WESTLAKE SOUTH NEIGHBORHOOD COUNCIL

AGENDA
Special General Board Meeting
MINUTES - APPROVED

MacArthur Park
2230 W. 6th Street
Community Room
2nd Floor
Los Angeles, CA 90057

Tuesday, April 23, 2019
6:30 – 8:00 PM

Board Members Present: Eduardo Aguirre, MD Lasker, Eric McAnally, Stanford Caldera, Nelson Castillo

Board Members Absent: Danielle Guillen, Victor Strukov

1. Call to Order and Commission roll call

Call to order at 6:45 PM by Mario Hernandez

Mario Hernandez: WSNC is still in exhaustive efforts. So while Westlake South is in the process of re-establishing its board, the city has re-assumed control.

2. Community/ Government Reports & Announcements:

   a. LA City Council District Representative
   b. LAPD Senior Leads
   c. Government Departments/Agencies, including Dept. of Neighborhood Empowerment

Hernandez: The bylaws were approved by the Westlake South Board of Commissioners, so I am in the process of establishing a draft. I’m going to recommend that we hold off in translating it into multiple languages.

This past weekend, the dept of neighborhood empowerment hosted the first neighborhood resources fair at Rampart. It was a good opportunity for advocates out there who want to fight this issue of homelessness but don’ know where to start. So hopefully it’ll make some progress for next year.
United Way is hosting a special movie screening of The Advocates. It’s following three advocates and what they do to. It’s at Deaton Auditorium. I recommend you RSVP. The auditorium holds 400 people, we’re already 320. That’s April 30. There’s a networking hour that starts at 5:00. There’s a Q & A with the producer and director.

Your e-mails have all been set up. I’ve e-mailed those to everyone. Have you got them? I recommend you start using those because, again, using your personal e-mail makes all of those subject to the public the record act. So using these business e-mails keeps all of those records private.

The City Department of planning is holding Planning 101 in collaboration with our department, with LA City College. The RSVP was sent out. I can send it again.

And you guys have about $28,000 to spend. And for Community Organizations, we have Alexandra Morales.

d. Community Organizations

Alexandra Morales: I’m with CARECEN in charge of Public Relations and Policy Advocacy with CARECEN, located on Hoover. It’s a resource center for jurisdiction, immigration and legal support. All of our consultations are free, paid for by the state of CA. We’re also on the field re organize to support our day laborers. We provide support for individuals who need it. We also support parents who have youth under 18 in LAUSD. We meet and discuss different policy issues. We also serve the SFV. We do detention and deportation defense as well.

3. Discussion and possible motion to fill vacancies to the Westlake South Neighborhood Council in accordance with the WSNC Bylaws, Article V, Section 6: Vacancies

a. The available seats to be filled are:

3.a.1. Community Based Stakeholder – 1 Seat

Morales: One of things we’re trying to make sure is that it’s genuinely community driven policy, and that it actually reflects the needs of the community. We have Youth Empowerment curriculum. We have a community survey to ensure that we are monitoring public safety concerns, monitoring health care, and then putting it all together and capturing as many zip codes as possible to have a genuine connection with the community. We’re hearing that this is a way for them to be connected with their own advocacy. We don’t want to be a distant organization, but we want to be connected with the community and working with those we serve.

3.a.2. At-Large Stakeholder – 1 Seat

Hector Arzate: I live 6th and Carondelet. I’ve been there for nine years. I was formerly in the MacArthur neighborhood council and I really, really want to start working right away. There’s a big problem – the building across from Park Plaza Hotel. Me and my neighbors showed up at City Hall because we had discovered inconsistencies in the whole process. It’s going to be 24/7 alcohol and there are children around. If we don’t pay attention, they’ll have that permit approved and no one will be able to do anything about it. They’re a multi-million dollar corporation. What I
bring to the table is working with communities and non-profits.

Hernandez: Can I have a motion to fill the vacancy?
Lasker motions. McAnally seconds.
Motion approved.

