



## Minutes

### WRAC Meeting of the Board of Directors October 30, 2023 – 6:30pm

**Webinar link:** <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87275111207>  
**Or Dial** (669) 900 9128 **Webinar ID** 872 7511 1207

ALL SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS AVAILABLE AT:

<https://tinyurl.com/3as63h3u> and <https://westsidecouncils.com/meetings/>

*Items on the Agenda may be taken in any order at the discretion of the Chair*

#### 1. Welcome/Introductions

**a. Call to Order and Certification of Quorum:** Chair Greenberg called the meeting to order at 6:32 PM **with 14 Present:** Robin Greenberg, Chair (BABCNC), Chris Spitz, Co-Chair (PPCC), Carolyn Jordan (BCC), Ravi Sankaran (DRNC), Drew Ruesch (MVCC), Marcello Robinson (NWNC), Tanya Leal (PalmsNC), Jason Plummer (SORONC), Nico Ruderman (VNC), Walton Chiu (WLASNC), Jane Wishon (WNC), Steve Sann (WCC), Lisa Chapman (WWNC), Paula Gerez (MCWP).

**Nonvoting Alternates Present** Nickie Miner (BABCNC), Barbara Broide (WNC) and Alexandra Polin (WLASNC).

**Also Present** Tyler Laferriere (WRAC Secretary); Marian Ensley, Office of Mayor Bass; George Hakopiants & Cairo Rodriguez, CD 5; Michael Amster, CD 11; Sherman Shamoiel, Office of Assemblymember Rick Chavez Zbur; Janet Turner, Office of Congressman Ted Lieu & Jessie Johnson, LADWP.

#### **b. Chair Updates –**

(1) Welcome new Board members:

PalmsNC – Tanya Leal, primary; Kay Hartman, alternate

SORONC – Jason Plummer, alternate

(2) Next Board meeting: November 20, 2023; guest speaker: State Sen. Ben Allen

(3) **Motion** to cancel the December 18, 2023 meeting **passed** by 11-01-0, and 2 absent, as **moved** by Members Wishon (WNC) and Ruderman (VNC).

(4) Speaker invited on January 15<sup>th</sup>, 2024: Veronica de la Cruz, Deputy C.A. and former Neighborhood Prosecutor, now assigned to the City Attorney’s newly formed “Community Law Corps” (representing Districts 5, 8, 9, 11 and 15).

**Motion** to **move the meeting to January 22<sup>nd</sup>** **passed** as the 3<sup>rd</sup> Monday is MLK Day, as **moved** by Members Leal (PalmsNC) and Robinson (NWNC).

(5) Position on Middle East conflict (BABCNC): Chair Greenberg related that BABCNC took a position, and read their motion to the Board, just as an FYI, which stated:

“The Bel Air Beverly Crest Neighborhood Council is horrified by the acts of terrorism

against Israel on October 7th 2023. Los Angeles is home to over half a million Jews and the Neighborhood Council recognizes the threats to their public safety as a result of the ongoing terrorism. We urge the Mayor's office to ensure that all Angelenos are safe during this time of heightened public threat. We are standing in solidarity with the nation of Israel, and our Jewish and Palestinian neighbors in LA who are pursuing peace. We mourn the loss of innocent lives." Chair Greenberg related that similar motions were made by City Councilmembers Price (CD 9) & Blumenfield (CD 3) and by LA County Board of Supervisors. Chair Greenberg noted that this was FYI only; not for discussion.

## 2. Government Reports/Speakers

- a. **Capt. III Richard Gabaldon** – Chair Greenberg introduced Captain Gabaldon, Commanding Officer, LAPD West LA Division, who related that he has been in WLA for four months, has been with the Department 29 years, a Captain for four years, was with NoHo Patrol, and Force Investigation Division for two and a half years, and was asked by Chief Moore to be the Commanding Officer at WLA. He feels lucky to have been placed at WLA. He is from Torrance, plans to retire in three years and hopes to finish his career here. The Captain gave a brief update and opened the floor to questions. Send additional questions to [31356@lapid.online](mailto:31356@lapid.online). Vice Chair Spitz thanked the Captain for his support for her community and commended SLO Brian Espin. Members Chiu, Ruesch, Miner & Sann introduced themselves to the Captain, asked questions and provided comments. Chair Greenberg thanked him and welcomed him to return often.
- b. **Mayor's Office – Marian Ensley, New West Area Representative**, introduced herself. Ms. Ensley provided updates included but not limited to that "Inside Safe" had their 29<sup>th</sup> operation in the Mar Vista area, on Venice Blvd. & underneath the 405 Freeway with other leadership, bringing 50 individuals inside; a citywide voluntary approach which leads with housing and services, and another one two weeks ago, in Koreatown, focusing on four clusters, brought 100 unhoused individuals inside.
  - 2) Today the Mayor signed her 5<sup>th</sup> Executive Directive to improve the customer experience of Angelenos requesting City Services with many changes (outlined) and creating a MyLA311 customer service policy that governs departments, intake fulfillment and communication of information and services to the public.
  - 3) Ms. Ensley noted that LA Metro Board of Directors approved Mayor Bass's motion to approach addressing homelessness on public transportation within Metro's Transit System, have Metro create an action plan to address homelessness, and work closely with LAHSA assure access to resources.
  - Questions were asked and answered.
  - Member Ruesch would prefer that they focus more on our Police & Emergency Services, as having to wait on hold 36 minutes on 911 is unacceptable, and the need to get better emergency response times. Ms. Ensley discussed realities of hiring in the city.
  - Member Ruderman (VNC) asked for clarity on whether the Mayor wants to eliminate the 90 (Marina) Freeway, to which Ms. Ensley shared a quote from Mayor Bass stating

that "...I do not support the removal or demolition of the 90 freeway. I've heard loud and clear from communities who would be impacted. And I do not support a study on this initiative. I thank Angelenos for continuing to make their voices heard about this important issue."

