

Greater Wilshire Neighborhood Council



Greater Wilshire Neighborhood Council General Meeting

July 14, 2010

Approved by the Board
August 11, 2010

1. Call to Order

A duly noticed meeting of the Board of Directors of the Greater Wilshire Neighborhood Council ("GWNC") was held Wednesday, July 14, 2010 at the Ebell of Los Angeles, 743 S. Lucerne Blvd. Secretary Elizabeth Fuller explained that President Charles Dougherty and Vice-President James Wolf were unable to attend this Meeting, and called the meeting to order at 7:16 p. m.

2. Roll Call

Ms. Fuller called the roll. Board of Directors members in attendance at the roll call were: Elizabeth Fuller, Kiki Gindler, John Gresham, Jack Humphreville, Mike Genewick (alt. Alex Jones-Moreno), Federico Mariscal, Frances McFall, Matthew Oldham, Fred Pickel, Mary Rajswing, Benjamin Rosenberg, Owen Smith, and Jane Usher. Director Patti Carroll joined the meeting at 7:20 p.m. Directors Yigal Arens, Charles Dougherty, Jane Gilman, David Lunzer, and Clinton Oie were absent and not represented by an Alternate.

The Secretary stated that a quorum was present. Also attending were 11 Stakeholders and guests.

3. Reading of the Minutes of June 9, 2010 #1 and #2

Mr. Humphreville requested that the following paragraph on page 3 of the Meeting #1 Minutes...

DWP liaison Jack Humphreville said the City now has a preliminary DWP budget. The new DWP general manager is an investment banker type with a good grasp of numbers, and the new budget indicates water rates will go up about 16%. Mr. Humphreville said the good news is that residents have cut water consumption by 10%...but that also means there's less revenue coming in, and overhead costs haven't gone down. Power rates will be going up by 6%. The DWP and the City had a huge dispute over the Energy Cost Adjustment Factor (ECAF). After an independent analysis of the issue, the new General Manager was named. One issue now will be long-term plans for both water and power. There will also will be fights over the issue of an independent ratepayers' advocate and several transparency motions filed by the City Council (these came out of the ECAF fight). The motions would allow the City Council to have a lot more say in the business of the DWP – such as the ability to

Greater Wilshire Neighborhood Council
Board of Directors MINUTES
of the Meeting of July 14, 2010
Page

remove the General Manager and commissioners, as well as budget approval and approval of rate increases. This would create more checks and balances, but it would also give the Council Members leverage for their own pet projects.

...be changed to read:

DWP liaison Jack Humphreville said the City now has a preliminary DWP budget. The DWP general manager is an investment banker type with a good grasp of numbers. The new budget indicates water rates will go up about 3-5%, however, water rates for homeowners will increase even more because of shortage year water rates. Mr. Humphreville said the good news is that residents have cut water consumption by 10%...but that also means there's less revenue coming in, and overhead costs haven't gone down. Power rates will be going up by 6%, however, power rates for homeowners will increase even more because of the Rate Restructuring Plan and the tiered rate structure. The DWP and the City had a huge dispute over the Energy Cost Adjustment Factor (ECAF) that is subject of a review by the Controller and further meetings of the City Council. One issue now will be long-term plans for both water and power. There will also will be fights over the issue of an independent ratepayers' advocate and several transparency motions filed by the City Council (these came out of the ECAF fight). The motions would allow the City Council to have a lot more say in the business of the DWP – such as the ability to remove the General Manager and commissioners, as well as budget approval and approval of rate increases. This would create more checks and balances, but it would also give the Council Members leverage for their own pet projects.

MOTION (by Mr. Smith, seconded by Mr. Gresham): to approve the Minutes of the June 9, 2010 General Board Meeting as corrected.

MOTION PASSED unanimously by a voice vote.

4. President's Report (Elizabeth Fuller)

A. GWNC Election Results/Certification Update

Ms. Fuller explained that the City Clerk refused to consider our protest of its rejection of the challenge that was filed in our recent election, and declared the election certified. At the same time, however, we have not had a response yet to our protest letter to the City Attorney's office. Officially, we are required to seat our board when the election is certified, which it has been...but we are also not allowed to seat the board when a challenge is still on the table, which we consider there to be. However, we need to get on with our business, and Ms. Fuller reported that she discussed the matter with Federico Mariscal and Karen Gilman (the candidates in the challenged Larchmont Village race), and they agreed to be seated as the Director and Alternate, respectively, unless we hear otherwise. So we will seat our new board members this evening.

