

WESTWOOD NEIGHBORHOOD COUNCIL MINUTES
OCTOBER 10, 2019
BELMONT VILLAGE SENIOR LIVING, 10475 WILSHIRE BLVD. LOS ANGELES, CA 90024

1. CALL TO ORDER

President Lisa Chapman called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m. Board members in attendance were Cyrus Baraghoush, Connie Boukidis, Sandy Brown, Lisa Chapman, Roozbeh Farahanipour, Tracey Fitzgerald, Philip Gabriel, Ann Hayman, Stephen Resnick, Paula Rogers, Marcello Robinson, Mark Rogo, and Laura Winikow. Members excused were David Lorango and Eloise Metcalfe. A quorum was present. There were approximately ten stakeholders and guests present.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – JULY 10, 2019

President Lisa Chapman moved to table approval of the July 2019 minutes until later in the meeting because they still needed some revision. Philip Gabriel seconded and the motion carried unanimously. No other action was taken on this item.

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – SEPTEMBER 11, 2019

Lisa Chapman moved to approve the September 11, 2019 minutes, seconded by Philip Gabriel. The minutes were approved unanimously except for Roozbeh Farahanipour, who abstained.

4. COMMENTS BY PUBLIC OFFICIALS

- A. U.S. Congressman Ted Lieu's representative Janet Turner announced a conversation with veterans to be held on November 10th from 1:30 to 3 p.m. at the West L. A. VA. Congressman Lieu will hold a roundtable on November 21st. An update on current legislation involving senior healthcare, drug pricing, and Social Security was also given.
- B. UCLA representative Marco Perez gave updates on Bruin family weekend in October, a Day of Free Science as part of UCLA's centennial celebration on November 3rd, and a ceremony for veterans on November 8th.

5. DISCUSSION WITH STEVE HOUCHIN, DEPUTY CITY ATTORNEY AND SEMEE PARK, DIRECTOR OF NEIGHBORHOOD COUNCIL OPERATIONS, TO INCLUDE A GENERAL DISCUSSION OF THE BROWN ACT AND NC'S, FOLLOWING DONE AND BONC'S RULES, AND POSSIBLE CHANGES TO THE SYSTEM

Steve Houchin gave a presentation on the Brown Act in which he said that the Brown Act is complaint-driven and requires a written complaint which there must be a response to. Specific issues involving the Brown Act were also discussed. North Westwood Neighborhood Council (NWWNC) always calls its meetings special meetings so it only needs 24 hours notice instead of the usual 72 hours. Steve Houchin said that if this is a pattern then it's a problem, and either DONE or the City Attorney's (CA) office could weigh in. The CA office works on fact-specific complaints and is advisory, can give legal opinions but can't enforce anything. It is general counsel and can't force anyone to take its advice but if the advice isn't taken the person is out of scope and could be sued. Under the Brown Act, a complaint would have to be sent to the offending legislative body, NWWNC, and a response must be issued. Another issue raised was that of "multiple item comment" at the beginning of the NC meeting so that the public can't comment on specific items when they are discussed, which is what NWWNC has started doing. Presidents can make their own rules but if it is being done to prohibit discussion it may be problematic. A Brown Act complaint or grievance could be filed if it is affecting the public's right to participate. An issue about

the grievance process was raised: that a grievance can't be filed against a person but it's an option when filing a grievance on DONE's grievance portal. DONE representative Jose Galdamez said that the new general manager has received feedback about this problem. BONC is considering new rules about civility and dispute resolution.

Board members spoke about the fact that grievances are never resolved, there is unequal treatment of NCs, and nobody oversees DONE to make sure it follows its own processes so there is a lot of frustration with this. DONE representative Jose Galdamez recommended that board members speak with the new general manager about their concerns. Semee Park did not attend the meeting.

6. DEPARTMENT OF NEIGHBORHOOD EMPOWERMENT

DONE representative Jose Galdamez reported that DONE's new general manager, Raquel Beltran, is visiting all the NCs. Jose will get confirmation that she will be attending WWNC's November 13th meeting. Updates were given on home-sharing ordinance workshops and an election feedback session. Lorenzo will respond to the grievance filed by tomorrow. Lisa Chapman will email Jose about the grievance portal issues so that the new general manager can look into them. Lisa Chapman requested that Semee Park attend the November meeting since she didn't attend tonight's meeting.

7. GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS

Westwood Community Council President Steve Sann reported that he, along with Sandy Brown and Stephen Resnick, attended a meeting on the proposed second soccer field at Westwood Park on September 18th. At the meeting there were more people opposing the field than in favor. Another meeting on the soccer field will be held on October 23rd. The Cultural Heritage Commission unanimously voted to recommend that 1043 Westwood Blvd., the former Tanino's, be designated a Historic Cultural Monument. There will be a free concert at the Westwood library on November 10th featuring the Fiato String Quartet.

