

# CITY OF LOS ANGELES

## OFFICERS:

## HOLLYWOOD STUDIO DISTRICT NEIGHBORHOOD COUNCIL CALIFORNIA

## Board Members:

**Steven Whiddon**

Board Chair

**Thomas Meredith**

Vice Chair

**Felipe Corrado**

Treasurer

**Vacancy**

Recording Secretary

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ANTONIO R. VILLARAIGOSA  
MAYOR



Alex Alferov  
Andy Schwartz  
Bill Zide  
Christina Derenthal  
Efrain Gonzalez  
Felipe Corrado  
Frank Valenti  
Jennifer Moran  
Jirair Tossounian  
Jose Torres

Juri Ripinsky  
Kenneth Ostrow  
Leila Forouzan  
Luke Vincent  
Manny Rodriguez  
Maria Yepremian  
Nathan French  
Narine Chobanyan  
Steven Whiddon  
Thomas Meredith

## HOLLYWOOD STUDIO DISTRICT NEIGHBORHOOD COUNCIL (HSDNC)

Monday July 9, 2012, 6:30 p.m.

Assistance League of Southern California, 1370 N. St. Andrews Place, Los Angeles, 90028

### REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

Items are listed for reference only and may be discussed out of order.

1. **Call to Order** – Welcome remarks by Vice-Chair Meredith at 6:45 p.m. Request by Chair Whiddon to identify oneself when speaking for purposes of the record. Guest Janet Harrison said thanks for coming here and if you'd like a tour of building, just call. Albert Tsao introduced himself. Chair Whiddon talked about [www.relayforlife.org/hollywoodca](http://www.relayforlife.org/hollywoodca), and asks people to sign-up. Walk with friends/family, and it's for an amazing cause; July 28, 9 a.m. to July 29, 9 a.m. Email Chair Whiddon if you have further questions.
2. **Roll Call** – Present: Alex Alferov, Christina Derenthal, Leila Forouzan, Efrain Gonzalez, Tom Meredith, Jen Moran, Manny Rodriguez, Jose Torres, Jirair Tossounian, Luke Vincent, Steven Whiddon, Bill Zide

Excused: Narine Chobanyan, Felipe Corrado, Nathan French, Ken Ostrow, Juri Ripinsky, Andy Schwartz, Frank Valenti, Maria Yepremian

Chair Whiddon stated that those who have been seated 90 days must have taken their Ethics course. Neither Manny Rodriguez nor Jirair Tossounian have taken theirs, therefore, they must refrain from voting tonight. Consequently, there is no quorum of eligible voters.

3. **Public Comments on Non-Agenda Items**  
**Nyla Arslanian**, Hollywood Arts Council, spoke about the upcoming Children's Festival, August 12, 2012, at Paramount; if there's any way Hollywood Arts Council can help, let them know. Last year, HSDNC participated with money and volunteer work. Chair Whiddon, everyone who was there last year had a great time. Vice-Chair Meredith, we had already prepared the agenda when you mentioned it. We'll come back to this next month re support.  
**Sam Kbushyan** –running for Council District 13, currently occupied by Eric Garcetti; introduced himself and community ties. Director of Continuous Skills School. Wants to empower immigrants to participate in the community. Will leave information at the door re getting involved with the campaign. Jose Torres asked about the Community Plan. Sam says he has supported a few things and opposed some others. Some properties are going to go vertical, rather than horizontal. We have enough space; it's mismanaged. Some places, we do need to improve but some of it is historic. Builders/Developers

support it. We invest with our lives. Some things really need improvement because the infrastructure is crumbling.

**Albert Tsao**, re cleanup, July 28, does conflict with relayforlife.org event. Not sure how many we're going to get; I think I'm going to get about 20-30 people. Conservation Corps is involved. There will be graffiti cleanup. Will be mentioning this at the park's Saturday Night Lights event. The tunnel under the freeway needs to be cleaned up again. Would appreciate it if the Clean Up were on the calendar. There will also be a basketball tournament. The local players love it, and will bring in some more folks. Maybe even the basketball players will clean up; BBQ in the afternoon.