Ms. Usher shared that the GWNC letter sent after the election made a difference in the election process for all NCs. Ms. Fuller noted that the City Clerk's Office is having community

Greater Wilshire Neighborhood Council
Board of Directors MINUTES
of the Meeting of July 14, 2010
Page

Meetings to solicit feedback regarding the NC election process. There is also an online feedback form people can fill out if they would like to have their opinions considered.

B. Seating of Elected Board Members & Alternates

Area 1 (Brookside) – Owen Smith
Area 2 (Citrus Square) – Benjamin Rosenberg
Area 3 (Country Club Heights) – Frances McFall
Area 5 (Hancock Park) – Kiki Gindler, James Wolf
Area 6 (La Brea/Hancock) – Frederick Pickel, Steven Katz
Area 7 (Larchmont Village) – Federico Mariscal, Karen Gilman
Area 8 (Melrose) – Yigal Arens, Naftali Rubin
Area 10 (Ridgewood/Wilton-St. Andrews Square) – Patti Carroll
Area 11 (Sycamore Square) – Elizabeth Fuller
Area 12 (Western-Wilton) – Matthew Oldham
Area 13 (Wilshire Park) – John Gresham
Area 14 (Windsor Square) – Jack Humphreville
Area 15 (Windsor Village) – Charlie Dougherty
At-Large – Jane Usher, Margaret Sowma
Renter – Clinton Oie
Business – Jane Gilman
Education – David Lunzer
Religion – Alex Jones-Moreno, Michael Genewick
Other Non-Profit – Mary Rajswing

Oath of Office: Board Members all recited aloud the Oath:

*I pledge to represent the Greater Wilshire NC with dignity, integrity and pride.
I will encourage other points of view, even when they differ from my own.
I will respect, value and consider everyone's opinion.
I will find the good in my neighborhood and praise it and promote it.
To my neighbors, and to neighborhoods throughout the City of Los Angeles, I pledge to do
this to the best of my ability.*

C. Nominations/Elections of Board Members & Alternates to vacant seats:

Area 1 (Brookside) – Alternate: Kay Martin
Area 3 (Country Club Heights) – Alternate: Robin Diffner
Area 11 (Sycamore Square) – Alternate: Myrna Dwyer
Area 15 (Windsor Village) – Alternate: Betty Fox
No other Board Members or Alternates were nominated.

MOTION (by Mr. Gresham, seconded by Mr. Smith): to accept Alternate nominees Kay Martin, Robin Diffner, Myrna Dwyer and Betty Fox to the GWNC Board of Directors.

MOTION PASSED unanimously by a voice vote.

Greater Wilshire Neighborhood Council
Board of Directors MINUTES
of the Meeting of July 14, 2010
Page

Ms. Fox took the Windsor Village seat to fill in for the absent Mr. Dougherty.

D. Election of Board Officers

Ms. Fuller distributed and noted "GWNC Officer Job Descriptions." She explained that Officer positions are only a one-year commitment and described some of the responsibilities. She also reported that Charles Dougherty won't accept a nomination as President.

I. President

Mr. Smith nominated Mr. Gresham, who declined. Ms. Usher asked Ms. Fuller if she was willing to be President; Ms. Fuller explained that she's been doing the work of four positions and is only willing to do one from this point forward. Mr. Smith said Ms. Fuller is too valuable as Secretary to give up that position. Mr. Mariscal nominated Ms. Usher, who declined. Mr. Genewick nominated Mr. Smith, who accepted.

MOTION (by Mr. Genewick, seconded by Mr. Humphreville): to elect Owen Smith as GWNC President.

MOTION PASSED unanimously by a voice vote.

II. Vice President

Patricia Carroll nominated Ms. Fuller, who declined. Mr. Rosenberg nominated Ms. Gindler, who accepted.

MOTION (by Mr. Rosenberg, seconded by Ms. Usher): to elect Kiki Gindler as GWNC Vice-President.

MOTION PASSED unanimously by a voice vote.

III. Secretary

Ms. Fuller noted that the Secretary position "is where the bulk of the work is"; she and Mr. Gresham described some of the responsibilities. Mr. Genewick nominated Ms. Fuller, who accepted on the condition that someone else volunteer to be an unofficial Assistant Secretary; Mr. Mariscal accepted the assistant job, whereupon Ms. Fuller accepted the nomination for Secretary.

MOTION (by Mr. Genewick, seconded by Mr. Mariscal): to elect Elizabeth Fuller as GWNC Secretary.

MOTION PASSED unanimously by a voice vote.

IV. Treasurer

Ms. Carroll nominated Mr. Humphreville, who declined. Mr. Smith nominated Mr. Rosenberg, who declined. Ms. Gindler nominated Mr. Oldham, who accepted.

