

VAN NUYS NEIGHBORHOOD COUNCIL MEETING
December 9, 2015

MEMBERS PRESENT:

George Thomas, President
Howard Benjamin, Vice –President
Jeanette Hopp, Secretary
Stacey Rains, Treasurer
Jason Ackerman
Paul Anand
John Camera
Quirino de la Cuesta
Steve Friedmann
Marilyn Havard
John Hendry
Josef Lazarovitz
Daniel Luna
Jeffrey Lynn
Kambiz Merabi
Penny Meyer
Kathleen Padden
Charles Robbins
Maria Skelton

MEMBERS ABSENT:

Jerry Martin, excused
Austin Noll

The meeting was called to order at 7:10 p.m. **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:** The pledge followed. **ROLL CALL** followed. We had nineteen members present constituting a quorum.

PUBLIC COMMENT: I endeavored to make a comment, but was shut-down by an invalid Point-of-Order from Daniel.

The chair moved the agenda to permit presentations to our distinguished guest, Zev Yaroslavsky. George stated that three years ago Zev started off our Distinguished Speaker series that **DONE** applauded us for having begun. Your office had always been good to us. They sponsored our first Emergency Preparedness Summit. This board passed legislation to re-name the Erwin Street Mall. The federal, state, county and city government are all involved, so getting the signs made is going to be a chore. As the Council President, I would like to thank you for all the work that you did on our behalf. I am hereby presenting you with a Certificate of Recognition on behalf of the 18th Senate District on the re-naming of the Erwin Street Mall. The certificate was sent by Senator Hertzberg. George also presented Zev with another Certificate of Recognition from Assemblyman Adrin Nazarian congratulating former Supervisor Zev on the re-naming of the Erwin Street Mall to your name.

Zev spoke about being back at UCLA, his Alma Mater. He is excited about being around young bright people. He missed the staff that he had, but not the job. It was time for a change. He thanked us for this honor. He stated it is not the first time a building was named after him and alluded to the new building at the corner of Van Nuys Boulevard and Saticoy Street. He thought it was in Panorama City, but we advised that it is still part of Van Nuys.

Mr. Robbins thanked him for his help with the Village and Family Center. Zev said there isn't a day that goes by wherein homelessness is not being discussed. We have a serious problem with our youth becoming homeless, some aged out foster youth, others with various problems of mental health, drug addiction or whatever. We recognize we need facilities to help these people. The county's job is primarily to serve the poor, marginalized in the county.

The Valley and Family Center thanked Zev for his help with the community. Penny stated she missed his Christmas event and his awesome staff (Lori and Benita). Ron Ziff spoke about a supermarket he owned that burned down and Zev stated he would help with the re-build. Zev made sure Ron made it through the permit process in a record breaking five month period.

Zev thanked Sister Luna and Sister Mark for their help. He said they are so saintly. He wished the Jewish faith had something similar. If he was going to become Catholic, they would have been the reason.

Guillermo thanked us for working with him. Happy holidays.

A representative from Paul Krekorian's office, Mr. Sevek, similarly thanked us for our support and wished us happy holidays.

LIBRARY: We were advised by the Director of the Van Nuys library that it was built in 1961. Minor renovations were made in the late 60's. They are getting a new electrical system and new furniture. The library will be closed during renovations.

RED CROSS: Their representative spoke about the program for mapping our neighborhoods they helped to begin recently. They are concerned about the prediction of a severe El Nino season coming. Van Nuys has been named the community to be helped were there to be a disaster. It seems we are one of the communities that would be hard hit under such circumstances, due largely to our aging and crumbling infrastructure and the age of the majority of the buildings and homes in Van Nuys. Purportedly, we would not be as resilient as other neighborhoods. They want us to become one of their partners. Anyone in the community may partner with them and they will tell that group how they can work together. They will have a meeting in late January. Ron Farina is the Executive Director for the Red Cross.

Mr. Farina spoke about the program they are sponsoring to provide free smoke detectors. They are trying to reduce home fires by 25%. It has a lithium battery that lasts ten years. They will have another give away on March 19, 2016.

Congressman Tony Cardenas' representative, Brian, advised as of Monday he will be transitioning to Mayor Garcetti's office, as representative to the East Valley. Sunday from 4 p.m. until 7 p.m. they will be at the East Valley Animal Shelter.

Ron Ziff, Vice-President of the Sherman Oaks Neighborhood Council came to speak to us about the BID (Business Improvement District) in Van Nuys. The city wants to take two 10' lanes for protected bicycle lanes. They will have concrete barriers staggered along the street to keep cars away. Metro wants to put the light rail through the same area. Their project would be 30' wide and will be fenced in as a safety measure. It would also have a 12' platform for riders to stage on while waiting for their train. We would stand to lose street parking with the light rail program. We would also lose driving lanes, bus service, police and fire services as there would be no way they could get by with nowhere to drive. A hook and ladder needs a 27' wide lane. Ambulance service would be unavailable. The train would come with a cost of over two billion dollars, and would only save four minutes over the bus service. The bus from Sylmar to Van Nuys takes 47 minutes. It would take 43 minutes by train. There will be no short

runs for the buses. If we want to form a BID, realize the City of Los Angeles has 1,000 parking spaces locked-up. If they contracted the parking with the BID we could have businesses open in the evening.

ZULU DANCE PROGRAM: This program will be located at 6232 Hazeltine in Van Nuys. This Sunday there will be a fund raiser. The fund raiser will be from 10 a.m. until 4 p.m. Rosemary was the individual advising us about this program. She provided a phone number (805) 748-9435.