**Angela Motta** from Eric Garcetti's office. Introduced new deputy, whose birthday it is; has flyers for the Saturday Night Lights events. Government 101 will also be held on July 28. It will teach how the legislative process and the City Council work. Planning and Land use issues will also be taught. Will also talk about consensus building. One of the jobs of the council office is to try and bring parties together. Not always possible, but we try. It will be held at Angelus Temple in Echo Park. Come to our event, then the Clean Up and then the Walk. It is our annual Un-Tag time, everyone from the office gets in their cars and goes down every street in the district to count the tags. Graffiti has gone down because there are now street captains. Can call it in to the Garcetti app.

**Chair Whiddon** mentioned that, because Lemon Grove Park is not ADA compliant, meetings cannot be held there. Estimate was \$470,000. We know that a nearby resident had submitted in writing a suggestion to make the current men's restroom into a unisex restroom with renovation to comply with ADA requirements. What is being done about that suggestion – it would be much cheaper than the original estimate? Invited to call office to discuss. Other parks: lights off, but gates open. General services unlock the parks in the morning. Looking into an automatic unlock in the morning; tricky to automatically lock at night because there's risk of people being there. **Manny Rodriguez** asked how the tags were being counted. Angela said they drive slowly and look at everything around.

**Patrick Agerkop** - Santa Monica Western Residential Association – requested and received a copy of the revised letter re a Brown Act violation. You said you were going to copy me on that, but I never got it. At that same meeting, there was a vote on no left turn on Western Ave., between Santa Monica Blvd. and Melrose. Info was vague that I still don't understand how you came to a solution that no left turns is a good idea. I think it's outrageous that some board members voted against it.

**Chair Whiddon** said he never promised he would get in writing a recording copy of the conversation with city Attorney, but would ask. He did contact and consult with Carmen Hawkins re the issue and you are free to contact her to verify such conversation, if you wish? Regarding the turn, it went to parking and transportation, and the board consulted with the LAPD. There were complaints from Stakeholders re prostitution and the LAPD made suggestions based on what worked in other neighborhoods, such as No Left Turn lanes. The board acted properly; it was noticed. No one was challenged. Patrick said Efrain and Jose were challenged. Chair Whiddon remembers this being asked and people who didn't think it was a good idea were still allowed to speak. There was no intent to harass any board member re the vote. And there were other questions, like would we remove the restriction later. Patrick referenced Sun living on a one-way street and this No Left Turn prevents her from going home. Patrick recommends the board listen to others in the community; not just one or two buildings. It's not always a convenient thing. David Bell reminded everyone that it's not illegal to challenge. Jennifer Moran said she didn't perceive Chair Whiddon's question in the other meeting to have been an attack. Is sorry that Patrick perceived it that way. Jennifer finds it troubling that Patrick is attacking Chair Whiddon; it's unfair. If what's happening to Sun is the case, then maybe we need to change the recommendation. Luke Vincent, said we had noted in the minutes that some would have a problem getting home with the new restriction. Efrain said we shouldn't send the letter because it was premature. And, to me, the LAPD isn't doing its job. We need to go there to see what's going on. Many people there are angry because it's not the right way to do that.

**Chair Whiddon** wanted to remind everyone that last year, there were a lot of people showing up at the meeting who were frustrated with the LAPD not being able to clean up the prostitution. This isn't a perfect situation. But keep in mind, when things go to committees, become agendaized, and people work

on the issue, it's not fair to unwind what people have done the work to participate in order to make a difference. How can we do that if we keep trying to unwind decisions? Are we making strides? Or are we picking and choosing? I think we need to continue working with the police. We've had an improved relationship. If the neighbors aren't happy with it, instead of teaming up against the neighborhood council, they should be electing street block captains, taking down license plates numbers, etc. The letter hasn't gone out. Alex Alferov said the police told him that they were going to put it through regardless, so the HSDNC could alert constituents of the change. Since the letter's not yet sent out, I suggest we invite Julie Nony to the next meeting.