8. STANDING COMMITTEE STATUS REPORTS

A. Executive – no report

B. Budget

1. Approval of Monthly Expenditures

Treasurer Laura Winikow reported that the September MER had a beginning balance of \$47,120.24 and ended with \$46,681.24 in the budget. Ann Hayman seconded and the MER was approved unanimously. Expenditures were \$132.83 for September staffing services and \$45.48 for tonight's copies. Philip Gabriel seconded the approval and the expenditures were unanimously approved. Cyrus Baraghoush, Roozbeh Farahanipour, and Marcello Robinson did not participate in the votes.

2. Motion to Approve Rollover funds in the amount of \$5,310

Treasurer Laura Winikow moved to table the vote because the amount of rollover money in the motion is not correct. Philip Gabriel seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

3. Discussion and Motion: "The WWNC approves an upgrade to the WWNC website for ADA compliance, at an initial one-time cost of \$3600 and \$10 per month"

Kevin from Media81 explained what ADA compliance on a website means. Lisa Chapman moved to table the motion until it is found necessary, seconded by Laura Winikow, and approved unanimously.

C. Land Use & Planning

1. Appointment of LUPC Members

Connie Boukidis moved, seconded by Philip Gabriel, to appoint Connie Boukidis, Ann Hayman, and Paula Rogers as committee members, along with Jerry Brown and Mary

- Chiu. The motion carried unanimously.
- D. Outreach & Communications – no report
 - E. Homeless Task Force – no report
 - F. Budget Advocates – no report
 - G. Public Safety/ Transportation & Parking
 - 1. Discussion in regard to a request for a Traffic Study at Wilshire/Veteran
There is no report because the committee hasn't met yet. Philip Gabriel will post the agenda so the committee can meet.
 - H. Bylaws – no report
 - I. WRAC
WRAC representative Roozbeh Farahanipour reported that he missed the meeting.
 - J. Park Advisory
Sandy Brown reported that the Westwood PAB hasn't met. Lisa Chapman volunteered to attend the Holmby PAB when it meets.

9. DISCUSSION & POSSIBLE MOTION AS TO WHEN NEIGHBORHOOD PURPOSE GRANTS (NPG) WILL BE PRESENTED

Lisa Chapman moved, "WWNC will hear NPGs in March 2020." Ann Hayman seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

10. DISCUSSION & MOTION IN REGARD TO COUNCILMEMBER KORETZ SUPPORT OF NO BICYCLE LANES ON WESTWOOD BOULEVARD

Sandy Brown said that because this is a problem that was already solved, she spoke with CD5 Transportation Deputy Jay Greenstein, who claimed that removing the lanes from the map was a problem with Metro. Laura Winikow moved to table the motion until the November meeting, seconded by Philip Gabriel and carried unanimously. Sandy will meet with County Supervisor Sheila Kuehl before the November meeting.

11. DISCUSSION IN REGARD TO VOLUNTEERS TO SERVE ON THE WESTWOOD PARK & HOLMBY PARK ADVISORY BOARDS (PAB)

Lisa Chapman will email Westwood Park's director and Deanne Dedmon at Recreation & Parks to get applications for the PABs. Stephen Resnick and Tracey Fitzgerald volunteered to apply for the Westwood PAB and Philip Gabriel and Laura Winikow volunteered to apply for the Holmby PAB.

12. BOARD MOTION TO AUTHORIZE A BOARD MEMBER TO PICK UP THE 2019 ELECTION RECORDS

No vote was taken on this item.

13. DISCUSSION & MOTION: "THE WWNC ACCEPTS THE SEPTEMBER 24, 2019 LETTER FROM SANDY BROWN ON THE PROPOSED 2ND SOCCER FIELD AS THE POSITION OF THE WWNC."

Sandy Brown moved the above motion, Tracey Fitzgerald seconded and the motion carried by a vote of Yes: 10, No: 1 (Philip Gabriel), and Abstain: 1 (Mark Rogo). Sandy added that she authorizes any board member to use the letter (below) to speak at any hearing on behalf of WWNC.

Sandy Brown

September 24, 2019

To: Recreation & Parks Commissioners and Rec & Parks Staff

Re: Westwood Recreation Center-Second Synthetic Soccer Field

At the meeting of the Facility Repair and Maintenance Commission Task Force on September 18, 2019 at the Algin Sutton Recreation Center, Chair Lynn Alvarez requested from staff that alternative sites be brought to the next meeting that address sites that could accommodate this synthetic field. There has been a consistent undercurrent by staff to keep the field at Westwood Park despite the myriad of issues brought to staff's attention. Who is working behind the scenes in spite of extensive community opposition to put this synthetic soccer field at Westwood Park?

