

**Neighborhood Council Valley Village
Board Meeting
1-26-05**

Approved 2-23-05 14-0

Agenda Item 1 – Call to Order, Roll Call and Welcoming Remarks. The meeting was called to order by NCVV President Peter Sanchez at 6:35 pm.

New Board member Alan Brody was recognized. Mr. Sanchez stated for the record that the meeting would be conducted under Roberts Rules of Order and within the guidelines of The Brown Act. Anyone wishing to speak to any issue was invited to complete a public comment card.

The roll was called. Board members present were: Mr. Tony Braswell (residential renter), Dr. Alan Brody (residential homeowner), Mr. Michael Drachkovitch (student representative), Ms. Ginny Hatfield (community based senior), Mr. Paul Hatfield (at large), Ms. Ann Hull (business), Mr. Walter Katz (residential renter), Mr. Greg O'Connor (education), Mr. Tom Paterson (residential renter), Mr. Nick Pool (business representative), Ms. Breice Reiner (community based organization), Mr. Peter Sanchez (residential homeowner), Mr. Bill Santoro (residential homeowner), Mr. Stuart Simen (business), Dr. Daniel Wiseman (cultural). Board member excused absent was Reverend Dan Clark, (faith based).

The posting roll was called. The posting requirements for the meeting were met.

Mr. Sanchez announced the resignation of Reverend Dan Clark from the faith based seat. He submitted his resignation due to family concerns in writing to Mr. Sanchez. Ms. Hatfield, chair of the Elections Committee, called for an election to refill the seat at the February 23 NCVV Board meeting. The elections committee will handle the mechanics of the election within the guidelines of the bylaws.

Agenda Item 2 – Approval of Minutes. Mr. Simen motioned to approve the December minutes, Ms. Hull seconded the motion. Approved 14-0.

Agenda Item 3 – President's Comments, Introduction of Guests. Guests for the meeting included Lisa Mowery and Jawahar P. Shah from DPW, and Chris Olsen from Councilmember Wendy Greuel's office.

Agenda Item 4 – Public Comment on Agenda Items. Mr. Sanchez opened the floor to public comment.

Marilyn White Sedel spoke to illegal posting of signs in the neighborhood, and encouraged the community to call 311 for assistance removing the signs.

Mr. Charles Peyton asked to defer to the agenda item.

Mr. Michael Cripps asked to defer to the agenda item.

Ms. Lunell Gilliland asked the Board to take a stronger stand on zoning and stop mansionization in Valley Village.

Mr. Kevin Allen asked the Board to institute the committee structure and require any application for building to come before NCVV prior to approval as a way of eliminating construction that violates the specific plan.

Ms. Stephanie Axelrod lives on 5400 block of Carpenter and expressed concern about mansionization and a large home that is being built on her street. (Ms. Axelrod submitted written comments for the minutes.)

Mr. Paul Kulak asked to wait until the agenda item.

Mr. Sanchez thanked all who came to speak during the public comment.

Agenda Item 7 – Water/Sewer Rate Increase. Mr. Sanchez recognized Lisa Mowery and Jawahar P Shah from The Department of Public Works. They gave a presentation on the proposed sewer rate increases. (attached).

Questions from the Board/Audience. Mr. Paterson conveyed the ongoing concern of an open sewer at Laurel Canyon and Chandler. Ms. Hatfield asked how DPW coordinates with the City. Dr. Wiseman asked how average use is calculated when some homes are much larger than the average lot size (Ms. Mowrey offered that individual meters can be placed in any home that feels they want a specific reading for their property. This requires a separate charge to the homeowner). Mr. Katz asked why the population increase would not help pay for proposed increased expenses. (current residents will not be asked to pay for the extra expense that will be required to accommodate new residents). An audience member asked why the DPW uses PR firms to communicate their message. It was stated that they do not. Mr. Katz asked for additional clarification on his question. It was stated that the current residential population of LA would not be asked to pay for future increases in population. Ms. Reiner asked how much a submeter costs. \$125 for installation, and possible extra if water lines are not separated. For specific requests please call 800-540-0952, or 311. Also, if comments wish to be incorporated into the public comments related to this proposal, they must be faxed to 213-978-1040 before February 7. Dr. Wiseman stated NCVV could submit a community impact statement, and restated his concern that one hundred cubic feet of water entering a property is not appropriate for properties with larger gardens. Dr. Wiseman also pointed out that in another DWP-Sewers meeting it was stated that the quoted cost of a “submeter” is only cost-effective if the water bill exceeds \$350 per month. Mr. Sanchez thanked the department representative for their presentation.