McAnally: You’re applying for a council seat in both places?
Hector: Yes. If I were to be accepted over here, I would forgo over there. I would feel more comfortable over here.
McAnally: Beyond the scope of this project, do you see yourself being a part of this group?
Arzate: Absolutely. Whatever happens next door affects me, whatever happens here affects you.
McAnally: How are you going about dealing with this situation?
Arzate: Public records. They intend to send 2,000 drunk drivers out each night. So it’s a conveyor belt of death. We deserve better. We can do better. If we allow companies from somewhere else to come and tell us what to do, we’re compromising our dignity. I’ve been here 8-10 years at this location and in the surrounding area.

McAnally (to Morales): I wish Danielle were here. She’d have some really good questions for you. I think youth empowerment is a really important issue. And also it’s really good to have another woman in the circle.

Morales: I think what people have noticed is that there aren’t a lot of resources. Just dealing with updates, or “this is how the budget process works.” Not just “this is happening to me, but I can do something about it.” We’re having the challenge that often the whole family wants to get involved. Often youth go back to their family and tell them “I’ve learned how the budget works,” or, “I want to meet with my state representatives.” It isn’t always necessarily giving them the answers, but giving them ways to go about things.

Hernandez: All in favor of appointing Alexandra Morales to Community Based Stakeholder?
Vote: 5
Approved unanimously.

All in favor of appointing Hector Arzate to At-Large Stakeholder?
Vote: 5
Approved unanimously.

4. Discussion and possible motion to appoint the Executive Officers of the Westlake South Neighborhood Council in accordance with Article VI, Section 3 and 4. The Officers shall serve one (1) year terms and serve at the pleasure of the Board. Officer positions are:

a) President

Aguirre: I nominate myself. I know all of us has the same interest to have the community go forward but someone has to take the leadership position and I hope all of you support me. In the future, if one of you wants to take the leadership position, I would support you.

Stanford motions to approve Aguirre’s nomination. Lasker seconds.
Motion approved unanimously.
Aguirre: All of us have different skills and abilities and interests. But at the time when the idea appears, we have to work together to make it work.

Arzate: My concern has always been the community. We're not a very inclusive community because of cultural things and other things. So that's something I would like to see worked on.

Hernandez: All in favor of appointing Eduardo Aguirre as President?
Vote: 6 (includes Arzate)
1 abstention (Morales)
Motion approved.

b) Vice-President

Lasker: (Nominates self.) I was a board member, so I like to work with the officers, helping the president, and to get involved more. I like to work hard.

Arzate: You were a board member before here, so were you also an executive of the board?

Lasker: Before I didn’t have any positions. So I was the same thing.

Hernandez: All in favor of appointing Lasker Vice President:
Vote:7
Motion approved unanimously.

c) Secretary

Hernandez: We have someone to do the minutes, but it’s making sure they’re done well. The secretary would also be in charge of tallying the votes at meetings. Any nominations or self-nominations? (discussion) Mr. Castillo?

Castillo: I respectfully decline.
Lasker: Can I nomination Alexandra?
Hernandez: If she would like to.

Morales: (Accepted nomination.) I like to make lists of everything. I like to organize everything. I would make sure that everything is on the record.

Hernandez: All in favor of appointing Board Member Morales as secretary:
Vote: 7
Motion approved unanimously.

d) Treasurer

Hernandez: It’s a lot simpler this time, with the system that the City Clerk has in place. It’s uploading receipts, making sure that the monthly report is done at the end of the month. It requires you to take the 32-hour monthly training by the end of the month.

McAnally: I nominate Danielle.
Arzate: If she doesn’t accept, I would take the position.
Mario: It has to be done right away. I know she’s scheduled to take the training on May 7. It’s getting critical.
McAnally: Should I message her and ask her if she accepts?
Mario: Let me text her really quick, see if she answers. (does so) She declined.

Arzate: I was treasurer for MacArthur Park Council for three and a half years. Times have changed, so I think it could be a lot easier. It was very demanding.

Hernandez: All in favor of appointing Hector Arzate Treasurer? Wait, are you current right now? (All shake heads no.) You guys again need to be current with everything. And we need this position filled in order to get our funds.

Hector: Actually I’ll decline. I’ll be really honest. I’m just doing the inventory in my head and I won’t have the time to give enough energy to it. (Asks about timelines and starts to offer to take position again.)

Aguirre: I think you’d better leave it open for now. Just based on what I’m hearing.

