a meeting about a charter school corporation that wanted to take over a building. The issue was that when the charter revoked they could turn building into luxury condos. That was contentious, she recalled. That's what a Council does. She appreciates the new board members. It's your time, she said.

Mo Najand said I came twice before in past years. I left within an hour each time. He admires Padilla-Mavropoulos' endurance. He's enjoyed being here. It's been a good year.

Lauren Buisson said I started out as a member of the audience and then joined a committee. I come from unions and have organizing experience. My ethos is the power of the vote. Outreach is key. The business of this board is to model the uniting of disparate communities into one. That's the lion's share of what we can do. Every election is a reset. Everything is on the table when a new board comes in. It's about consensus building. We must strive for consensus. She's proud to have worked with everyone.

Paul Bowers said that Boards that have the opportunity to socialize outside of meetings are more effective. He said that he is frustrated that we don't have more opportunity to hang out. He said that he's impressed by and grateful for this Board. A committee that supports chairs would help with burnout in regard to creating agendas. We have to get the work of the Board to happen in Committee. Board meetings would be shorter.

He said that he is hopeful. He's flooded with happy hormones hearing what everyone is saying tonight. Maybe have these retrospectives quarterly?

Padilla-Mavropoulos said this has been the best Board that we've had in 15 years.

Julien Antelin reminded the audience that elections are soon. Until the results official, you are still Board members. At the first meeting of the new Board, there won't be officers. We will agree with setting up the agenda. First we must set up officers. We have a set of items for agenda. Trainings are changing but it will be the same content.

Buisson asked who put this retrospective on the agenda? This was kind of genius. It's a really respectful collective way of airing things. Should we give ourselves a round of applause? There was applause.

15. Other Administrative items

Discussion and/or possible action on the following:

- a. Selection of open BOG officer positions and Liaisons

Harris said you're still committee chairs until we appoint new chairs. That may not happen by April. Don't quit. Bowers suggested that for committee formation, maybe reform the committees? He wants a Mobility Committee.

Ortega noted that some other neighborhood councils have different committee names but do the same work. It may be good to explore that. Sachin Medhekar said that he welcomes people to participate in Executive Committee meetings.

Ortega mentioned the issue of translations for meetings. Antelin announced that the City Council has approved funds for DONE to pay for translation. There was applause. The goal is to pay for translation services during meetings. The City Clerk will soon establish that mechanism. Joelle asked what about translation for the minutes? Antelin said that's a good question. One neighborhood council has agendas in English and Spanish but minutes only in Spanish. I will ask about that.

Yenawine mentioned one concept. PLUC has plenty to do. Schools and Libraries Committee can be a production. Some neighborhood councils have an uber committee to hear lots of issues. That might be effective to have a dynamic committee that can handle lots of issues. Silver Lake had a model at some point that actually worked. There are different models. Luiza Padilla-Mavropoulos said that it's important to follow through on committees, particularly for funding.

b. Formation of new committees

Paul Bowers nominated Kevin Brennan as Outreach Committee Co-Chair.

VOTE for Kevin Brennan as Outreach Committee Co-Chair
Unanimous
PASSED

Yes Votes:

Devin McCutchen
Sachin Medhekar
Michael Galano
Paul Bowers
Tyan Schesser
Mo Najand
Lauren Buisson
Cheryl Ortega
Hsing I Bird
Kevin Brennan

Jim Brown
Pascal De Maria
Joselyn Geaga-Rosenthal
Luiza Padilla-Mavropoulos
Tad Yenawine
Darcy Harris

No Votes:
None

Abstentions:
None

16. Announcements.

Harris said there is a proposed a mural on the side of the Shoe Palace, a mural of Jackie Robinson. There will be a meeting about this on April 5 at 6pm at the Shoe Palace.

Yenawine commented about Chris Ellington. For the record, if you take a position based on total fabrication, that's foolish. It's not a service to the community. Getting onto the record for a housing project at El Centro, that will change that organization's relationship to its public lot. That proposal hasn't changed for a long time. Half of the playground would remain untouched. The request for the project has legitimate and totally open input from El Centro about their needs and how to meet their needs at that facility or at another location.

The building proposed is not a homeless shelter. It never was. It is permanent housing. These are the facts as I know them. Don't support a narrative that's untrue.

A Woman asked about the Los Feliz Ledger? Mo Najand said that he would follow up. The Eastsider has also promised an article.

Harris offered a reminder for the election. Talk to your neighbors. Do your best to get the word out. Stakeholders must bring proof of their Echo Park connection to vote for district seats but not for at-large seats.

Buisson asked for 16 year olds and above, does using a school identification card count? Antelin replied to email your election representative about that.

McCutchen said after we adjourn, I'd like to take a group photo with us and Julien Antelin and the note-taker.

A Woman asked about the Dodgers Ad Hoc Committee. This is her first meeting ever. Sachin Medhekar explained that there is a Dodgers related committee. Yenawine added there have been two submissions from that Committee that went to the City. I can forward them to you. That Committee probably won't meet again unless there is a pressing need.

Harris said that Mike Jolly is not running again. His plane got delayed so he's not here tonight. He sends his best wishes. He'll be at the next Planning Policy Committee meeting.

17. Future Agenda Items

None

18. Adjournment

The meeting ended about 10:00pm, followed by a group photo.

After adjournment Antelin said that Teresa at the City Clerk's Office has examples of lists of documents needed to vote.