

WESTWOOD NEIGHBORHOOD COUNCIL MINUTES
SEPTEMBER 14, 2022
ZOOM MEETING ONLINE OR BY TELEPHONE

1. CALL TO ORDER

President Lisa Chapman called the meeting to order at 7:03 p.m. Board members in attendance were Connie Boukidis, Sandy Brown, Lisa Chapman, Tracey Fitzgerald, Philip Gabriel, Ann Hayman, David Lorango, , Stephen Resnick, and Paula Rogers. Members excused were Roozbeh Farahanipour, Marcello Robinson, Mark Rogo, and Laura Winikow. A quorum was present. There were approximately nine stakeholders and guests attending.

2. ANNOUNCEMENTS

There were no announcements.

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Lisa Chapman moved to table approval of the August 10, 2022 minutes, seconded by Tracey Fitzgerald, and carried unanimously.

4. COMMENTS BY PUBLIC OFFICIALS

- A. Stephen Resnick read two announcements from CD5 Field Deputy Jasmine Shamolian: Councilmember Koretz submitted a letter on Habibi Café supporting revocation of use and Westwood Gardens Park is on the list for 41.18 enforcement.
- B. U.S. Congressman Ted Lieu's representative Janet Turner gave a legislative update and reported that antisemitic flyers were distributed in Westwood, Brentwood, and Pacific Palisades. Congressman Lieu wrote a letter to the FBI requesting a formal investigation.
- C. SLO James Allen reported that robberies, aggravated assaults, and theft from motor vehicles are down year-to-date. Grand theft auto, burglaries, and thefts are up year-to-date. Two crews were burglarizing homes in the area and one suspect was arrested driving a black SUV without license plates in the 2000 block of Holmby. Thefts are mostly in Westwood Village at 7-11, Ralphs, and Target, where the homeless are stealing food and store security has a hands-off policy.
- D. State Assemblymember Isaac Bryan's representative Michelle Persoff reported that the legislative session ended on August 31st. Assemblymember Bryan will be holding a town hall on October 3rd in Culver City from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m.
- E. UCLA representative Marco Perez reported that classes start on September 22nd and student welcoming events will take place from September 18th to October 1st. UCLA is sponsoring a candidate forum for CD5 and 3rd District Supervisor candidates on September 28th at the Hammer Museum from 7 p.m. to 9 p.m. and it will also be livestreamed.
- F. Veronica de la Cruz, the neighborhood prosecutor for West L. A. for criminal offenses, introduced herself and explained what she does. She works with LAPD and UCPD prosecuting serious misdemeanors.

5. DEPARTMENT OF NEIGHBORHOOD EMPOWERMENT

DONE NEA Freddy Cupen-Ames announced open registration for the Congress of Neighborhoods on September 24th.

6. TREASURER'S REPORT

A. Motion to approve the Monthly Expenditure Report for August 2022

Stephen Resnick reported that the August MER was the same as the previous month with the exception of a \$75 charge. Stephen Resnick moved to approve the August MER, seconded by Lisa Chapman and approved unanimously.

7. GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS

There was no public comment.

8. PROPOSED CD5 DEBATE

A. Discussion and Introduction of Motion: "The WWNC joins with the Pico Neighborhood Council, along with the other Westside NCs as co-sponsor of a virtual CD5 debate between Katy Yaroslavsky and Sam Yebri on October 10, 2022 at 7 PM."

Lisa Chapman moved the above motion, seconded by Connie Boukidis and carried unanimously.

9. UCLA LIVE CANDIDATE FORUM

A. Discussion and Introduction of Motion: "The WWNC rescinds the WWNC's previous co-sponsorship of the UCLA live candidate forum scheduled for September 28th."

Lisa Chapman said that she stepped down because UCLA is using two moderators, one of whom has no moderator experience, who don't know Westwood. UCLA said that the moderators can change the questions if they want but specific questions were chosen about Westwood. During a short discussion, some board members said that though they agreed with Lisa, WWNC should participate anyway.

Lisa Chapman moved the above motion, seconded by Philip Gabriel. The motion failed by a vote of No: 5 (Connie Boukidis, Sandy Brown, Tracey Fitzgerald, Ann Hayman, Paula Rogers), Yes: 2 (Lisa Chapman, Philip Gabriel), and Abstain: 1 (Stephen Resnick).

10. DISCUSSION & INTRODUCTION OF MOTION TO SUPPORT THE WESTWOOD HOMEOWNERS ASSOCIATION IN PROVIDING A REPRESENTATIVE TO THE WESTWOOD PARK ADVISORY BOARD

Stephen Resnick moved,

"Whereas, the Westwood Homeowners Association (WHA) has been making contributions to the quality of life for Westwood residents since 1961, and

Whereas, WHA initiated improvements at Westwood Gardens Park and Westwood Park. WHA spoke with experts, and worked with the Council Office and the Recreation and Parks Department to do a sorely needed remodel of Westwood Gardens Park. Also, WHA initiated and worked with the Council Office to form a community group to create a list ("wish list") of needed maintenance and improvements at Westwood Park; and

Whereas, following Covid, the former Westwood Park director restarted the Park Advisory Board (PAB), which included a representative from the Westwood Neighborhood Council (WWNC). However, WHA was NOT provided such representation on the board; and

Whereas, WHA has the stated support of the Council Office in joining the PAB; and

Whereas, the current park director has not extended an invitation for WHA to join the PAB; and

Whereas, considering its contributions to the community and Westwood parks, it is altogether appropriate for WHA to have a representative on the PAB; and

Now, therefore, be it resolved that the Westwood Neighborhood Council supports the Westwood Homeowners Association in joining the Park Advisory Board."