Morales: Would it be more critical for you to have a Treasurer, or a Secretary?
Hernandez: A Treasurer.

Morales: Can I switch and nominate myself for Treasurer instead?
Hernandez: Motion to reconsider.
Morales: I withdraw my appointment for the position of Secretary and would like to be considered for the position of Treasurer.
Hernandez: All in favor of appointing Board Member Morales as Treasurer:
Vote: 7
Motion approved unanimously.

5. Discussion and possible motion to appoint a board member to serve as 2nd Signatory. This is a Financial Officer position and is required to complete the Office of the City Clerk Funding Division’s live training.

    Hernandez: Can I have a motion on this item?
    McAnally: First
    Aguirre: Second
    Hernandez: Any nominations, or self-nominations?
    Arzate: I’ll nominate myself
    Aguirre: I’ll do it
    Hernandez: As Second Signer? (nods) All those in favor of appointing President Aguirre as Second Signer?
    Vote: 7
    Motion approved unanimously.

6. Discussion and possible motion to appoint a board member to serve as the WSNC purchase card holder. Card holder is responsible for making all approved purchases of the SWNC. This is a Financial Officer position and is required to complete the Office of the City Clerk Funding Division’s live training.

    McAnally: First
Lasker: Second
Castillo: I nominate President Aguirre to be purchase card holder
Aguirre: I decline.
Arzate: I'll do it.
Hernandez: You sure?
Arzate: Yes. I spend a lot of time online. (Discussion.) I withdraw my nomination.
(Morales nominated)
Morales: I accept.

Hernandez: All in favor of appointing Board Member Morales purchase card holder:
Vote: 7
Motion approved unanimously.

7. Discussion and possible motion to appoint a board member to serve as Alternate Signatory. This position will sign all funding documents in the absence of the Treasurer of 2nd Signatory. This is a Financial Officer position and is required to complete the Office of the City Clerk Funding Division's live training.

McAnally: First
Lasker: Second.
Aguirre: I nominate Vice President Lasker.

Mario: All in favor of appointing VP Lasker as Second Signer?
Vote 7
Motion approved unanimously.

8. Discussion and possible motion to select a Saturday for a WSNC Board Retreat for require board member training and strategic planning and up to $750.00 for refreshments and retreat supplies.

Hernandez: We have a retreat coming up. We'd be talking about setting up agenda, how to write an agenda, a community impact statement, what those are, community filing... so if we can pick a Saturday. Can I get a motion?

McAnally: First.
Aguirre: Second.
Hernandez: Board member discussion?
McAnally: Should we table this, since Danielle is not here?
Castillo: You seem to be able to text her. Could you ask her availability for the next few Saturdays?

McAnally: May I'll be graduating and going back home to Nashville to see my sister.
Castillo: I'll be unavailable the first weekend in June.
Morales: I think the earlier we do it, the better
Morales: I think June 8? (Agreed Castillo, McAnally.)
McAnally: How long in advance do you have to submit a location for it to be approved?
Hernandez: In the past they would hold meetings at maybe the Ramada?
Castillo: How many hours do you envision us being here?
Mario: at least four. So that’s not bad. The conference room at the Ramada, I think it rann us $400.
Aguirre: We could agree on something and always adjust it later.

Arzate: Just a suggestion that, every opportunity that we can, we try to give business to the neighborhood.

Hernandez: Well, it has to stay within the area. We can set it for June 8 and we can bring it back for a new dollar amount and location.

Hernandez: Motion to set June 8. (And that works for Danielle, as well.) All in favor?
Vote 7
Motion approved unanimously.

Castillo: What time would it start?
Hernandez: I’m figuring 9:00 – 1:00.

9. Discussion and possible motion to approve up to $1,000.00 on WSMC branded swag and outreach materials. Swag would be given at WSNC outreach events which will help establish the WSNC identity. Items to be considered are:
   a. Acrylic brochure holders – Outreach
   b. Name badges
   c. Outreach supplies

Hernandez: Currently we have pens, those drawstring backpacks… I guess that’s all we have at this point.

Arzate: We were thinking of getting first aid kits and blankets with a stamp of the neighborhood council and stuff like that.

