

NEIGHBORHOOD COUNCIL BUDGET ADVOCATES MEETING #2  
MEETING BETWEEN 2015—2016 FOR THE FISCAL YEAR OF 2016—2017  
FLAME INTERNATIONAL RESTAURANT  
11330 SANTA MONICA BOULEVARD, LOS ANGELES, CA 90025  
JULY 18, 2015

INTRODUCTIONS

NCBAs Co-Chair Jay Handal called the meeting to order at 12:00 PM. The NCBAs present introduced themselves.

**MEMBERS PRESENT**

Mr. Kevin Davis (1) 1:33 PM  
Mr. Juan Salas (1) 12:59 PM  
Co-Vice-Chair Krystee Clark  
Ms. Krisna Velasco (2) 3:15 PM  
Parliamentarian Glenn Bailey (2)  
Ms. Becky Leveque (2)  
Ms. Joanne Yvanek-Garb (3)  
Mr. Harvey Goldberg (3)  
Ms. C.R. Cochrane (3)  
Ms. Jeanette Hopp (4)  
Treasurer Howard Katchen (4)  
Mr. Brandon Pender (4) 12:37 PM  
Ms. Elvina Beck (5) 1:09 PM  
Dr. Patrick Seamans (5)  
Mr. Charles Lindenblatt (5)  
Assistant Secretary Linda Lee (6) 2:56 PM  
Mr. Nelson Castillo (6)  
Mr. Scott Bytof (6)  
Co-Vice-Chair Susan Reimers (7)  
Mr. Marcus Rodriguez (7)  
Ms. Liz Amsden (8)  
Ms. Fanny Ortiz (8)  
Ms. Marisol Sanchez (8)  
Ms. Margaret Peters (9)  
Ms. Veronica Torres-Matthews (9) 12:38 PM  
Mr. Brett Shears (10)  
Secretary Erick Morales (10)  
Ms. Ayana McCowen (10)  
Co-Chair Jay Handal (11)  
Co-Chair Terrence Gomes (11)  
Mr. Jon Liberman (11)  
Mr. Hayes Thrower (12)  
Ms. Danielle Sandoval (12)

**MEMBERS ABSENT**

Ms. Barbara Ringuette (7)  
Ms. Monica Hernandez (9)  
Ms. Joan Jacobs (12)

**GUESTS:** Commissioner Lydia Grant; Mr. John Chavez from the Mayor’s Office; Mr. Steven Quat; General Manager Grayce Liu (12:38 PM); and Ivan Spiegel (12:48 PM).

Co-Chair Handal spoke to the NCBAs about their mission for the upcoming fiscal year, which includes meetings with elected officials and City department executives. Handal also discussed the need to have the

NCBAs work to improve on areas in which they have not done well before; this includes communication via email and general outreach to the neighborhood councils.

#### WHAT IS OUR PURPOSE & JOB DESCRIPTIONS

Co-Chair Terrence Gomes introduced Liz Amsden, one of the Budget Advocates from Region 8. Ms. Amsden was a new Budget Advocate last year and served as the group's Secretary and Co-Chair of the White Paper Committee.

Ms. Amsden spoke to the NCBAs about her experiences and the amount of time devoted by individual BAs to the process every year. She urged the NCBAs to find their passion among the group's committees and look for solutions to questions they had. She also discussed the commonalities of the regions, the need to empower individual NCs by actively pursuing input from their stakeholders, and the need to relay information both up and down. She also noted that NCs share most issues but often they are viewed through a different lens by NC to NC.

Co-Chair Handal introduced Grayce Liu, General Manager of the Department of Neighborhood Empowerment, before the NCBAs. Ms. Liu thanked the NCBAs for their service for the upcoming year. She also distributed lapel pins to the new NCBAs.

Co-Chair Terrence Gomes introduced Mr. John Chavez from Mayor Garcetti's Office. Mr. Chavez committed to working with the NCBAs to incorporate their comments and concerns in the crafting of the 2016—17 municipal budget. Mr. Chavez also committed to providing the NCBAs with requested information, including metrics used by the Office of Budget and Innovation and reviews of General Managers done by the Mayor's Office.

The NCBAs had lunch at this point, provided by the Flame Restaurant.

#### Q&A ABOUT ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Co-Chair Handal and Co-Vice-Chair Reimers took questions from the NCBAs regarding the budgeting process and the influence of the NCBAs. Handal noted that at least 13 of the NCBAs for this cycle are new members. Handal told the NCBAs that while neither the organization or individual neighborhood councils have formal power, they have the power to advocate for their communities, hence the name Budget Advocates.