Agenda Item 5 – Treasurer’s Report. Mr. Hatfield presented two reports (attached), year to date spending financials and a proposed budget for the next four quarters. He explained that there has been a long delay in paying expenses related to National Night Out and it is because DONE wants another budget. The Board accepted the financial report. *Mr. Hatfield motioned that the Board adopt the proposed four quarter budget to be presented to DONE to clear the way for NCVV reimbursements. The motion was seconded by Dr. Wiseman and approved 14-0.* Each Board member was required to sign the budget document.

Mr. Santoro asked if there was a time limit to spend allocated funds? Yes, generally one year with some exception. Dr. Wiseman stated that the fiscal year end is June 30 and we have spending that needs to be instituted in this year. Mr. Sanchez reviewed the budget process for the public present and new Board members.

Agenda Item 6 – Ad Hoc Committee Report - Mr. Katz thanked the Ad-Hoc Committee members who have met related to the zoning issue for Kulak’s Woodshed – Mr. Kevin Allen and Mr. Jim Britten. A four hour meeting was held January 18 and all concerned citizens present were allowed to speak before the committee. Mr. Katz is awaiting a response from DONE and will host a follow-up meeting in the next few weeks. Mr. Santoro asked if there was a time limit for the Board and DONE to respond to this issue? No.

Public Comment on Agenda Item 6. Mr. Charles Peyton stated that this is a clear case of a person being considered for a variance, and if it were any other business it would be denied. He again stated that this is harming his livelihood and asked that the support for the community for Mr. Kulak not be relevant to the zoning request.

Mr. Paul Kulak stated that this has become a personal vendetta against him that will not end no matter the zoning decision, and he feels the zoning is close to approval. He asked the help of the Board in mediating the personalities involved.

There was no further public comment. Mr. Katz asked to be excused due to an ill family member.

Agenda Item 8.a – Planning and Land Use Committee. Mr. Paterson distributed a handout to the Board, including a motion for consideration. He reported on activity at 5555 Carpenter, and at 5512 Carpenter. He stated that an application has been submitted for a Temple at 5346 Laurel Canyon. Also a 12 unit condo is planned for 5300 block of Bellingham. Mr. Paterson’s report is attached. He made the following motion: *“Given the growing problems with the City handling of land use issues in Valley Village, the Neighborhood Council Valley Village hereby requests that Chris Olsen schedule an early February meeting with Councilwoman Wendy Greuel including representation from both the Valley Village Homeowners Association and NCVV as well as Dale Thrush to discuss those problems.”* The motion was seconded by Mr. Braswell. During discussion it was asked if any other Neighborhood Council has attempted this? No. Ms. Hatfield asked how the Board could get a list of all building project permits submitted? DONE should provide, but they are constantly late and this is part of our meeting with Councilwoman Greuel. Dr. Wiseman stated he supported the measure as it would create a “regular communication link” with our Councilmember and could, further, be shared by neighboring NC’s. Mr. Santoro asked if the bullet points in the report were part of the motion? No. Mr. Simen asked the President of the Homeowners Association (Lori Dinkin) to state her desire to be a part of the motion. She did. Mr. Sanchez asked for public comment. Mr. Michael Cripps stated that he is concerned about the mansionization of the Valley Village community, and stated that he contacted Wendy

Greuel personally to state that this is an issue which “she needs to get”. Mrs. Cripps asked if there are block captains? Mr. Sanchez invited her to attend the February 16 Homeowners Association meeting which would focus on public safety and she would get more information on that question. Mr. Simen asked to amend the motion to remove the first section (Given the growing...use issues in Valley Village). Mr. Paterson did not accept the amendment. Mr. Simen withdrew his request. *The motion was approved 13-0.*

Mr. Sanchez thanked Mr. Paterson for his report, and encouraged more membership for the committee. Mr. Paterson distributed a sign up sheet for the committee.

