

VAN NUYS NEIGHBORHOOD COUNCIL MEETING
January 10, 2018

MEMBERS PRESENT:

George C> Thomas, President
Jeanette Hopp, Secretary
Veronica Marin, Treasurer
Josef Lazarovitz, Parliamentarian
Jason Ackerman
Michael Browning
John Camera
Steve Friedman
John Hendry
Richard Hopp
Jeffrey Lynn
Jerry Martin
Penny Meyer
Ashley Neyra
Marcela Rodriguez
Maria Skelton

ABSENT MEMBERS:

Howard Benjamin, exc
Kathleen Padden, exc
Stacey Rains

The meeting was called to order by our president at 7:10 p.m. **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:** The pledge followed. **ROLL CALL:** Our secretary took the roll and determined we have a quorum.

4) SECRETARY'S REPORT: I advised a draft of the minutes was posted and a hard copy disseminated for those who may not have read them previously. I moved that we adopt the minutes as presented, seconded by Mr. Lazarovitz and carried with a vote of 15 ayes, 1 nay and 0 abstentions.

TREASURER'S REPORT: A motion was made by Mr. Thomas, 2nd by Mr. Lazarovitz to adopt the Treasurer's report as presented. The motion carried unanimously. **OUTREACH REPORT:** Ms. Skelton advised we had a great holiday event at Delano Park. Daniel came to our aid and we had a Pancake Breakfast with Santa on December 22nd. There were 340 children who participated in that portion of the event. There were more who received gifts between us and Mr. Marez' donations and gifts the park itself collected. We began our morning by retrieving our gifts with two pick-up trucks at the storage facility and then transporting them to the park. We stayed until after 3:00 p.m. because children kept coming. The event was a total success. Mr. Marez wished to submit a VERBAL PRA request. I noted he wants to know how many toys were purchased to whom were they distributed and exactly what was purchased at what cost. Our secretary advised we cannot provide a list of the children's names, as the law does not permit us to do so. We do not have their names. We do have an itemized list of the items purchased in accordance with the board's vote from the receipt. We got so many toys and other items because they were on sale on Black Friday. We got buy one get one free, buy one get two free and so forth. Anyone could have gotten the same items for the same prices. Our reason for shopping at Walgreen's is because it is a local Van Nuys business and we checked out CVS but it is too expensive and other more reasonable places are not located in Van Nuys; such as Walmart in Panorama City and K-

Mart in North Hollywood. We wanted to shop in our neighborhood. A motion to adopt Ms. Skelton's report was made by Mr. Thomas moved to adopt the report, 2nd by Mr. Lazarovitz and carried.

7) c The VNNC to elect committee chairs and formally discuss goals and giving each committee \$ 1,000 for committee expenses. Mr. Camera and Mr. Browning were nominated as Chair of the **PARKS AND REC COMMITTEE**. Mr. Thomas moved that they be considered as Co-Chairs, 2nd by Mr. Lazarovitz and carried. They were elected Co-Chairs. **PUBLIC HEALTH & SAFETY COMMITTEE:** Ms. Medrano, Mr. Hendry and Mr. Lazarovitz were nominated. The vote was 12 in favor of Mr. Lazarovitz and Ms. Medrano, 5 in favor of Mr. Hendry and Ms. Medrano. Ms. Medrano and Mr. Lazarovitz were elected Co-Chairs with a motion made by Mr. Hendry and 2nd by Ms. Marin. **PLUM COMMITTEE:** Mr. Benjamin and Mr. Friedman were nominated as Co-Chairs. A motion to elect them as co-chairs was made by Mr. Thomas, 2nd by Mr. Lazarovitz and carried with a vote of 11 ayes, 3 nays and 1 abstention. **BUDGET AND FINANCE COMMITTEE:** Ms. Marin and Ms. Hopp were nominated as Co-Chairs. A motion was made by Mr. Thomas, 2nd by Mr. Lazarovitz to elect them as co-chairs. The motion carried with a unanimous vote of 16 ayes, 0 nays and 0 abstentions. **OUTREACH COMMITTEE:** Ms. Skelton was nominated as Chair of the Outreach Committee. A motion was made by Mr. Thomas, 2nd by Mr. Lazarovitz to elect Ms. Skelton as Chair. The motion passed unanimously with 16 ayes, 0 nays and 0 abstentions. **GOVERNMENT RELATIONS & BYLAWS COMMITTEE:** Mr. Ackerman was nominated as Chair as well as Mr. Hopp. Mr. Hopp declined. A motion was made by Mr. Thomas, 2nd by Mr. Lazarovitz and carried unanimously to elect Mr. Ackerman chair.