Greater Wilshire Neighborhood Council
Board of Directors MINUTES
of the Meeting of July 14, 2010
Page

MOTION (by Ms. Gindler, seconded by Mr. Smith): to elect Matthew Oldham as GWNC Treasurer.

MOTION PASSED unanimously by a voice vote.

E. Committee Sign-ups

Ms. Fuller circulated Committee volunteer sign-up sheets for the four committees below and explained Committee scheduling; Committees elect their own Chairs and “the Land Use and Outreach committees will need their own Secretaries.”

I. Land Use

This is a standing committee, open to Directors, Alternates and Stakeholders, and subject to Brown Act rules.

II. Outreach

This is a standing committee, open to Directors, Alternates and Stakeholders, and subject to Brown Act rules.

III. Ad Hoc Funding Guidelines

This is an ad hoc committee, open only to Directors and Alternates and not bound by the Brown Act. Ms. Fuller explained that because of our more limited funds this year, the GWNC “needs now, more than ever, funding guidelines.”

IV. Ad Hoc Million Trees

This is an ad hoc committee, open only to Directors and Alternates and not bound by the Brown Act.

F. Possible date change for September Meeting (Rosh Hashana conflict).
There was discussion regarding possible Meeting dates.

MOTION (by Mr. Gresham, seconded by Mr. Pickle): for the September GWNC General Board Meeting to be held on Wednesday, September 1, 2010.

MOTION PASSED unanimously by a voice vote.

G. CD4 Update (Nikki Ezhari)

[This Agenda Item was addressed after Item #5) C.) Ms. Ezhari distributed informational handouts and reported that “Sycamore Square has applied for Community Designation.” She’ll be meeting with the L.A. Recreation and Parks Dept. regarding Robert Burns Park Prop K Funding. Regarding the 585 Rossmore condo building, the L.A. Bureau of Sanitation has a system to assess potential flooding. The Council office has requested that AB 1290 funding be transferred to the LAPD for outdoor security cameras in the Windsor Square area. She’ll get an answer for the GWNC regarding the City Council trying to take NC funding for the charter bus program.

Greater Wilshire Neighborhood Council
Board of Directors MINUTES
of the Meeting of July 14, 2010
Page

H. 42nd Assembly District Update (Haeyoung Kim)

Ms. Kim was unable to attend this Meeting, but sent informational handouts which were distributed to the Directors.

I. 26th Senate District Update (Andrew Lachman)

Mr. Lachman was unable to attend this Meeting and there was no update.

5. Treasurer's Report & Budget Items

A. Monthly Budget report/approval (Elizabeth Fuller)

Ms. Fuller distributed the "[GWNC] Budget, Fiscal Year 2010-11" and "Monthly Spending Report – June 1-July 13, 2010" and explained that DONE now requires NCs to approve all purchases each month.

MOTION (by Mr. Smith, seconded by Mr. Pickle): to approve the GWNC "Monthly Spending Report – June 1-July 13, 2010."

MOTION PASSED unanimously by a voice vote.

B. Hiring of assistant for Meeting Minutes (Elizabeth Fuller).

Ms. Fuller explained "it is written into our Budget for this year . . . and we do have the budget for it" and introduced the new Minutes Writer, Mr. Levin.

C. GWNC 2010-2011 Budget approval (Elizabeth Fuller).

Ms. Fuller explained that the GWNC has a \$45,000 annual allocation and approximately \$28,000 rollover funding from DONE, and reviewed the proposed Budget. Land Use Committee Meeting space costs \$25 per Meeting; \$500 was budgeted in case Special Meeting space is needed. Office space costs around \$1,000 per month in this area; an office is needed for storage and to meet DONE's requirements for hiring an assistant. No free office space is available yet that meets City requirements (such as being ADA-compliant) and DONE requires that the office be within the GWNC boundaries. Many landlords won't sign DONE's lease, and it would take up to six months for the City to process a landlord's lease, which landlords are not willing to wait for. The current website space is full and needs to be expanded, which may increase our expenses for that item; "the website redesign project is moving forward." A mailbox is needed because the GWNC "needs an address that isn't someone's home." The GWNC is "obligated to provide a translation if requested . . . [It] costs \$275 per meeting" per language. "The Officers and the Outreach Committee have felt the need for business cards."

Ms. Fuller explained that the Green Islands Median project was allocated \$15,000. We did not specify how the funds should be used, and the project organizers chose to use the money for maintenance. Ms. Rajswing noted the traffic islands are on Wilton at 1st and 2nd Streets. She added that "there is no duplication [in items funded]. The Community Redevelopment Administration wouldn't fund Green Islands for maintenance, so [the GWNC] did." Ms. Fuller clarified that "this project was voted on at a [General Board] Meeting."