**Chair Whiddon** passed out the letter dated March 21, 2012. Going over it, it doesn't mention the direction of the signs. That should be clarified. To clarify, the police may have made their decision. Ours was only an advisory role. They came to us to see if we would support it.

**Jose Torres** said he'd like to find another way to fight the crime. If you see the police during the day, they're just walking looking for any small violation. We need to look at alternative ways to address this problem. There are people who take care of those ladies, who carry guns. Changing that dynamic may cause another problem. Chair Whiddon agrees that this is an important point; we are not asking regular citizens to act like police officers. We are asking people to get organized and involved to work with the police. Should not take on the policemen's role. Am so open to having a special meeting so we can talk about this and not make someone the villain, but find out ways that the Stakeholders can solve the problems.

4. Meet – Greet – Enjoy Refreshments

Jirair wanted to point out that Julie Nony said that only Vice cops could arrest prostitutes. If you would like to do some outreach in this area, get with Efrain.

5. Approval of June 11, 2012, Minutes – No quorum of eligible board members to vote

6. Report by City Officials

Angela Motta from Eric Garcetti's office. Introduced new deputy, **Ryan Carpio**, whose birthday it is. Has flyers for the Saturday Night Lights events. Government 101 will also be held on July 28. It will teach how the legislative process and the City Council work. Planning and Land use issues will also be taught. Will also talk about consensus building. One of the jobs of the council is to try and bring parties together. Not always possible, but we try. It will be held at Angelus Temple in Echo Park. Come to our event, then the Clean Up and then the Walk. It is our annual Un-Tag time, everyone from the office gets in their cars and goes down every street in the district to count the tags. Graffiti has gone down because there are now street captains. Can call it in to the Garcetti app. Chair Whiddon mentioned that, because the Lemon Grove Park, was not ADA compliant, meetings could not be held there. Estimate is \$470,000. What can be done? Invited to call office to discuss. Other parks: lights off, but gates open. General services unlocks the parks in the morning. Looking into an automatic unlock in the morning; tricky to automatically lock at night because there's risk of people being there. Manny Rodriguez asked how the tags were being counted. Angela said they drive slowly and look at everything around.

7. Report by State Officials – Expect speaker Lauren Pizer Mains did not appear.

8. Presentation by Marcello Robinson, Co-Chair, Neighborhood Council Budget Advocates – Recognition from Mayor's Office re HSDNC's participation in the Budget Process for largest response from all the neighborhood councils. Congratulations. Vice-Chair Meredith asked if it was 100%. Vice-Chair officially accepted it.

9. Presentation by Paul Dumont & Sober Living Network team re Council File 11-0262. At the PLUM meeting, we discussed it at length. Had hired Munger Tolles, who found the ordinance flawed. Various groups, like Homeless Services, Inner City Law Center, et al, have recommended that the neighborhood councils oppose it. In 2007-08, then council members, they planned to take group homes out of residential areas. But any law targeting sober living homes would be classified as disabled, thus illegal. So instruction back to the Planning Commission and PLUM was to regulate all shared housing. So any shared housing is now illegal. This would also apply to seniors, homeowners renting out extra rooms,