Mr. Hatfield added that there is a very good website run by the City of Los Angeles that will give information on any property tract in the city. It can be found by “googleing” the LA County Tax Assessor.

Agenda Item 8.b – The Orange Line. Dr. Wiseman reported briefly that the fence erection has begun, it is green and 4’ tall as promised. The station naming is now official and the name “Laurel Canyon Valley Village Station” has been submitted to the MTA Executive Board. In all the project is about half completed. Mr. Paterson stated that Donna Gooley (resident) has been pressuring MTA about route changes/discontinuation planned before the opening of The Orange Line. He asked that we support her effort through a motion. The motion was presented – Neighborhood Council Valley Village opposes the MTA making any changes to the existing lines until the Orange Line is operational. Mr. Simen seconded. Discussion – Ms. Hatfield stated this is occurring because some routes are not profitable due to budget cuts. Ms. Hull stated for persons who depend on bus transportation this is very upsetting and she supports the motion and requests that current routes not be altered. Dr. Wiseman said the entire MTA is affected, and that the route mentioned by Mr. Paterson is being discontinued not only due to non-profitability but also because MTA wants to force more ridership on the Orange Line. Mr. Paterson stated that some of the lines affected are among the most used and we do not want them altered until the Orange Line is fully operational. Dr. Wiseman agreed as he wants to see what impact the Orange Line has on other line ridership. Mr. Sanchez asked how the motion would be communicated? It would be introduced into public comment. Discussion was held on specific wording for the motion, Ms. Hull called the question. The motion was approved 12-0-1.

Mr. Paterson motioned *that The Operation of the Orange Line Route be changed such that Route 156 eastbound terminate at Highland and Santa Monica Boulevard and not at Highland and Hollywood Boulevard as is currently planned.* Mr. Simen seconded the motion. Mr. Paterson stated that it is important for us to make a statement to the MTA on this issue. The question was called, and the motion was approved 11-0-2.

Dr. Wiseman will communicate the two motions to the MTA.

Agenda Item 8.c – Soundwalls. Mr. Sanchez reminded the Board and audience that Mr. Chris Pechin wishes to remain involved with this issue, and reviewed the importance

of it. Mr. Santoro agreed to head the Board representation, and several Board and audience members agreed to help. Ms. Reiner stated that Mr. Pechin is still involved.

Agenda Item 8.d – NCVV Newsletter. Ms. Reiner and Mr. Santoro distributed a template for the new NCVV newsletter (The Bridge). They invited comment and pointed out that many Board members had responsibility to contribute information for the newsletter. There are plans to produce 6 or 4 newsletters per year. It was mentioned that this is a very important way to communicate with the community, and would be one major component of NCVV outreach. Mr. Paterson asked if block captains could be used for distribution? Yes. Ms. Hatfield asked how often the newsletter would be produced? 4 –6 times per year. Will there be electronic copies? Yes. Mr. O'Connor asked if NCVV funds could be used for postage? Yes, but there are less expensive ways to distribute. Dr. Wiseman offered that other NC's have used private companies to produce and distribute their newsletters at an average cost of \$2000 per newsletter. Mr. Simen offered to proofread. Dr. Brody asked if ads could be sold? Dr. Wiseman stated that might not be encouraged by the City. Mr. Braswell asked if it might be feasible to use a private company for four times per year? Ms. Reiner stated there will be a more complete example for the Board at the February meeting.

Agenda Item 8.e – Neighborhood Watch. Ms. Hatfield reported that we are still waiting for city approval to post the NW signs that were purchased in August. The NCVV Board has completed the bid process and is ready to contract with someone. She reported that we are having trouble getting answers from the City. Deanna Stevenson, DONE, stated that she would help get this resolved and will speak with Ms. Hatfield.