Greater Wilshire Neighborhood Council
Board of Directors MINUTES
of the Meeting of July 14, 2010
Page

Regarding the line item for the Wilshire Crest Big Sunday project, Ms. Fuller explained that DONE wouldn't pay the janitor's second invoice unless he has a Tax ID number, but they're okay with reimbursing her for paying the janitor with a personal check. There was discussion regarding the Ehlers landmark application payment arrangement. Finally, Ms. Fuller noted that \$10,000 is budgeted "for funding community projects." There was extensive discussion regarding the necessity to honor allocation commitments in the current climate of funding cuts.

MOTION (by Mr. Smith, seconded by Ms. Usher): to approve the "[GWNC] Budget, Fiscal Year 2010-11."

MOTION PASSED unanimously by a voice vote.

Ms. Fuller noted that "the Budget has been approved and will be submitted to DONE as written."

D. NC Budgeting Changes Recommendations from Harbor Gateway NC (Elizabeth Fuller) [This Agenda Item was addressed after Item #4) G.) Ms. Fuller recommended and it was agreed to TABLE this Item.

E. City budget update (Jack Humphreville)

Mr. Humphreville explained City budget allocations and proposals for a library tax and selling the parking facilities. The pension and infrastructure parts of the City budget are the biggest challenges.

6. DWP Oversight (Jack Humphreville)

Mr. Humphreville announced "good news about the Ratepayer Advocate . . . They want to have public hearings . . ." He described recent DWP history with the City and that "significant" rate impacts are coming. The DWP is the largest contributor to the City General Fund at around \$550 million. "DWP wage rates are the gold standard" for California utilities. There was extensive discussion regarding getting DWP and other City services.

7. Community Concerns

A. Memorial Library landscaping (Owen Smith) – Project details and funding request.
Mr. Smith reported that he's "still working" on it.

B. Senior citizen concerns (Joan Taylor)

Ms. Fuller reported that Ms. Taylor couldn't attend this Meeting; Ms. Fuller recommended and it was agreed to TABLE this Item.

C. Koreatown boundary status/review

Ms. Usher reported that the "boundaries are going forward . . . [They're] the boundaries we agreed to: Olympic on the south, Melrose on the north, Vermont on the east and Western on the west, and the commercial district on Western to Melrose on both sides."

Greater Wilshire Neighborhood Council
Board of Directors MINUTES
of the Meeting of July 14, 2010
Page

8. Outreach Committee (Elizabeth Fuller)

A. Website redesign update

Ms. Fuller met with the web designer; most of the new design is completed and she “hopes to have [the design available to] show at the next [General Board] Meeting.”

B. GWNC booth for Larchmont Fair

Ms. Fuller described previous Fair support; a booth will cost “approximately \$300” and the Fair will be held around October 24th. Mr. Gresham added that “it’s very important to do this.”

MOTION (by Mr. Gresham, seconded by Mr. Mariscal): to allocate funding for the approximately \$300 Larchmont Fair application fee and consider at the next GWNC General Board Meeting what the GWNC will do at the booth.

MOTION PASSED unanimously by a voice vote.

9. Land Use Committee (James Wolf)

A. 4th Street Bike Boulevard

[This Agenda Item was addressed after Item #11).] Ms. Fuller described previous discussion regarding this issue.

MOTION (by Mr. Smith, seconded by Mr. Gresham): the GWNC approves of the following recommended Land Use Committee MOTION: That the GWNC support the general concept of a 4th Street Bike Boulevard and encourage the Bike Coalition to work with the individual Neighborhood Associations along the proposed route to create appropriate solutions (crossings, markings, landscaping, etc.) for the portions of the project in their areas.

MOTION PASSED unanimously by a voice vote.

B. Yeshivath Torath Emeth Preschool – 7002 W. Clinton

Ms. Fuller described the issue. Mr. Gresham relayed that Stakeholder Lloyd Solly said that City Hearings were postponed to August 3rd and 10th. Mr. Solly described what an MND [Mitigated Negative Declaration] is and that there are “two areas that concern” his group: 1) they will “appeal to the City Council to reverse the Planning Commission decision . . .” and 2) “an ethics violation issue.” He described some history of complaints by neighbors against the School, including that the Certificate of Occupancy has been violated because the School has “fenced off the parking lot and are using it as a playground . . . Staff are parking in the surrounding streets . . . There’re not the required number of parking spaces . . . [and due to] noise complaints being [made] on a regular basis.” The City has said to “get a record of complaints . . . [to] get them into a Nuisance Abatement Program . . . [The School’s plan] is not even remotely supported” by any of the area’s Community Plans. The current zoning “was hand-crafted for that community.” Mr. Solly continued that there’s no “on-site pickup or set-down” for the 1,000 students. The L.A. Dept. of Transportation said “if the enrollment exceeds 1,030 students a complete traffic impact study” must be done. Mr. Gresham and Ms. Fuller noted that the GWNC has previously supported the neighbors on