Hernandez: The City Clerk has restricted the swag allowance. They're tightening down.

McAnally: It’s because of that $28,000, right?
Hernandez: Right. And the board did approve those 10 concerts, so a lot of this stuff would be used there.

Aguirre: I’ve seen some neighborhood councils give a plastic bag to shop with, rather than the drawstring bag. And what about pins? We had some for the Christmas event?

Hernandez: Yeah, we don’t have any more of those. I’ve been thinking we might have some more board member polo’s. I might be able to find those.

Aguirre: I don’t like it.
Hernandez: Do you guys want to move on this item or table it?
Lasker: Table it.
Hernandez: Okay. And I can put some ideas together.

10. Discussion and possible motion to approve a date to host the WSNC Community Engagement Forum to be facilitated by Gabriel Kahan, Sense.LA. Forum is based on the leading-edge MIT methodology, which helps to create new thinking and increase community participation at Neighborhood Council meetings. Forum requires up to $700.00 for outreach materials, forum supplies and food for participants.
Hernandez: We had Gabriel Kahn come in from Sense LA. I think that would be very beneficial to the Westlake community to get them engaged. You already approve $700. I think we need to set a date for that item and it’s probably one of those that we’ll have to push out into next year, because it’s critical enough that we’ll really have to do enough outreach. So we can table this right now, unless you guys really want to talk about it.

McAnally: So my understanding is that, in tabling this for next year, that $28,000 does not get spent.

Hernandez: As long as we get you guys out of exhaustive efforts, get a president, Second Signer, Treasurer, all those things in place, then the $10,000 will roll over into the next year. So you’ll only have $18,000 to spend down. So the last date to submit the purchase card to the city clerk will be June 1. I’m also this close to getting a storage unit for Westlake South.

Castillo: Where would that storage unit be?

Hernandez: Sixth and Beaudry. Again, the actions we took tonight look like we’ll get you out of there by the timeline and get you in process.

McAnally: Can you give me examples of what would be done with a neighborhood purpose grant?

Hernandez: For example, the Leavitt Pavilion was done by neighborhood purpose grant. But in this particular case, they did it by neighborhood council community park. It’s easier to grant the money to the organization. Like KYCC. And Pico Union. They do graffiti within community boundaries. They do beautification projects within community boundaries.

Aguirre: If they provide the uniforms, we can put the logo on it, things like that.

Castillo: I would encourage all of you to build a neighborhood council that puts the neighborhood council first. Like finding an office space, where people can come and see you. A lot of times we think about investing in everybody else, but we don’t think about ourselves. The reality is that we are very dysfunctional at the moment. We are at the hands of the city. And we have to get out of there. And once we get out of there, everybody looks at you and sizes you up. You have to take care of yourself first, before you can take care of others. And you have to be very strategic about how you use your money.

Arzate: I second that. I don’t know if we have a website and we have all that set up. But it’s very important that we have the physical contact with the community.

Aguirre: I’ve been thinking about this place here.

Castillo: When you think about a place, you have to think about it strategically. This place is nice, but it’s not centrally located. You have to think about all the parts of the community that you serve. If you can get it for free, it’s great, but if not, it might be better to invest.

McAnally: I’m curious, does anybody here have experience with Cedillo’s office and know how that all works, or if that’s a possibility?

Hernandez/Arzate: I do.
Arzate: If it costs money, then we have to be as independent from the city as possible. My experience from his office is that it’s not been that good.

Hernandez: We’re kind of getting off topic here.
Aguirre: We can table that to discuss later.
Hernandez: We’re tabling number 10.

11. Adjournment at 8:03 PM

Hernandez: Motion to adjourn?
McAnally: First
Hernandez: Done. Adjourned at 8:03 PM.

Hernandez: And I strongly encourage you to build that relationship with your neighborhood office. And if anything has happened in the past, I encourage you to put that in the past and to move forward for the betterment of the community. Over 50 percent of Westlake South doesn’t have high school diplomas. Maybe that’s something the neighborhood council can work on.

Instead of giving them money for a neighborhood purpose grant, or whatever, we can give them funds for something that would improve public safety, or education. It’s just widening the lens and getting away from the norm of 5,000 there, 2,000 here, that sort of thing.