



EMPOWERMENT CONGRESS WEST AREA NEIGHBORHOOD DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL

MINUTES – May 20, 2008
3731 Stocker ♦ Los Angeles, CA 90008

Board Members In Attendance: Michelle Colbert, Mary Darks, Jai Gaines, Lark Galloway-Gilliam, Damien Goodman, Tommy Plummer, Johnnie Raines, Reatha Simon, Chris Shoaf, Phyllis Taylor, Rev Lee Walker, Charles Zacharie

Absent: Karen Ceasar, Christine Hall

City Representatives: Charles Brown – District 8; BongHwan Kim, Kevin McNeely, Barry Stone - DONE

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 6:40 pm by the chair, Lark Galloway-Gilliam. A quorum was present.

Public Comment:

Damien Goodman announced two community forums on the Expo Line to be held on May 22nd at Dorsey High and May 29th at Foshay.

Approval of Minutes:

The motion was made by Damien Goodman and seconded by Michelle Colbert **to approve the April 2, 2008 minutes as presented. The motion passed by a vote of 7-0-1.**

The motion was made by Rev Lee Walker and seconded by Damien Goodman to approve the April 22nd minutes with the following corrections:

- Land Use Committee report – third paragraph: ...”a vote of ~~9-3-0~~ 9-0-3 with Chris Shoaf, Johnnie Raines and Tommy Plummer ~~opposing~~ abstaining the motion.
- Expenditure Request - second paragraph: The motion passed with a vote of ~~10-0-1~~ 10-1-0 with Chris Shoaf opposing the motion.
- Expenditure Request – third paragraph: The motion passed by a vote of ~~11-0-1~~ 11-1-0 with Chris Shoaf in opposition to the motion.
- Expenditure Request – fourth paragraph: The motion passed by a vote of ~~10-0-1~~ 10-1-0 with Johnnie Raines voting in opposition to the motion.
- Expenditure Request – fifth paragraph: The motion was approved by a vote of ~~10-10-0~~ 10-0-1

The motion to approve the April 22nd minutes as corrected passed by unanimous vote.

Damien Goodman noted an error in the May 7th minutes under the section on the Rancho Cienga/ Jim Gilliam Tennis Tournament and recommended that minutes be corrected to state that “Phyllis Taylor recused herself from the vote” and the vote was 9-0-0. **The motion was made by Michelle Colbert and seconded by Phyllis Taylor that the minutes of May 7, 2008 be adopted as corrected. The motion passed by unanimous vote.**

Presentations:

BongHwan Kim, the newly appointed General Manager provided a brief overview of the role of DONE and his vision for the neighborhood councils. He emphasized the significance of the role of the neighborhood council in a participatory democracy to ensure the active engagement of stakeholders. Mr. Kim encouraged the NC to focus on the priority needs of the community and how the council can be

engaged in addressing these concerns; to participate in regional coordination among neighborhood councils; to work through personal issues and agree to disagree; and to look to the department as a partner. He went on to report that upon completion of the December elections, the department will free up resources to help increase the capacity of the NCs to increase its visibility and outreach. Following a brief question and answer period, the board congratulated Mr. Kim on his confirmation and thanked him for taking the time to attend and speak to the membership.

Kevin McNeely was invited and introduced by the chair to provide a brief overview of the financial guidelines, policies and procedures. Lark distributed copies of the response by Mr. McNeely to an email sent by the chair in follow-up to the questions raised at the previous board meeting. Mr. McNeely offered the following additional clarification: the councils have three years to expend any given year allocation before it reverses back to the city; any funds in excess of \$100,000 on July 1 will reverse back to the city; the Treasurer gets half of the year's allocation via the credit card; the website provides a monthly status report on all expenditures; vendors must have a BTRC and EIN or Social Security and W9 to be paid; no third party payments are allowed; "buy local" when possible and focus on the benefit to the immediate community; all fund must be spent for activities and projects inside the NC boundaries; stakeholders other than the board members cannot be reimbursed; all expenditures must be linked to the budget and supported by board action as noted in the minutes and a community benefit statement; the cut off date for submitting demand warrants is June 13, 2008. In respect to the council budget – Mr. McNeely stressed the importance of "transparency and accountability". He recommended the budget be viewed as a strategic roadmap with as much detail as possible to ensure the public is aware of all expenditures. He stressed the importance of compliance with the conflict of interest laws. After a brief period of questions and answers, the board thanked Mr. McNeely for taking the time to attend the meeting and address their questions.