Parliamentarian Bailey noted to the NCBAs that have not been active in keeping track of City Council files and report-backs. He noted that the Budget Cycle includes all actions from the start of a fiscal year, including deliberations before the Budget and Finance Committee. **Bailey recommended that the NCBAs deal with report-backs and council files.**

Ms. Amsden commented on the importance of getting input from individual neighborhood councils on NCBA activities. **Ms. Amsden also asked that the NCBAs strongly consider advocating for the greater budget and not member's own regional differences and preferences.**

Ms. Hopp mentioned that individual constituents—including neighborhood council constituents—could give the NCBAs different insights. **She encouraged having the individual NCBAs involving their own stakeholders.**

**Mr. Castillo asked that the NCBAs be copied on budget-related communications before the City Council.** Co-Chair Gomes volunteered to speak to Council President Wesson about this request.

Amsden—add to reporting regionally of NCs—get responses from our NCs. How to have better cohesion of advocating for both NCs and departments, you can only do it for one. **Advocate for the greater budget, not regional differences and preferences.**

A few of the NCBAs were unable to use Google Docs to write their committee preferences and so on. **It was recommended that a guide on using Google Docs be created to assist the NCBAs.**

#### REVIEW OF COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENTS AND BUDGET REP CONTACTS FOR MONTHLY MEETING REPORTS TO NCS

Secretary Morales and Co-Vice-Chair Reimers collected individual NCBAs' preferences regarding departments they would like to work with over the year. These departments will be grouped into committees and distributed the NCBAs at a later time.

#### MOTION TO APPROVE PARKING PASSES AND BUSINESS CARDS

Co-Chair Gomes presented the NCBAs with a request to purchase new business cards and provide parking passes for the NCBAs at a price of \$650. The NCBAs are required to provide their personal and vehicle information on Google Docs to receive either product.

Mr. Liberman moved and Ms. Yvanek-Garb seconded the motion. The 32 NCBAs present voted to **UNANIMOUSLY APPROVE** of the request.

#### MOTION FOR MEETING SCHEDULES AND LOCATIONS

Co-Chair Gomes presented the NCBAs with a request to hold the board's meetings on the first Monday of the month in Los Angeles City Hall at 7 PM and on the third Saturday of the month in West Los Angeles at 1645 Corinth Avenue at 10 AM (time may be moved if necessary). Some NCBAs initially presented objections to this request as it would conflict with other meetings some NCBAs attended. Gomes noted that these dates would be the best as they conflict with the least number of commitments of the other NCBAs.

Mr. Liberman moved and Mr. Goldberg seconded. The 32 NCBAs present voted to **UNANIMOUSLY APPROVE** of the request.

The NCBAs will not be meeting on the first Monday of September due to the Labor Day holiday.

#### MOTION FOR A NEW STANDING RULE: APPOINTING BUDGET REPS

Parliamentarian Glenn Bailey provided the following amendments to the NCBAs Bylaws:

- I. Renumbered existing Rule 3.2.1 to 3.2.2
- II. Added new Rule 3.2.1 as follows:

If a Neighborhood Council does not elect (or appoint) its Budget Representative(s) prior to the annual Neighborhood Council Budget Day or at any time thereafter, then the Board President and/or Treasurer shall be recognized in that order as the interim Budget Representative(s) for that Neighborhood Council by default.

Bailey noted that it is important to have this amendment's approval because many NCs are currently unrepresented in the NCBAs as Budget Representatives. Furthermore, some NCs claim that they rarely receive communications from the NCBAs, often from a lack of Budget Representatives. Therefore, this motion ensures that the NCBAs are further represented throughout the neighborhood council system.

Parliamentarian Bailey moved and Mr. Goldberg seconded. The 32 NCBAs present voted to **UNANIMOUSLY APPROVE** of the request.

## ACTIVITIES: PRIORITIES GLOBALLY AND LOCALLY

Co-Chair Gomes asked the NCBA's to split into two groups and discuss different themes and priorities for consideration of the upcoming year's white paper. Parliamentarian Bailey and Ms. Amsden each led one of the groups in discussion. These themes include:

### Bailey's group

- Livability, quality of life, sustainability, green
- Cradle to career
- Comprehensive
- 'The time is now' urgency, no time like the present
- Unaffordability of LA housing – owned & rental, Mayor's office needs to tackle LA housing crisis, Building Industry Association of SoCal
- 'Fiscal accountability for future success'
- Future – long term budgeting begins now
- Investment in citizens of Los Angeles, our charge is...
- NCBA charge is...
- Infrastructure, lack of funding, city be more efficient with \$

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### Amsden's group

Slogan: We're back... and we're better than ever

Need to look at: What do we need?  
What can we afford?  
How do we get there?