7) a Our Distinguished Speaker series is featuring Assembly member Nazarian in its on-going series. Mr. Nazarian swore in the new committee chairs before addressing the board and constituents. He stated 2017 saw them working on lots of important legislation. Depending upon the number of bills and the need, you begin to see the state is looking at areas that need a little more funding and policy changes, which gives you the idea of where the trend is going. There were 42 bills on housing alone. Housing, transportation and they haven't had the success they were trying to obtain. They passed SB 1 that will put 15 billion into highway and transportation funding over the next 15 years. There may be an election referendum on the issue. We want to finance the upgrades for our infrastructure. Code does not change, it takes an act of the legislature. Cap and trade passed two sets of bills on this issue. There was concern we are not being as strict as we should. We continue billing on what was agreed upon last year. The Homeless issue is not just in Los Angeles, but all throughout the state and affordability of housing is another part of the issue. This cannot be controlled through the legislature. They passed 38 to 40 bills regarding housing. When you look at the issue of homelessness, you are looking at not just shelter, but all of the services required to make that person whole again and a contributing member of society. People who are not clean (and sober) who are still using drugs do not equate to a desirable situation. Individuals may receive a voucher for housing, but may not be permitted to get housing because they are not clean. The homeless issue is very multi-faceted.

Higher Education: Looking at higher education and education in general, we do not fund our education very well. We are now 44th in the nation in funding, previously 48th but it is still dismal. We have some of the best universities and colleges, but we do not produce individuals able to attend these institutions of higher learning. We want to see the Walmarts of the world providing higher salaries, benefits and a pension when they retire. Many of the larger merchants try to cut costs as much as possible. There are

on-going fights with big business and the legislature, and the smaller businesses lose out and are expected to make up the difference. These businesses are not about to do this. Challenges for smaller businesses over time has affected them adversely. He wants to get relief for smaller businesses. It is critical to look at the long-range situation as to how to get investments for smaller businesses. Who may get mixed-use in the area. Packages with R & M that will invest in the communities with the existing east and west corridor and with Pasadena. They want to make people less dependent upon vehicles. They want to provide a reliable, safe and clean environment so that people will use public transportation.

The approval for a Parkinson's registry was passed in 2004, but it was never funded. Seven bills were signed by the governor with two vetoes. Four bills were made into four-year bills. Many bills that require money are always relegated over time. Getting funding for a Parkinson's registry was a priority. Children's health care has registries with no problem, but it is no so in adult health care. Alzheimers and Parkinson's are critical. Twenty percent of our older adults have Parkinson's disease. Diabetes takes up 80% of our health care budget. There was a question from Mr. Ackerman about AB 2987, having to do with public access to educational and governmental videos and cable. Costs and rent control savings reduces our ability to fill buildings. State controlled broad band is something we need. Had we put our own satellite up years ago, other states would be paying us for its use. The PUC (Public Utilities Commission) is to require businesses continuing to operate in California to maintain a certain level so that residences here can continue being connected.