Opposition to a second synthetic soccer field at Westwood Park:

- The Westwood Neighborhood Council in whose boundary the park lies, voted twice to oppose this at Westwood Park and provided two Community Impact Statements to the City.
 - Westwood Homeowners Association, also in whose district this park lies, voted unanimously to oppose this field at Westwood Park.
 - Those who play tennis vigorously opposed losing half of their tennis courts in order to accommodate the construction of this field at Westwood Park. There was NO outreach to the tennis community before discussion to destroy half of their courts.
 - Westwood Community Council voted overwhelmingly to oppose the removal of the tennis courts, the cost to the city, and supported a synthetic soccer field alternative to Westwood Park.
 - Park neighbors and users of the park also voiced strong opposition to this synthetic field at Westwood Park.
 - The soccer community clearly needs more fields. The coach of the LA Breakers did not insist that this field be built at Westwood Park.*
 - I met with and spoke to Nikki Mark who has publicly stated that she did not insist that the field be built at Westwood Park.*
 - Councilmember Koretz has also stated that he could support it elsewhere. He also claims he was not given accurate information from staff.*
- *Not opposed but would support the field elsewhere.

Yet, every time there is a meeting or roundtable, we always seem to be arguing the Westwood Park location with staff and the council office. Many people are asking why. Why this insistence?

So many other parks in this city would love to have such a facility at their park. With all of this opposition, why are we still discussing Westwood Park?

- When it will cost the city \$2.7 million dollars in order to use a \$1.2 million dollar contribution?
- When Westwood Park already has an enclosed synthetic soccer field?
- When there are parks much larger that could accommodate this field?
- When Westwood Park has a recently constructed enclosed dog park?
- When 15 trees must be cut down to accommodate this field?

Here are the reasons:

The main motivation to build this field is, and has always been, to get a soccer field that would primarily serve the L.A. Breakers Club, its patrons, Wildwood School, and soccer academies.

Clearly, the insistence for a regulation-size soccer field did not arise out of need from the community, but rather from Nikki Mark, to benefit elite private soccer clubs such as the L.A. Breakers, L.A. Galaxy and LAFC. The community is troubled by the possibility that public

land can be used to primarily benefit the private interests of these soccer clubs at the expense of many other users.

See email proof below directly from Nikki Mark, and directly from RAP staff:

".....we need a plan 8 in place in the event the litigation over the VA fields force all these kids to go elsewhere."

July 15, 2014. From: Nikki Mark To: Winter (From PDF "07.15.14 Permits Motivations..." pg 8)".....the club needs to start having backup field plans and relationships in the event the VA litigation ends up kicking the kids off the field."

July 17, 2014 From: Nikki Mark To: Doane Liu (From PDF 7.22.14 Trying to find Nikki space Pg 2)"I am a Commissioner on the Status of Women for the Mayor, helping to support with various initiatives. I work for a company, sbe, that has sponsored FCLA (the soccer club) and I subsequently am supporting the Mayor's efforts to help Veterans get back in the work force. So my motivation is to help the soccer club, which is on VA property and simultaneously help the Veterans, which ties back to the Commission I'm on. At the same time, I'm an LA native and live in Westwood, and I have young kids that play far too many sports at all of these parks. So I'm just entrenched in a community who would like to help."

October 16, 2014 From: Nikki Mark To: Robert DeHart (From: 10.15.14 Nikki wants to put turf Barrington)

2. Now that the VA fields are off-limits to youth groups, we are getting requests from very politically-tied groups to use both the synthetic field and the multi-purpose field. FC Los Angeles (head: Nikki Mark) is at the forefront here. This group actually has a proposal to upgrade this multi-purpose field (I'll share that e-mail chain after I send this one). When we talk about this, we need to include Mr. Singer as he has been in the middle of the decisions with regards to the Westwood fields."

March 27, 2015. From: Rob DeHart To: Michael Harrison (From PDF "07.15.14 Permits Motivations..." pg 44):If you are still open to permitting the grass field in front of the Westwood Rec Center we would love to consider that too. The grass is dead and while we would re-seed it over the summer we just need to know that it's okay to water it, put a temporary fence around it and maybe even add our portable lights to it -so that we can start using it come August.

