

Van Nuys Neighborhood Council



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Members
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John Camera
Connor Chiu
Quirino de la Cuesta
Brian Edelman
John Hendry
Ann Kalb
Dalilah Perez-Vigo
Derrick Spears
Cyle Zezotarski

Van Nuys Neighborhood Council Executive Committee Meeting AGENDA

Wednesday, December 30, 2024
6:30 PM

Van Nuys Branch Library
Community Room
6250 Sylmar
Van Nuys, CA 91401

On the Civic Center Plaza

Van Nuys
Neighborhood Council
P.O. Box 3118
Van Nuys, CA 91407-3118

Email: info@vnnc.org
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818-357-2446

Comments from the public on agenda items will be heard only when the respective item is being considered. Comments from the public on other matters not appearing on the agenda that are within the Board's jurisdiction will be heard during the General Public Comment period. Please note that under the Brown Act, the Board is prevented from acting on a matter that you bring to its attention during the General Public Comment period; however, the issue raised by a member of the public may become the subject of a future Board meeting.

Public comment is limited to a maximum of 2 minutes per speaker per item with a maximum of 10 minutes total per meeting, unless adjusted by the presiding officer of the Board. Actual time for each comment will be recorded in 30 second increments (i.e., 30 sec., 1 min., 90 sec., 2 min.).

Speakers shall limit their comments to matters relevant to the item on the agenda. The Chair may rule that the speaker is out of order if the comments are not germane to the item under consideration.

Speakers shall direct their comments to the Board (not to an individual).

Members of the Executive Committee: M. Bolla, D. Harari, M. Nkuku, K. Schreiner

1. Roll Call and Pledge of Allegiance
2. Three items to add to the January 8th GBM Agenda
 - a. Discussion and possible action to recommend that the Board approve VNNC participation in providing snacks for volunteers in the Van Nuys Homeless Count on January 21st and expenditure of up to \$100 in Outreach funds.
 - b. Discussion and possible action to recommend that the Board approve a CIS opposing CF 24-0867. (See possible language on page 6.)
 - c. Discussion and possible action to recommend that the Board approve a Resolution and CIS to encourage continued funding and staffing of the CERT program in the LA Fire Department Budget. (See draft language and background on pages 10-12.)
3. Discussion and possible action regarding potential Items for the Agenda of the GBM (General Board Meeting) on January 8 – see separate list of items starting on page 5.
4. Logistics for January General Board meeting
 - a. Welcoming special guest Imelda Padilla
 - b. Recognition of former VNNC Board Members (see list on page 4)
 - c. Food (any special items?)
 - d. Room setup
5. Ask John Hendry for possible Saturday dates in January or February when he would be available to conduct a 1.5 hour historical tour of Van Nuys for VNNC Board Members and interested members of the public.
6. General Public Comment on Non-Agenda Items (2 min per stakeholder)
(Note that topics discussed must be within the jurisdiction of the VNNC.)
7. Identification of topics Board Officers would like to discuss at a future meeting.
8. Adjournment,

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RECONSIDERATION AND GRIEVANCE PROCESS - For information on the VNNC’s process for board action reconsideration, stakeholder grievance policy, or any other procedural matters related to this Council, please consult the VNNC By-laws. The By-laws are available at our Board meetings and our website <http://www.vnnc.org>

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For assistance, please contact the Ethics Commission at (213) 978-1960 or ethics.commission@lacity.org

Recognition of VNNC Board Members for Years of Service

Present Members Years of Service through June 2024

- Hakop Azatyan (3+ years)
 - Myrra Bolla (3+ years)
 - John Camera (5+ years)
 - Brian Edelman (5+ years)
 - David Harari (2 years)
 - Ann Kalb (1 year)
 - Maduka Nkuku (1.5 years)
 - Kathy Schreiner (5+ years)
 - Cyle Zezotarski (1 year)
-

Recently resigned -- Served 1+ year from July 2023

- David Kopelev
 - Josue Chavez
-

Served 4 years: July 2019-June 2023

- Mike Browning (5+years)
 - Jennifer Febre (4 years)
 - Thela Thatch (4 years)
-

Served partial term between 2021 and 2023 and made significant contributions

- Glen Makiri (1.5 years)
 - Danielle Rouillard (1.5 years)
 - Britt Vaughn (2 years)
 - Suju Vijayan (1.5 years)
-

Special recognition:

- John Hendry – served over 19 years (almost 5 four-year terms) on the VNNC and is regarded as informal historian of Van Nuys