Mr. Israel Hirsch asked if the agenda and newsletter could be posted on the website? Yes.

Agenda Item 8.f – Community Projects. Ms. Hatfield presented a proposal titled "Culture of Peace", a VV school based outreach event that would be sponsored by NCVV. The proposal is attached. She requested a \$2000 commitment from the Board for the event, as part of our community outreach effort. Ms. Hatfield *motioned* "NCVV will support the cultural outreach event financially for approximately \$2,000." Dr. Wiseman *seconded the motion*. Discussion – What will the funds be used for? Fees, permits, refreshments, advertising and promotion. Ms. Hull expressed her concern that not all students have access to the program as directed under the Proposal – e.g. some students are involved in community based or after-school activities that are not connected to their schools. Ms. Hatfield reviewed the need for adult sponsorship into the program, and allowed that she would work with Ms. Hull to ensure that all children had access. Ms. Hull asked if there were some way to remove the requirement that "participants must be a member of a youth organization." Ms. Hatfield did not believe that was possible. *The motion was approved 11-0-2.*

Agenda Item 8.g – Bylaws. Mr. Simen reported that we are still awaiting DONE approval for our bylaw changes. Ms. Stevenson stated that they are basically approved

and we are only waiting for this in writing. She felt it would be completed before the February board meeting.

Agenda Item 8.h – Procedure for Youth Seat. Mr. Drachkovitch gave an overview of his plans to establish structure for the next Youth Seat election. His priority is to get the word out about the opportunity to serve. Mr. Sanchez asked Mr. Simen and Mr. Braswell to work with Mr. Drachkovitch to formalize the plan before the next meeting. Mr. Simen reminded the Board that students are on a different calendar than NCVV.

Agenda Item 8.i – Office Space and Web Site. Mr. Sanchez stated that we do now have office space, located in a cubicle at DPW. We will be sharing this with Midtown North Hollywood Neighborhood Council, and he publicly thanked them for their help in securing the space. We will continue to look for more ideal space for the Board.

The Web site has been updated considerably over the holidays, and work continues. Mr. Sanchez asked all Board members to remember that any posting for the web site must go through him in respect for the requests of the designer, Mr. Ciccareli.

Agenda Item 9 – Board Liaison Reports and Material Distribution. Materials were distributed by The President at the start of the meeting. Mr. Sanchez reviewed for the audience the role of liaisons and asked for any reports. Ms. Hatfield reported that East Valley Senior Center will host a fundraiser February 2. Mr. Sanchez reported that NCVV has agreed to participate in mayoral debates being assembled by Studio City Chamber of Commerce. Dr. Wiseman identified the NCVV representatives who would be involved – Mr. Braswell, Ms. Hatfield, Mr. Hull, Mr. Paterson, Mr. Pool and Dr. Wiseman. There are two events, February 7 and February 28. Dr. Wiseman will inform the coordinators of the event of our appointed representatives.

A motion was made by Dr. Wiseman to accept these persons as representatives of the Board for the function; seconded by Ms. Hull. The motion was approved 12-0.

Agenda Item 11 – Future Agenda Items. Ms. Hatfield asked that The Depot on Lankershim be discussed. Dr. Wiseman asked that the meeting tables be arranged in an arc so that Board members could see each other. He also stated that it would be preferable to have real chairs instead of the children's lunch benches. Mr. Sanchez stated that the new committee structure would be used on the next agenda. Mr. Braswell reminded committee chairs that they must post meetings and maintain minutes. Dr. Wiseman asked that a discussion be held on the Heritage Preservation Overlay Zone Concept. Mr. Santoro asked that the Gateway sign be added. Dr. Wiseman distributed information on the City Attorney's Dispute Resolution Program and asked to "agendize" a discussion of problem resolution in a future meeting.

Agenda Item 12 – Public Comment. Ms. Lori Dinkin was recognized to speak about the gateway sign.

Agenda Item 14 – Adjournment. There being no further business, Mr. Simen motioned to adjourn, and Mr. Santoro seconded. The meeting was adjourned at 9:12 pm.