IMMIGRATION: Guillermo Torres was supposed to speak about immigration, but he is sick. He will be placed on the agenda for January. We were asked to go on record to welcome our Muslim brothers. We are not permitted to get involved in such political matters. We are here to optimize life for the residents in Van Nuys.

Rosemary spoke about a resolution for us to support paid sick leave for city, county and state employees. The Executive Committee will iron out the language and then vote.

PUB LIC COMMENT: I gave Mr. D'Esposito money for the under-privileged, poor children and families in Van Nuys that the Knights of Columbus help annually. His efforts to receive an NPG from the council were met with unwarranted interference and dropped balls by executive board members. I did not want these children to be disappointed and neglected during the holiday season. Their organization helps all races, creeds, colors, etc. without exception. The contribution I gave on behalf of Kathleen and myself was as a community member and had nothing whatsoever to do with the council. The funds came from our personal pockets. They lost some of their donors due to death and other reasons. Their party will be held on December 20, 2015 beginning at noon. Everyone is invited.

DWP: A representative spoke about the rain barrel program. He gave us a booklet with information on their plethora of programs. They will have 40% of their workforce eligible to retire soon. He was hoping some of our children would be ready to start working and perhaps choose the DWP. A question was raised about the new net metering change and how it might affect the sustainable energy program. He heard if you have solar energy you will only get 50% of any electricity put back into the grid. The representative from DWP was unaware, but said if you heard that is the case, it is probably true.

The LA Basin depends on its water from the snow pack in the High Sierras. Diamond Lake supplies Metropolitan Water District, who supplies DWP. This, in the short term, is how the water supply could be addressed. He stated there are two huge reservoirs. It is a substantial amount. The acre feet is tremendous. They get water from MWD and the Owens Valley. Even with all of the droughts in the last few years, we just barely touched the reserve this year. I stated we use only 5% of the water usage in the urban arena, 40% is used by farmers and more than 45% is used by big business. Yet, we are the ones being asked to conserve and are surcharged, not big business. He responded that the urban water plan is developed every five years. It is close to the time to review that plan.

ELECTIONS: The city wants to amp up elections and use the city clerk's office, not DONE any longer. He is an Independent Elections Administrator. He is a paid employee. There will be paid employees at the polls. George made a motion to appoint Jeff Lynn and Paul as Co-Chairs of the Elections Committee, seconded by Howard. The vote was 16 in favor, 0 nays and 0 abstentions. The election will be held April 7th.

MINUTES: A motion was made by George, seconded by Howard and carried. The vote tally was 13 ayes, 0 nays and 4 abstentions. The motion passed.

GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS COMMITTEE: This committee was proposed to handle the future PRA requests. A motion was made by George, seconded by Howard with the secretary to send the letter after the

committee met and checked with the city attorney's office. The vote tally was 17 ayes, 0 nays and 0 abstentions.

TREASURER'S REPORT: Stacey stated how much funds were in each account and the total left, followed by a vote to adopt her report. See below:

100 OPERATIONS	4,524.99	-54.27	4,470.72
200 OUTREACH	15,940.00	-60.00	15,880.00
300 COMMUNITY IMP.	10,000.00	-0-	10,000.00
400 NPG	6,001.00	500.00	5,501.00
500 ELECTIONS	4,000.00	-0-	4,000.00
Current total	39,851.72		

The vote tally was 14 ayes, 0 nays and 0 abstentions. The motion made by George and seconded by Mr. Robbins carried.

ITEM d: There was a request for a letter of support for Case #ZA 2012-2245 to renew their CUP from 7 a.m. until 11 p.m. They will have a security guard, and have the isle gated off after 11:00 p.m. A motion was made by George, seconded by Howard to give them a letter of support to be written through Quirino's committee. The motion was adopted with 14 ayes, 1 nay and 0 abstentions.

ITEM e: A number of council members expressed their concerns about the proposed mixed use project. We are concerned pot shops would be in the bottom business area or more liquor stores. We want to upgrade our neighborhood. He did say he would put solar panels on the roof. Josef asked about a restaurant being installed down below after the tenants occupy the building. There is not enough room for the commercial tenants. A motion was made by George to adopt the language in Item e, as stated, seconded by Mr. Robbins for the letter of support. The tally of the vote was 14 ayes, 1 nay and 0 abstentions. The motion carried.

ITEM f: The people are wishing to obtain approval for a body shop and garage. Since they are within 1,000 feet of a school they had to advise the parents and the public. A letter was prepared and sent out by the AQMD in English and Spanish, and was not commented upon within sixty days. They have a permit from the Fire Department for the spray booth. Since they would be located within 500' of a single apartment building they had to advise them. The motion was made to adopt the language in Item f by George, seconded by Howard and carried. The tally was 15 ayes, 0 nays and 0 abstentions.

ITEM g: The VNNC to officially designate John Hendry as the Contributing Editor of the VNNC Newsletter. Our newsletter is to be written on a monthly or quarterly basis, under the leadership of Mr. Hendry. The motion made by George and not seconded that should have killed the motion was purportedly passed with a tally of 15 ayes, 0 nays and 0 abstentions.

PUBLIC COMMENT: Condescending comments were made by Mr. Marez directed at the secretary pertaining to her personal gift to the Knights of Columbus for under privileged children and families in Van Nuys to be utilized for their holiday party and gift giving event. He had to state that Blythe Street kids attend the party and that they equal one-third of participants. I stated that leaves 2/3rds under-

privileged children from Van Nuys who are being helped. He further stated he knows this to be true because he had that party for twenty years, which means he knowingly gave to those same Blythe Street kids for twenty years himself through the Knights. He was out-of-line with his comments.

The meeting adjourned at 10:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Jeanette Hopp Secretary

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