Items to be Considered for the Agenda of the VNNC January 8, 2025 GBM (General Board Meeting)

1. Roll Call and Pledge of Allegiance
2. Special Guest Councilmember Imelda Padilla to make remarks and present certificates of recognition to current Board members who have served at least one year, to past Board Members who served a full 4-year term, and to past Board Members who served partial terms and made significant contributions.
3. Government Official Reports (Will take public questions/comments after each report.)
4. Metro staff reports regarding G Line Improvements, upcoming Utility Work on Van Nuys Blvd., and special programs for businesses impacted by the ESFV Light Rail Line project
5. Consider appointment of new Board applicant
6. General Public Comment on non-agenda items
7. Board Officer Reports
8. Consent Agenda:
 - a. Review/approve minutes from October 9th and November 13th Board meeting.
 - b. Review/approve letter of support to Councilmember Imelda Padilla, Council District 6 advocating for the utilization of art fees paid by developers to acquire and install an original art work on the Van Nuys Civic Plaza. (see page 8)
9. Action Items from the Budget and Finance Committee – Discussion and possible action to approve recommendations from the 12/4 and 12/30 meetings of the Budget and Finance Committee on the following topics
 - a. Approve October MER.
 - b. Approve November MER.
 - c. Discussion and possible action to reimburse PLUM Committee Chair, Quirino de la Cuesta for agenda printing costs totaling \$40.24.

8/1/24	72 pages	\$17.35
8/1/24	30 pages	\$ 7.23
10/17/24	65 pages	\$15.66

<https://vnnc.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/12/fedex-receipts.pdf>
10. Discussion and possible action to send a letter to the Metro Project Team and Councilmember Padilla to advocate for the planting of native trees along the route

of the ESFV Light Rail line on Van Nuys Blvd from the G Line north to San Fernando Road. (See page 9.)

11. Discussion and possible action to recommend that the Board approve VNNC participation in providing snacks for volunteers in the Van Nuys Homeless Count on January 21st and expenditure of up to \$100 in Outreach funds.
12. Discussion and possible action to approve CIS (Community Impact Statement) in opposition to CF 24-0867.

<https://cityclerk.lacity.org/lacityclerkconnect/index.cfm?fa=ccfi.viewrecord&cfnumber=24-0867>

Key requests from this Council Motion are shown in the box below:

I THEREFORE MOVE that the Board of Neighborhood Commissioners, with assistance of the Department of Neighborhood Empowerment, the Youth Development Department and the City Clerk, be requested to provide recommendations on potential methods and options to amend the Neighborhood Council Bylaws (Bylaws) to ensure youth participation in Neighborhood Councils including the designation of a youth seat on each Neighborhood Council board to increase diversity and allow for leadership growth;

I FURTHER MOVE the Board of Neighborhood Commissioners, with assistance of the Department of Neighborhood Empowerment and the City Attorney, be requested to report to the Council on potential options to amend the Bylaws to include term limits for Neighborhood Council board members in order to facilitate greater member participation and leadership development.

Suggested key points to be included in the CIS?

- Oppose Council mandate regarding youth membership on Neighborhood Councils and imposition of term limits.
- Each Neighborhood Council should be able to determine the composition of Board seats to represent the community. While the Van Nuys Neighborhood Council does include a Youth Representative in its bylaws, we acknowledge the difficulty of filling this seat because of the time commitments to serve on the Board and the many demands on the time of the high school age students who would qualify to fill the seat.
- The City Charter gives Neighborhood Councils the responsibility for establishing through bylaws whether to have 2 or 4 year terms per seat and whether to establish term limits for Board positions.

- There is no evidence that long-term Board members are causing a problem for Neighborhood Councils. Most Neighborhood Councils, Van Nuys included, experience quite a bit of turnover of Board members. Quite a few individuals do not even serve their initial 4-year term due to various life circumstances, such as change of job, health challenges, family obligations, etc. Having some stable and experienced Board members is useful for a Board and can help with meeting quorum.
- 13.** Discussion and possible action to recommend that the Board approve a Resolution and CIS to encourage continued funding and staffing of the CERT program in the LA Fire Department Budget. (See possible language and background on pages 10-12.
 - 14.** Report by PLUM Chair Quirino de la Cuesta regarding the request to identify possible historic locations in Van Nuys to be highlighted in the SE Valley Community Plan
 - 15.** Update on status of virtual foster dog Trinity, currently at the East Valley Animal Shelter. (Virtual fostering means that the VNNC will share information about the animal's availability for adoption on its website, on social media, and in its monthly e-blast.)
 - 16.** Update on unresolved topics:
 - a. Need to delay vote on SB 411 meeting option until can get 14 Board Members available to attend a meeting.
 - 17.** Announcements and identification of topics that Board members would like to be discussed at a future meeting.
 - 18.** Adjournment.