Connie Boukidis seconded and the motion carried by a vote of Yes: 7, No: 0, and Abstain: 1 (Tracey Fitzgerald).

11. HOLMBY PARK

A. Discussion and Introduction of Motion: "The WWNC requests a copy of the Bylaws of the Holmby Park Advisory Board by September 30, 2022."

Sandy Brown has received no reply from HPAB President Robert Ringler on this request. It was also sent to RAP, Mayor Garcetti, and CD5. Sandy moved the above motion, seconded by Stephen Resnick, and carried unanimously.

12. DISCUSSION & INTRODUCTION OF MOTION TO SUPPORT HABIBI CAFÉ REVOCATION OF USE
Lisa Chapman moved,

"Whereas, Habibi Cafe does not have a tobacco license (for hookah), liquor license, entertainment license, retail license, and no conditional use permits; and

Whereas, Habibi Cafe has a restaurant license only; and

Whereas, there are a multitude of major violations against this establishment from LAPD, planning, and Vice; AND

Whereas, in 21 years of doing business, Habibi Cafe has never applied for any other permit other than a restaurant license; and

Whereas, the location of this establishment is only one block from a major university; and

Whereas, the owner of this establishment has made no attempt to comply with the laws and ordinances of the City of Los Angeles;

Whereas, Habibi Cafe has been a magnet for serious crime, violence, and chronic law violations in Westwood Village for more than 20 years; and

Whereas, the most serious incidents of gun violence include a fatal shooting and homicide that took place at Habibi Cafe early Christmas morning, December 25, 2005; and

Whereas, two additional incidents of dangerous gun violence took place in the summer of 2020, including a shooting on August 11, 2020, followed by a second nearly fatal shooting at 3:50 a.m. on Saturday, August 22, 2020; and

Whereas, both of these incidents of gun violence in August 2020 took place during the COVID-19 pandemic, at a time when all such businesses were ordered to be closed by the California Governor, the L.A. County Health Department, and the Mayor of Los Angeles due to the public health emergency; and

Whereas, despite these clear public health and safety orders, Habibi Café illegally operated on a nightly basis during summer 2020, as an unlicensed, unpermitted, after-hours nightclub, where alcohol was served and consumed on the premises without an ABC License and without a Conditional Use Permit, where live entertainment was provided without a Conditional Use Permit or a required Live Entertainment Permit, where tobacco was sold without a required Retail Tobacco License, and where Hookah smoking took place in connection with a restaurant in blatant violation of both State and City law; and

Whereas, most recently, on Saturday, August 20, 2022, even after the ownership of Habibi Cafe was put on notice of their multiple law violations during the Zoning Administrator nuisance abatement

hearing in May 2021, yet another incident of serious gun violence took place when two armed and masked robbers, using two guns, violently robbed two Habibi Cafe patrons at gunpoint as they left the establishment at 4:30 a.m.

Now, therefore, be it resolved that the Westwood Neighborhood Council fully supports the full revocation of the Habibi Cafe business, as stated by 5th District Councilmember Paul Koretz in his August 31, 2022 letter to the City's Planning and Land Use Management Committee supporting revocation."

Stephen Resnick seconded, and the motion carried unanimously.

13. DISCUSSION & INTRODUCTION OF MOTION IN REGARD TO A WWNC HOLIDAY EVENT TO HELP OTHERS

Sandy Brown suggested holding an event for residents of the Salvation Army building. Lisa Chapman said that the Rotary Club already does a holiday event with them, but suggested a library event. Other suggestions were the West L.A. Community Police Station, Emerson, a toy drive, or a snow day at the park. DONE NEA Freddy Cupen-Ames will look into what is permissible.

14. APPOINTMENT OF LEGAL LIAISON TO INTERACT WITH THE CITY ATTORNEY

Lisa Chapman stated that she has been doing this already, and nominated herself, seconded by Connie Boukidis. The nomination was approved by everyone except Philip Gabriel, who abstained.

15. OPEN RENTAL DIRECTOR SEAT

- A. Discussion for a replacement as Rental Residential Director.
A candidate is still being sought.

16. OPEN OWNER RESIDENTIAL AREA 4 DIRECTOR SEAT

- A. Discussion for a replacement as Owner Residential Director.
A candidate is still being sought.

17. STANDING COMMITTEE STATUS REPORTS

- A. Executive – no report
- B. Land Use & Planning – no report
- C. Outreach & Communications – no report
- D. Homeless Task Force

Lisa Chapman reported that she identified a possible housing site on Sepulveda between Wilshire and Santa Monica behind a chain link fence where there are 10 to 12 metal buildings.

- E. Budget Advocates – no report
- F. Public Safety/ Transportation & Parking – no report
- G. WRAC – Emergency Preparedness
Philip Gabriel recommended CERT training.

H. Bylaws – no report

I. WRAC – Report and Motions – no report

1. Support: Letter re: mistreatment of animals at city animal shelters.
2. Lisa Chapman moved,
"The Westwood Neighborhood Council strongly supports the sentiments, goals and requests made in the letter from Bel-Air Beverly Crest Neighborhood Council of August 10, 2022 to Mayor Garcetti and Councilmember Koretz concerning the mistreatment of animals at City Shelters."

[Read more](#)

Philip Gabriel seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

J. Park Advisory

Tracey Fitzgerald reported that the park did a sound analysis and pickleball courts were approved. Multi-use courts will be requested so they can be used for tennis and pickleball. Construction on Aidan's Place has started and is expected to be finished in December. There will not be as many climbing structures as before because they are too expensive.

18. ADJOURNMENT

President Lisa Chapman moved to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Ann Hayman, and unanimously approved at 8:54 p.m.