students rooming together to share expenses. This would now be illegal. The second part of it regulates any two people in a single building on probation, even Section 8 housing. There are a lot of unanswered questions. What about retroactive background checks. Does this violate current lease agreements? The third part of the ordinance regulates sober housing with more than 7 people on a license; it would require a variance. It's no benefit to the treatment community. There's usually a limit of two people per bedroom. United Way is leading the way to oppose this because it concerns shared housing. Jirair Tossounian asked about enforcement. Answer, it will be complaint driven. Leila Forouzan asked how police felt about this ordinance. Answer, they believe it will be a mess. Chair Whiddon believes that bad homes need to be closed, but if anything we need to see an increase in these types of services. Don Durkey asked if there were sober living facilities in our area that have been problematic. Answer, the problem is that it regulates all shared housing. That's why we have this whole list of opponents here. Leila Forouzan asked if he could share the number. His card is in the folder. Luke Vincent asked if we could support this, and have our logo on the list of the opponents. Chair Whiddon asks if there is a quorum of eligible voters. We have nine in attendance. It requires 11. Alex Alferov wants to research this more. Chair Whiddon asks if there is a deadline. They expect to be handling it when they come back from recess this coming week. Chair Whiddon believes it can be handled at the next meeting on August 13, 2012, and thanks Paul Dumont for his presentation.

10. Budget and Finances

- a. Discussion and possible action re approval of \$40 fee for attendance at HPOZ conference on May 19 for Jirair Tossounian and Courtney Hukel
- b. Discussion and possible action re purchase of Ricoh Aficio 2035e copy machine w/collator for \$350 (researching maintenance agreement cost) – Chair Whiddon is trying to get bids on a maintenance agreement. This would be useful not only for us but for neighborhood groups. They wanted an answer right away, but can't vote so we'll do this later.
- c. Discussion and possible action authorizing up to \$150 for truck rental to transport equipment – No quorum; can't vote.
- d. Report and possible action on Budget for new fiscal year – Felipe Corrado did not want to turn in the official paperwork until the start of the fiscal year, July 1, 2012. He will be turning it next week to make it official. He's had a lot on his plate, but he has been working with Will. Will sent an email last week or so with our balance, with approximately \$2,000 in the account, but things hadn't yet hit, so our reconciliation has been finalized. We're current, and we've spent our money and have records to back it up. It's really important for the Budget Committee to get larger so I really don't have to participate in the future. It should be a committee led by the Treasurer. The committee should grow. Contact Janelle or Felipe. I'd like to congratulate the Board for how it handled its money this past year.

11. Outreach

- a. Open Neighborhood Wi-Fi Update – Co-chair Meredith said Jirair is really spearheading this. At the Hester Street Fair, all the banners, etc. made our table look nice and professional. Clearly there was an increase in people coming to ask about the neighborhood council. We looked professional. Hollywood Hills West and Central were also there, but didn't have as good of a show. Glad we funded some of these new materials. I think it helps our image in the community. Good job!
- b. Neighborhood Groups Update (Melrose Hill, NU-LA, Santa Monica & Western, 4 Squares) Jirair from Melrose Hill mentioned the Lemon Grove Clean-Up. I also report graffiti and droppings. Lately there are a lot of couches being dumped. Can we get the Council's assistance in getting that cleaned up a bit. Jennifer Moran, we have the same problem. Maybe Garcetti's office wants to spearhead some kind of clean up on that. Reporting is only useful if you've seen the violator do it. Manny Rodriguez still calls it in because children could get hurt on things like rusted nails. He reminds them that he's a landlord too. Jirair said illegal dumping is different from graffiti, so maybe we can do something about. Manny Rodriguez points out that he can discover the building owners via MLS; and they are the ones who should be contacted.

Sometimes it's their management company doing the dumping, and they should be made aware of this.

Chair Whiddon asked Jennifer Moran to explain "block captain". What it really is a cheerleading effort to get people to report graffiti. Chair Whiddon said he's trying to think of things that are already established that HSDNC could connect with going forward. Jirair says it feels more like a marketing campaign than anything else. Patrick said that there are so many block captains and what it really means is that the block captain gives a couple walls higher priority. The calls go right to the Hollywood Beautification Team. Jirair would like the phone number to HBT.

Vice-Chair Meredith received something from 4 Squares that has invited HSDNC to come to a meeting and connect. He will get the specifics of the meeting and let others know.

Also, the next Outreach meeting will be the 31<sup>st</sup> at the Denny's on Van Ness.