Proposed Letter advocating for Use of Art Fees for a Public Art Project

Councilmember Imelda Padilla

Council District 6
14410 Sylvan Street, Ste. 215
Van Nuys, CA 91401

RE: Public Art Proposal for the Van Nuys Civic Center – “Wind Sculptural Installation”

Dear Councilmember Padilla,

The Van Nuys Neighborhood Council is excited to share our enthusiastic support for bringing public art to our community. Through our Planning and Land Use Committee (PLUM) meetings, we have engaged in meaningful discussions with Ms. Ayndrea Wilson of the California Artist Coalition of Los Angeles (CACLA) regarding a proposed public art project for the Van Nuys Civic Center.

On November 13, 2024, during our general board meeting, Ms. Wilson presented an inspiring proposal featuring the work of renowned visual artist Mr. Paul Chilkov. His envisioned “Wind Sculptural Installation” would be a transformative addition to the grounds of the Van Nuys Civic Center. The board and community members expressed strong enthusiasm and support for this project, recognizing its potential to celebrate creativity and foster pride in Van Nuys.

The Van Nuys Neighborhood Council firmly believes in the power of the creative arts as a catalyst for economic revitalization, community engagement, and cultural enrichment. Public art can reimagine and redefine our neighborhood, serving as a beacon of inspiration and drawing businesses and visitors to the area.

We also have full confidence in the expertise of CACLA, under the leadership of Ms. Wilson, to bring this vision to life. Ms. Wilson has demonstrated a deep understanding of managing public art initiatives and highlighted how the 1% Art Development Fee could be utilized effectively for this project. Her guidance ensures that Van Nuys will benefit from thoughtful and impactful public art installations.

We respectfully urge you and your office to support this initiative and work with CACLA to bring Mr. Chilkov’s “Wind Sculptural Installation” to the Van Nuys Civic Center. This project represents a unique opportunity to enhance our community’s vibrancy and cultural identity. Thank you for your leadership and for considering this vital proposal for the future of Van Nuys.

Sincerely,
Kathy Schreiner
President
Van Nuys Neighborhood Council

Proposed Letter Advocating for the Planting of Native Trees on Van Nuys Blvd.

To: Metro

Greg Gastelum

Senior Executive Officer/Project Manager, Program Management, Metro

Cc: Jesse Leon, Community Leadership Council Manager

Lisa Karwoski, Deputy Project Manager, Design

To: Council District 6

Councilmember Imelda Padilla

City Council District 6

Cc: Andres Sandoval, District Director, and Lamont Cobb, Director of Planning and Land Use

At the meeting of the Community Leadership Council for Metro's ESFV Light Rail Project on October 24th, Lisa Karwoski, Deputy Project Manager, Design, made a presentation on the plan for replacing all of the street trees along Van Nuys Blvd. from the G Line north to San Fernando Road when the Light Rail Line is constructed (due for completion in 2031). It was explained that Metro has determined that all of the sidewalks along the 7 miles of Phase I of the ESFV Light Rail Line will be replaced and that over 500 street trees that currently line Van Nuys Blvd. will need to be removed. Unless Metro can be persuaded to try to preserve some of the current mature shade trees, there will be over 1000 replacement trees planted – some on cross streets and other streets close to Van Nuys Blvd.

The Van Nuys Neighborhood Council (VNNC) is in favor of having the new trees selected from diverse varieties of California native trees. There are many advantages to planting native trees that are adapted to the climate of the SFV, including the fact that such trees need minimal watering (once the new trees have been established) and minimal fertilizer because they evolved to be a good match with the local climate. In addition, native trees support local biodiversity and provide a home for native birds and insects (such as butterflies).

The VNNC understands that there is a need to advocate with City officials to expand the list of California native trees that are approved to be planted as street trees. We support the efforts of VNNC President Kathy Schreiner (who is also a member of the ESFV Light Rail Community Leadership Council) to coordinate with Council District 6, the Neighborhood Council Sustainability Alliance, and the Community Forest Advisory Commission to advocate with the Mayor's Office and appropriate City staff (including the Urban Forestry Division and the Bureau of Street Services) to approve more species of native trees to be planted as street trees.