April 23, 2015. From: Nikki Mark To: Charles Singer (From PDF "07.15.14 Permits Motivations..." pg 62)"Thanks Steve, I just want to confirm the following are the basic blocks of time that would be needed to duplicate what would potentially be lost: August-mid-December. Monday-Friday 4pm-7pm. Saturday 8am-5pm. Aug 1-June 1 and Sept-Dec Jan-June, Monday-Friday 4pm-9pm. Saturday 1:30pm-6pm, Saturday 8am-4pm, Sunday 8am-6pm"

October 30, 2015. From Charles Singer To: Steve Morris, Nikki Mark, Eric Mellem, Janet Anderson (From PDF "10.30.15" Pg1)"Also, I did ask if Wildwood school could get some specific field time between Nov thru February-as the school is willing to make a significant six figure donation and pay for all necessary permits for what feels like a reasonable time period-but I understand this may not be possible. If it is, I will give you that donation amount # as well. Tommy went to Wildwood and it has no designated field for soccer like the other Westside schools, so it seemed like a good fit subject to policies. It would benefit not just Wildwood students but all the students across LA who play against the school."

February 12, 2019 From: Nikki Mark To: Joel Alvarez (From PDF 2019-Revised Agreement (v2) Tommy's Field 203 Pg.3)"FOWLA will want a weekend permit to run a sponsored tournament as it does for its Dream Games.....Wildwood is a Westside school that has no athletic area or field. It plays in a league against other westside public and private schools and by giving it access to Tommy's Field during only three months of the year when club soccer organizations take a lot of breaks and need less space

February 25, 2019. From: Nikki Mark To: Joel Alvarez (From PDF "20190225-Re_DraftAgreement_Tommy_s Field-36_Redacted" Pg.1)

The multi-purpose field at Westwood Park ended up being the perfect location because it met the donor's demands in terms of size and availability. The second soccer field was never meant as an enhancement or improvement for Westwood Park. It was also a direct assault on the tennis community and basketball community who have yet to be advised.

A little background below.

Email from Michael Shull to Joel Alvarez:

Subject: Re: Revised Agreement (v2): Tommy's Field

From: Michael Shull <michael.a.shull@lacity.org>

Date: 2/13/2019, 8:52 PM

To: Joel Alvarez <joel.alvarez@lacity.org>CC: Vicki Israel <Vicki.Israel@lacity.org>, Monika Leisring <monika.leisring@lacity.org>, Desiree Perez <desiree.perez@lacity.org>, Raymond Chang <Raymond.Chang@lacity.org>, Cathie Santo Domingo <cathie.santodomingo@lacity.org>, Ramon Barajas <Ramon.Barajas@lacity.org>, Anthony-Paul Diaz ap.diaz@lacity.org

Nice work Joel! My comments are in yellow highlight. Amend as necessary and send to them. Vicki and Joel, Over next couple weeks, share this with Lynn and meet with her to avoid any issues at taskforce. I have also included Cathie as well. please make sure that both her and Sylvia are well briefed before it comes to task force. PMC will also need to explain the tennis....

My comments regarding this quote: "share this with Lynn and meet with her to avoid any issue at the task force. I have also included Cathie as well. Please make sure that both her and Sylvia are well briefed before it comes to task force."

Really? Avoid any issue at the Task Force? RAP gives the commission a briefing on what the department wants in order to avoid any issue? Why bother with public hearings? Meetings? Why does the public bother to drive for an hour to attend a Task Force mtg which obviously, was a charade?

Our community would appreciate hearing from Mike Shull, from Joel Alvarez, from the Task Force, from Councilmember Koretz, and from anyone who also holds the public's trust. We take time off from work, hire babysitters, cancel appointments, rework schedules, in order to speak for 1 or 2 minutes. After 40 years as a community-involved stakeholder, I am shocked and saddened by the exchange above and can see that community input is completely meaningless. Our community strongly supports soccer. Our families play soccer. Westwood Park has a synthetic soccer field. We recognize that there is a dire need for additional soccer fields. Therefore, we urge RAP staff and the RAP Commission to find a different location for this field.

Sincerely,

Sandy Brown

VP, Westwood Neighborhood Council*

Pres., Holmby Westwood Property Owners Association*

*For identification only

14. DISCUSSION & MOTION: "THE WWNC REQUESTS AN INVESTIGATION BY THE COUNTY IN REGARD TO LOS ANGELES COUNTY SUPERVISORS USING A HELICOPTER AT GREAT COST TO THE COUNTY FOR ROUTINE TRAVEL IN THEIR DISTRICTS"

County Supervisor Kathryn Barger uses a helicopter to go to Lancaster and Palmdale. The county claims it can't break down the cost of using the helicopter for these trips. Roozbeh Farahanipour moved the above motion, seconded by Philip Gabriel and carried unanimously.

15. DISCUSSION & MOTION: "THE WWNC CALLS UPON THE LOS ANGELES CITY CONTROLLER TO RELEASE HIS AUDIT REPORT ON MEASURE HHH"

No vote was taken on this item because the audit has already been released.

16. ADJOURNMENT

President Lisa Chapman adjourned the meeting at 10:00 p.m.