Many of the issues they grapple with have stayed on the books for twenty years. This creates communities who fight over the same money. We need to continue investing and incentivizing in housing. The real issue is the cost of housing has gone up so much, that we are only producing 20%, while our population has grown by a great deal. Maria wanted to thank Adrin and his staff (Angie) for everything his office has done to help her and our community. We have all seen how his staff reaches out to help the community.

The Job and Career Fair is coming up next month. Talk to Angie if we have ideas. This is the 4th year for the Job Fair and they have helped about 120 persons get jobs. The strength depends upon us and how much we get the word out. They have had more employers coming because of our outreach.

Daniel asked about offshore drilling. Mr. Nazarian said this has been an on-going issue. The government is not into fracking. This is a struggle. They have attempted to curb as much as possible. The oil lobby is very powerful. His first bill had to do with a two-year moratorium within close proximity to public institutions, hospitals, water wells, allowing two to stay and after two years put them back into place. The bill passed policy, but did not even get out of appropriations. He asked how about asking the local municipality to handle the issue, but the bill did not even get through policy in that area.

A representative from **Sheila Kuehl's** office, Jessica Orellana came to speak to us. She will be hosting Homeless Connect Day. They connected the homeless with providers who may be able to help them. There will be such an event in Winnetka (Canoga Park) next week. They want volunteers to count the number of homeless people. This Saturday they have a twenty-mile run across the valley.

Marco Sanchez, representative for **Nury Martinez** our City Council District 6 Councilwoman, came to speak to us. This month is human trafficking month. City Hall will be lit blue in awareness of this issue. They are sponsoring a human trafficking toiletry drive from January 11th through February 9th. All donations will be going to Journey Out and Saving Innocence. He is taking over the role of Ovanes until they fill his position. Someone asked for an update on Quiznos empty storefront. GSP is working on this issue.

Our secretary requested a clean-up of the center median on Saticoy between Orion and Firmament. It hasn't been done in years. The neighbors staged a clean-up and some community members or persons on probation cleaned it up several years ago, but never completed the job. Following any rain, the weeds grow tall quickly and leaves fall off the trees at an alarming rate. Homeless dump trash there.

Congressman Cardenas sent his representative Nigel to speak to us. His office will have an event on January 29th. There was an injunction regarding DACA. Students who were already DACA students can re-apply. They are waiting for a response from ICE and Homeland Security.

Candido Marez said there are over 4,500 mentally ill incarcerated by the sheriff. It is very cold in their building. A call from the Congressman would help. They had an awesome event for veterans.

Councilman David Ryu's office: sent his representative Daniel Eyal to speak to us. **CD4** covers a small portion of our neighborhood. He said in 2018 they are going back to a promise made two years ago to change the way in which we elect our local representatives in Los Angeles. His second priority is increasing green spaces. Thirdly, he wants to increase access to knowledge by implementing a children's savings account program. He wants to preserve the community's way of life. He wants to prevent hate crimes. It seems there has been an increase in such crimes against some members of the community. He has space on his discretionary funds task force. This person or persons could advise him on how to spend these funds.

Daniel Hernandez-Delano Park: He thanked everyone for their support. The holiday event was spectacular.

He advised he has free classes for community members. Ballroom dancing classes are held on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday.

7) b The VNNC to look into hiring Wendy Moore to continue to discuss possible work assignments for her including marketing, capturing email addresses and distribution of press releases. The VNNC to vote on the expenditure NTE \$ 350.00. We would have her create content and things for the web site. A motion was made by Mr. Thomas, 2nd by Mr. Lazarovitz for a one-time use to help us achieve our goals with regard to city requirements pertaining to benchmarks.

7) d The VNNC to continue hosting the Taste of Van Nuys at its January meeting. The VNNC to choose one ethnically diverse restaurant in Van Nuys each month NTE \$ 150.00. Mr. Thomas moved to continue the Taste of Van Nuys, 2nd by Mr. Lazarovitz and carried unanimously.