Sincerely,

Kathy Schreiner, President

Van Nuys Neighborhood Council



Van Nuys Neighborhood Council

Resolution

Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) Program Support

January 8, 2024

To: Mayor Bass, LA Fire Chief Crowley, LA Board of Fire Commissioners, Councilmember Imelda Padilla, Councilmember Adrin Nazarian, Councilmember Nithya Raman, and City Council members on the Budget Committee

The Van Nuys Neighborhood Council strongly supports the successful LAFD Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) program. The CERT program trains community volunteers in best practices and how to respond in the event of earthquakes and other disasters. CERT trained volunteers are prepared to help themselves, their neighbors and their communities when an emergency happens, thus allowing the LAFD to concentrate their efforts in highest-need areas. CERT volunteers also consistently support the LAFD's responses to their routine activities. This is especially critical during emergencies. Some CERT trained volunteers can and do continue their training in hopes of joining the ranks of the Call Out teams that are especially important during emergencies. In 2024, the CERT unit conducted the following trainings: 2,357 CERT students; 2,700 Hands-Only CPR students and 961 Fire Extinguisher students. A total of 940 hours of service has been performed by the CERT Call Out volunteers. Considering that we never know when a city-wide emergency might occur and considering that when it does the investment in the CERT program will contribute immeasurably to the resilience and recovery of the city, the Van Nuys Neighborhood Council urges the city leaders to continue funding and staffing the LAFD CERT program.

Thank you,

Van Nuys Neighborhood Council

X

Kathy Schreiner

Board President

Van Nuys Neighborhood Council

Email: kathy.schreiner@vnnc.org | Website: www.vnnc.org

CC: Board of Fire Commissioners LAFDFireCommission@lacity.org, LAFD Chief Kristin Crowley kristin.crowley@lacity.org, Mayor Bass's East Valley Area Representative Betsaira Aguilera betsaira.aguilera@lacity.org, CD 6 Councilmember Imelda Padilla, CD 2 Councilmember Adrin Nazarian, CD 4 Councilmember Nithya Raman, and LA City Councilmembers on the Budget Committee

Official Use Only

Date of Board Vote: __

Board Vote Count: Aye____ Nay____ Abstain____ Recused____

Motion Status: Passed____ Failed____ Other_____

Background:

At the VANC (Valley Alliance of Neighborhood Councils) December meeting, we learned from Cindy Adair, CERT instructor and member of the Sherman Oaks Neighborhood Council, that the Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) program is in danger of being ended (or at least paused). We learned that due to budget constraints, The LA Fire Chief is proposing that some or all of the current CERT instructors be transferred to other LAFD units and that others who have a work-related disability may be asked to retire. If that happens, there certainly will be an effect on CERT training classes after March or April of 2025. Additionally, it is not known what might happen to the Call Out teams if the CERT unit loses staff or is disbanded.

The proposed resolution is copied from a draft resolution from Leonard Schaeffer, Board of Neighborhood Council Commissioner, President of the Tarzana Neighborhood Council, and chair of the Neighborhood Council Emergency Preparedness Alliance (NCEPA). Vice President Jennifer Clark of the North Hollywood Northeast Neighborhood Council identified a Council File related to the Fire Department's Budget that provides context regarding budget constraints. See the following excerpt:

Council File: 24-1600 Los Angeles Fire Department / Service Impact on Operations

12-17-24 Board of Fire Commissioners' 22 page report, relative to operational challenges due to the elimination of critical civilian positions and a reduction in Overtime Variable Staffing Hours. https://clkrep.lacity.org/onlinedocs/2024/24-1600_rpt_bfc_12-17-24.pdf

"SUMMARY

The Los Angeles City Fire Department (LAFD) is facing unprecedented operational challenges due to the elimination of critical civilian positions and a \$7 million reduction in Overtime Variable Staffing Hours (V-Hours). These budgetary reductions have adversely affected the Department's ability to maintain core operations, such as technology and communication infrastructure, payroll processing, training, fire prevention, and community education.

In addition to these impacts, the reduction in v-hours has severely limited the Department's capacity to prepare for, train for, and respond to large-scale emergencies, including wildfires, earthquakes, hazardous material incidents, and large public events. Specialized programs and resources, such as Air Operations, Tactical EMS Units, Disaster Response, and Community Emergency Response Teams (CERT), which rely heavily on v-hours, are now at risk of reduced effectiveness."

Link to the full council file:

<https://cityclerk.lacity.org/lacityclerkconnect/index.cfm?fa=ccfi.viewrecord&cfnumber=24-1600>