Finance Committee Report

Charles Zacharie, the Treasurer, distributed and reviewed the financial report of expenditures for April 2008. Mr. Zacharie also reported on the Finance committee proposal to revised the modified budget to reflect the lower than projected revenue. The committee recommendation was tabled pending the action by the board on the issue of office space rental.

Outreach Committee Report

Reatha Simons provided an overview of the two office space options. The first office located at 3756 Santa Rosalia provided 362 sq ft on the third floor of the building for \$750 per month or approximately \$2.07/sq ft.. The second option is located at 3761 Stocker with 597 sq ft on the first floor of the building rents from \$985 per month or \$1.65/sq ft plus a CPI. **The motion was made by Jai Gaines and seconded by Mary Jones Dark to authorize the execution of a one year rental agreement for the property at 3761 Stocker Street at \$985 per month with the stipulation that the CPI or incidental/cleaning cost not to exceed \$50.00 per month. The motion passed by a vote of 10-0-1.**

Reatha provided a brief explanation of the phone services noting that there was no physical phone but a phone answering service. Each member was asked to set up their message box asap and indicate how they wanted to direct callers. Reatha offered to assist members in setting up their message box.

Reatha then reported that the board was offered the opportunity to purchase a booth at the Leimert Park Book Faire on May 31st at a cost of \$350. The matter was closed due to a lack of motion.

7 King Liquor Store Appeal

Anna Burns a resident of the Leimert Park and member of the Cherrywood Block Club was introduced and presented a brief overview of the history and appeal by 7 King Liquor store against the conditions imposed by the zoning administrator following neighbor complaints. Ms. Burns reported that there is an over concentration of liquor stores in the area with 20 liquor stores within 1 ½ miles radius of the area. She explained the city zoning administrator had imposed twenty three conditions on the owner for which the owner was appealing four of the conditions. The conditions under appeal include the requirement that the owner: close the business at midnight; hire a uninformed security officer; provide for future hearings with fees if any of the conditions are violated; and the conditions run with the land irrespective of ownership. Ms. Burns requested the NC go on record as opposing the appeal, write a letter to the planning commission to that effect and send a representative to the appeal hearing on June 3, 2008 at 2:00 pm at City Hall.

Mr. Chowdry, the owner/operator of the liquor store indicated that he is attempting to change the store into a 7-11 franchise and would need the store to remain open until 2:00am. He reported that the change to the new store format would change the merchandize to 95% food and 5% alcohol. Members of the board and attendees expressed their concern for the extended hours and sale of alcohol in the area. After a great deal of discussion **the motion was made by Damien Goodmon and second by Johnnie Raines that the current conditions be upheld and that a letter be sent requesting the appeal be denied. The motion passed by a vote of 8-0-3. The motion was made and duly seconded that Mary Jones Darks and Johnnie Raines attend the hearing, present the letter and speak on behalf of the council in opposition to the appeal. The motion passed by unanimous vote.**

The motion was made by Mary and second by Jai and passed by unanimous vote to extend the meeting an additional 15 minutes.

2007-08 Budget

The agenda returned to a review of the proposed modification to the 2007-08 budget. The budget as presented by the Finance Committee was modified to: (1) increase the allocation for facility cost to \$12,420 based upon the earlier motion to enter into a one year lease: (2) eliminate the bookkeeper services line item and reduce the equipment line item to \$1,150 accordingly. **The motion to adopt the modified budget as amended was moved by Rev Lee Walker, seconded by Mary Jones Darks and passed by unanimous vote.**

2008-09 Budget

Lark Galloway-Gilliam reported that the board would need to submit the 2008-09 budget by the end of June. **To meet the deadline, the Finance Committee will be meeting on Monday, June 2, 2008 to prepare a draft budget for the community and board review. All committees were requested to submit their budget request no later than Friday – May 30 or to attend the Finance Committee meeting. The draft budget will be presented for information only at the June 4th meeting and considered for adoption at the June 17th board meeting.**

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at approximately 9:00 am. The next meeting will be on June 4th. The topic is public safety. The recommendation was made to schedule a meeting to discuss both the status of Marlton Square and the Crenshaw Transit corridor.