- Budget & finance committee suggested sustainability, City is pushing its Sustainable pLAN
- Building & maintaining quality of life
- Education alternatives to what LAUSD provides = city programs for kids & adults (through libraries, City/NP partnerships, City already funding education through NPGs to schools, apprenticeship programs, COMMITTEE on education
- Housing, affordable housing, transit tie-ins, homelessness – need committee to address & discuss
- Follow the money
- LA Unified largest employer in country
- Education fits into budget as companies won't move to LA if good education is not available, will never be a first class city without
- Need to improve safety & cleanliness to attract & maintain tourism
- Management & personnel, need training for management skills
- Better response to stakeholders & NCs from City & departments
- Communicate our needs to Councilmembers, get in their faces
- Infrastructure needs – paths, LAPD, safety, pipes, water, LA River
- Land use, gentrification
- Quality of life
- Business development & jobs, growth vs. quality of life issues

## MOTION FOR SERVICES REPORT CARD AND FORM COMMITTEE

Whereas the Mayor's Office had distributed a budget survey to the public that had no input from the NCBA's, there should also be a survey distributed by the NCBA's for our own information of community needs. This survey will gauge needs such as affordable housing and whether or not that engenders homelessness. Most of

all, the survey will measure whether departments such as Housing are doing their part to fulfill their missions in the eyes of the public.

The Services Report Card will have a window to allow the NCBAs to collect data. The NCs will also be asked to discuss and promote the survey at their board meetings. Individual NCBAs will also be asked to request that their Councilmembers, State Assemblymen, Senior Lead Officers, etc. also distribute the survey to the general public. A format for the survey should be prepared before August 3<sup>rd</sup>. Constant Contact will also be purchased to help distribute the survey.

Mayor put out a document that had a list of questions engineered by the Mayor's Office with no help from the NCBAs. So, put out a survey that asks what people think about some services like police and public works. What do communities need more off—there's not enough affordable housing, does that engender homelessness? Give a window that will allow for NCBAs to collect such data. **Have the NCs discuss the survey.** Send it out to SLOs and City Council deputies. Voted and approve constant contact.

Co-Chair Gomes moved and Assistant Secretary Lee seconded. The 32 NCBAs present voted to **UNANIMOUSLY APPROVE** of the request.

The following NCBAs volunteered to join the committee: Ms. Peters; Mr. Quat; Ms. Velasco; Ms. Amsden; Mr. Bytof; and Mr. Pender. Co-Chair Gomes requested that a press release be developed and mentioned that he has the press contact list.

#### SET A DATE AND LOCATIONS FOR REGIONAL BUDGET DAY

Co-Chair Handal discussed that October Regional Budget Day—a day for individual regions to discuss their individual budget priorities—should be set at this meeting to allow for advanced planning. Handal suggested October 17<sup>th</sup>, the third Saturday, as the date with Regional Budget Day replacing the regularly scheduled NCBAs board meeting.

Parliamentarian Bailey requested that the actual Budget Day also be scheduled earlier rather than later, noting the inability of the Mayor to attend this year's event. It was suggested that the last Saturday of June 2016, the 25<sup>th</sup>, be the date for annual Budget Day.

Mr. Liberman moved and Ms. Velasco seconded. The 32 NCBAs present voted to **UNANIMOUSLY APPROVE** of the request.

The following NCBAs volunteered to join a committee responsible for collecting information on the coordination of all regional Budget Days: Parliamentarian Bailey; Assistant Secretary Lee; Ms. Sandoval; Ms. Sanchez; Ms. Ortiz; Co-Chair Gomes; and Co-Chair Handal. **Co-Chair Gomes volunteered to take the lead in reserving the room for annual Budget Day and to speak to Council President Wesson about the event.**

#### MOTION TO DEVELOP ADVANCE SURVEY FOR DEPARTMENTS AND REVIEW CURRENT SURVEY

A survey will be created and sent to General Managers to request information regarding their priorities before any meeting with the NCBAs. This survey will include questions regarding the Department's mission, what the Department perceives its mission to actually be, and what has been added and defunded to further reach that mission.

Mr. Bytof requested that a question be included on the percentage of Department's resources and dollars that are used to solve homelessness. This question was further expanded into how emerging issues such as AirBnB impact the City and individual budgets.

Parliamentarian Bailey proposed that a question ask about requests made by Angelenos that City departments have been unable to accommodate and why. This includes, for example, unmet service requests.

Mr. Davis asked that a question be included concerning current training and improving training. The question might also include requests for department's current training protocol and what resources are needed to improve training.

#### ADJOURNMENT

Treasurer Katchen reported that around \$27,000 had been donated to the NCBA's from the individual neighborhood councils, with close to one-third of all councils donating to the fund. More information about the NCBA's budget will be provided at a future meeting.

WITHOUT OBJECTION, Co-Chair Gomes adjourned the meeting at 4:08 PM. The NCBA's will meet again on Monday, August 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2015, at Los Angeles City Hall.

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED BY:  
ERICK M. MORALES  
2015-2016 NCBA's SECRETARY