7)e The VNNC to vote on filing the remaining seat on the council currently on the roster. Mr. Browning has worked with Kathy on youth issues. He said she is a person of her word. She works with parents of children 0-5 years of age in Panorama City and north Van Nuys. She worked for the City of Los Angeles in Personnel hiring people. She was involved in Early Childhood Development. She cares about homelessness. She has worked in this area and her father was a member of a Rescue Mission. We tabled voting on her until her application was completed.

7) f Discussion and possible action on 7002-7004 a Nuys Boulevard mixed-use development requiring a zoning change to permit new construction for a 170-unit mixed use development. The Plum Committee referred this issue to us. Zachary advised the site is very long and narrow. There are three auto facilities that will be torn down. Seventeen units will be low income. Mr. Browning said this area has a problem with serious graffiti, so the building should be compatible with ones that can be cleaned-up. They will have green chargers on the roof or somewhere on the property. Tabled until our retreat.

7) e We returned to this item, as Kathy turned in her application. A motion was made by Mr. Thomas, 2nd by Mr. Browning to elect Kathy. The vote to place her on the board and fill the seat was unanimous.

7)g Mr. Browning wished to discuss a problem we are having with 2-4-yard dumpsters which are left in the street for days or weeks on end and often not emptied. There is currently a charge to move the dumpster in and out of the street. The dumpsters attract graffiti and illegal dumping. The dumpsters often block parking spaces. The owners are permitted to leave the dumpsters in the street, but they are an eyesore. They attract vermin when not emptied for a long period of time. Nury's representative spoke about the CEQUA program. He suggested having this issue referred to the Environmental Committee to speak about missed pick-ups. There are more than 28,000 such bins in the city. The Sanitation Department is the authority on this issue. If the property owner hasn't done the first assessment, it is placed automatically by the waste company. There are financial penalties after the first six months for missed pick-ups.

7) h The VNNC to begin to generate and brand the Van Nuys area to create a specific identity and neighborhood feel. The president wants us to come up with an Official motto, official flower and/or mineral. The president suggested marijuana as the official flower. Opal as the official mineral and the motto to be "Let's do it Together," or "Let's get the job Done." A suggestion was made to require the dispensaries to designate a certain amount of funds toward helping to eradicate homelessness. We have no authority to determine how the dispensaries spend their spoils. Maria doesn't think this is something we want to represent our neighborhood council and community. The flower was referred to the Beautification Committee.

7) I to be tabled until our retreat so that we may go over the bylaws.

7) m The VNNC to discuss and take action on the Council Ambassador program being proposed by Mr. Thomas. The VNNC to consider offering these positions to 30 prominent community leaders in the area. The VNNC also to look into designing a sash NTE \$ 1,000.00. We were advised we cannot order sashes for the ambassadors by Semee. A motion was made by Mr. Thomas, 2nd by Mr. Hopp to approve actively seeking ambassadors. The motion passed unanimously.

7) n The VNNC to nominate and vote for Mr. Hendry to become the VNNC Historian. Mr. Hendry has served 13 years as a Van Nuys Councilman. Mr. Hendry needs this title and acknowledgement for his application to Amtrak National Park Service Trails to Rails docents on the Coast Starlight. Mr. Thomas moved to appoint Mr. Hendry our Historian, 2nd by Mr. Ackerman and passed unanimously.

7) o This item was tabled to be discussed at the retreat. We were advised by Semee we could not use city funds to hire a certified court reporter. Although the motion made by Mr. Thomas, 2nd by Mr. Ackerman carried with 12 ayes, 1 nay and 1 abstention, we tabled the item.

PUBLIC COMMENT: Veronica stated she wanted to thank Mr. Camera and Mr. Marez for giving 700 toys, one each for every child at Van Nuys elementary school.

A question was asked who is considered a prominent person in the area. Mr. Thomas responded by stating Fran the principle at Van Nuys High School and Cheryl Cashman are prominent persons.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 10:36 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Jeanette Hopp, Secretary
2nd Signatory

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