Greater Wilshire Neighborhood Council
Board of Directors MINUTES
of the Meeting of July 14, 2010
Page

this issue. Mr. Solley added that “this is not a daycare, it’s a school . . . [The] applicant is in violation . . . [and they’re intending] to increase the number of kids at all four locations . . .”

MOTION (by Ms. Gindler, seconded by Mr. Gresham): the GWNC approves of the following recommended Land Use Committee MOTION: That the GWNC:

1. Support the neighbors’ appeal to reverse the Planning Commission decision regarding CPC-2008-5028-CU and its acceptance of an MND in relation thereto.
2. Send a letter to the PLUM committee and the City Council reporting the motion/support.
3. Write to the General Manager of the Los Angeles Department of Building and Safety, inquiring about the current status of each of the current CUP violations and asking how LADBS plans to adequately investigate these violations given the haphazard timing of occasional inspections with a school curriculum.
4. Write to the office of Zoning Administration to initiate a Nuisance Abatement / revocation of the COs and CUPs for the school buildings at 555 N La Brea, 540 N La Brea, and 7002 Clinton.

AMENDMENTS to the MOTION (by Ms. Fuller, accepted by Ms. Gindler and Mr. Gresham): to use the word “encourage” instead of “initiate” and Ms. Fuller also clarified that filing a Community Impact Statement is the best way to have our position recorded with the Council and other City agencies.

AMENDED MOTION PASSED by a voice vote; Mr. Rosenberg opposed.

Ms. Sowma and Ms. McFall left the Meeting at this time, leaving the Board without a quorum

The following agenda items were informational only and did not require discussion or votes:

- C. California Marketplace CUP -- 450 S. Western
 - D. Larchmont Bungalow – 107 N. Larchmont
 - E. Responsible Density Increase in R1-R3 Areas
 - F. St. Andrews Boarding House
 - G. Vacancy on Windsor Square HPOZ Board
 - H. Wireless Telecommunications Requests
10. Board Member Comments/New Business
[This Agenda Item was addressed after Item #8) B).] Ms. Usher explained that she “recused herself on land use” issues “because she’s a City Attorney.” She receives many

Greater Wilshire Neighborhood Council
Board of Directors MINUTES
of the Meeting of July 14, 2010
Page

complaints from around the City regarding billboards and medical marijuana clinics. It's been the City Attorney's promise and they've accomplished removing all the [illegal] supergraphics around the City. "Old structure," previously approved signs are allowed; "new structure" signs are not allowed; to report them, give the exact address, not just the intersection; pictures help but aren't necessary. "No new digital billboards are allowed . . . They're all coming down . . . There're approximately 6,000 licensed structures around the City . . . with 9,000 faces, with about 1,200 that aren't legal . . . Merchant signage" is a future issue. She encouraged e-mailing her at Jane.Usher@LACity.org if you see an illegal marketing campaign.

Ms. Usher explained that the medical marijuana clinics Ordinance went into effect June 7th and there are 30 lawsuits against it. "All [illegal dispensaries] have been ordered to close . . ." She requested to "let her know" if a medical marijuana clinic "is causing any problems . . . Tools" for regulating "this industry don't exist" [locally] because such regulations are handled at the federal level. Ms. Usher also explained that the City Attorney will first concentrate on shutting down dispensaries that opened illegally after the City's moratorium went into effect. After that, they will give dispensaries that did properly register before the moratorium a chance to opt for legal operation. Those that apply will be given the chance to comply with the new rules regarding background checks, locations, etc., if they want to remain in business.

11. Public Comments

There were no additional public comments.

12. Announcements and Adjournment

Mr. Mariscal said he has invited Larchmont Bungalow owner Albert Mizrahi to speak at our next meeting. Ms. Fuller said she would agendize his appearance at the next Land Use Committee meeting, which would be the most appropriate venue. Ms. Fuller also reminded everyone about NC Board Members Training by DONE July 17th, 8:00 – 1:00 in Gardena and July 31st, 8:00 – 1:00 at 1819 S. Western. Mr. Gresham encouraged completing the DONE Ethics Training at DONE's www.EmpowerLA.org website.

Ms. Fuller declared the Meeting adjourned at 10:27 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
David Levin
Minutes Writer