Chair Whiddon said the Hollywood Beautification Team could be contacted at [HBteam@earthlink.net](mailto:HBteam@earthlink.net)

Jose Torres asked about the Wi-Fi. Luke Vincent said we were wondering about the money coming through. Per Chair Whiddon, that is happening.

12. PLUM – Led by Chair Whiddon

- a. Old Spaghetti Factory Letter – Bill Zide put the letter together and the PLUM committee did some vetting. At the last council meeting, people expressed concerns and this is the latest draft. We're not voting on it tonight, so take some time to review it. You can track it with changes on the computer, or write in any changes, scan it and email it back to us.
- b. Discussion and possible action re Sober Living Network on Council File 11-0262, as recommended by PLUM committee – Needs to be tabled for next meeting

13. Bylaws/Elections – Nothing to report

14. Parking Transportation Traffic – Nothing to report

15. Proposed Agenda Items for next Board meeting on August 20

Chair Whiddon: Did everyone get a chance to read the McNaughton letter re the Brown Act? The posting issue. First and foremost, I want to thank Luke Vincent for posting. Thank you. So, we've always strived to post in time, but we did not violate the Brown Act. Ziggy verified it was posted in at least two places, so there was no violation of the Brown Act. Our goal as a board is to be open and transparent and serve our community as best we can. We're asking for help in proceeding. Jennifer Moran asked if the City Attorney is going to respond to McNaughton's letter. Chair Whiddon believes it's best if they do because it's more than he can handle. Manny Rodriguez wants to clarify how many times it needs to be posted. At least one place, 72 hours before. Jirair asked if online satisfies that. Chair Whiddon did not know.

Was a grievance filed? There are several issues here. The first has to do with Paramount Pictures. It's alleged that it's Paramount Pictures. It has to do with our process of a vacancy. There isn't anything in our bylaws requires that we send anyone to committee. There were eight members seated for this new board, so there was a lot of work. But those who were interested in the board meet with the Outreach Committee. Our attempts to form a bylaws committee is still ongoing. As we've become a larger board, there was nothing that said someone had to meet with a committee first. Thanks Christina Derenthal for going through that process. We will be looking for a Recording Secretary. There will also be a minute-taker, so the Recording Secretary won't have to do that. The City Attorney is consulting with us regarding the grievance. We want to be more timely in responding than as our last grievance.

When we thought we were going to put together a Grievance Panel last time, three of the five volunteers had conflicts. That is not fair. It's not in the spirit of transparency. And it's not in keeping with integrity. We agendized it. The entire board should be commended for its handling of it. It was a fair, democratic process. Does anyone have any questions or concerns about what we're supposed to do. The City Attorney has not given us a timeline. Bill Zide reminds us that reasonable people can disagree, but it's been personalized at times. Sees Steve Whiddon getting attacked a lot. We seem to be getting bogged down time and again, preventing us from moving forward on other things. I came on the board to get things done, but this letter has gone on for months. Ziggy doesn't want to comment because it hasn't

been agendized. Jennifer Moran thinks it's important to point out that this is a board of volunteers, not hired commissioners. We're not doing this to further our own careers. We need to pay attention to the process and the form. Who wants to do this if this is what it is? Don Durkey mentioned he has not been at a meeting at a while, so he doesn't understand what the letter was about.

Per Chair Whiddon, there was an accusation that a meeting wasn't noticed and things were being decided behind closed doors. If you have any agenda items for the next meeting, please email me and copy Vice-Chair Meredith.

Jose Torres doesn't think she's attacking us; I think she's just wanting to make sure we're following the steps. And, a suggestion to Chair Whiddon, when you're talking to the City Attorney, we need a paper on what was discussed. Chair Whiddon recommends that Jose contact Carmen Hawkins and suggest to her that he would like things in writing.

16. Other - None

17. Adjournment – Chair Whiddon thanked everyone for coming and adjourned the meeting at 9:19 p.m.