- Member Gerez asked questions regarding the Landlord Rental Assistance program, and as to Inside Safe locations, e.g., hotels, which do not take into consideration vulnerable or sensitive sites within 500 ft., citing a shooting at a hotel near a school.

- Member Broide related that she heard that the Mayor supports the Metro TCN digital billboard advertising program and asked if it is possible to engage the Mayor on this topic. Ms. Ensley invited all to email questions to [Marian.Ensley@lacity.org](mailto:Marian.Ensley@lacity.org).

**c. Council Reports –**

- (1) **George Hakopiants, District Director -- CD 5/Yaroslavsky**, introduced himself, having worked at CD13 for 5-1/2 years and happy to be here. He provided updates:
- 1) CD 5 is partnering with LASAN on the "Great Pumpkin Bash," which invites people to bring their pumpkins to Pan Pacific Park on November 5<sup>th</sup> for composting.
  - 2) They are working on an EP session with the EMD, LAPD and LAFD to help prepare folks for disaster readiness, starting in the hillsides. They are looking to host an event at TreePeople, are coordinating the event and will announce in a few weeks. They want to do this across CD 5, as well as provide other events in their district throughout the year.
  - 3) Near UCLA on Sepulveda, their office removed graffiti, part of a larger problem relatively unnoticed for 10 years. The work was done in an easement area without a finalized maintenance agreement; now the Bureau of Engineering (BOE) is working with Caltrans, Metro & city departments to finalize the maintenance agreement so they can more quickly abate the graffiti.
  - 4) Councils are invited to make use of the LA Conservation Core (LACC) Green Team, a crew of five people who go around the district to do tree planting, bulky item abatement, etc., to complement the efforts of Sanitation. If you would like a request, send a photo to the CD 5 field deputy. [george.hakopiants@lacity.org](mailto:george.hakopiants@lacity.org)
  - 5) George also introduced **Cairo Rodriguez**, new CD 5 Sr. Field Deputy for the SORO area, Cairo introduced himself, noting his history in City Council offices. Cairo will serve as CD 5's representative at WRAC meetings. [Cairo.Rodriguez@lacity.org](mailto:Cairo.Rodriguez@lacity.org)
- (2) **Michael Amster, Field Deputy – Council District 11/Park** gave a detailed update:
- 1) They have added three new team members: a new Field Deputy, Kevin Ivy, from Westchester, will now serve as Field Deputy for Westchester, Playa Vista & Playa Del Rey; Sean Silva will be Venice Deputy for only Venice and will be a Planning Assistant. Ashley Lozada will now be Housing and Homelessness Coordinator & Field Deputy at Mar Vista and Del Rey. Michael's role will be unchanged.
  - 2) Accomplishments of his office mentioned include the Inside Safe operation along Venice and Globe/the 405 Underpass, with over 50 people housed; the ability to have people housed at the Venice ABH (A Bridge Home) in December; the Culver Boulevard Median clearing in January, then Venice and Dell in the summer; the operation involving the RVs at the Ballona Wetlands shortly thereafter – five very complex operations that

got people housed and made the community cleaner and safer while getting people the housing and services they desperately need.

3) Michael spoke on a services operation organized with Metro LAPD, in Sawtelle underneath the 405 along Exposition. This sidewalk had not been seen in years due to the encampment but now but people are walking to the post office, are coming from the Metro rail station and can actually use the sidewalk.

4) The Temescal Canyon Road project in Pacific Palisades will take at least until the end of November to be completed because of the need to more robustly address the groundwater that accumulates underneath the adjacent bluffs. While the road project completion has been delayed, when it's all over, a much better project will have been created than what was initially planned. [michael.amster@lacity.org](mailto:michael.amster@lacity.org)

**d. Additional Government Reports –**

**Janet Turner from the Office of Congressman Ted Lieu** thanked so many of the councils for helping out with their Conversations with Veterans.

Because of craziness in Washington, the event was changed to virtual. Janet offered to send us a new flyer with the Zoom link. Since this meeting, the event took place as can be seen at the following link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dqRpj63W73k>

Some bills the Congressman has introduced include the “Face Recognition Act” that would prohibit use of facial recognition on protestors or for immigration enforcement. He co-sponsored HR3921 – the “Reduce Helicopter Noise Act.” He also introduced two new bills to help address homelessness & co-sponsored one with Representative Waters.

[Janet.Turner@mail.house.gov](mailto:Janet.Turner@mail.house.gov)

**Sherman Shamoel from the Office of Assemblymember Rick Chavez Zbur** shared three broad areas of focus for the Assemblymember: housing & homelessness, housing & the environment, civil rights & social justice. Four of the Member’s bills were signed by the Governor, AB3, AB5, AB1484 and AB1620. Asm. Zbur’s office is having an open house December 3<sup>rd</sup>, 12:00 pm-3:00 pm at 1445 North Stanley Avenue. Assembly Speaker Rivas announced the formation of a select committee on retail theft and Asm. Zbur has been named committee chair; the select committee is bipartisan.

[Sherwin.Shamoel@asm.ca.gov](mailto:Sherwin.Shamoel@asm.ca.gov)

**Jessie Johnson from LADWP** noted that LADWP has introduced an online tool to help customers take control of their energy and water use.

**3. Board Member Updates –**

**Ravi Sankaran (DRNC)** – gave an update on the Murphy Oil Drill Site appeal hearing which took place on October 17<sup>th</sup> and which he attended virtually. The South LA Area Planning Commission had to decide whether to uphold the city’s letter of determination, which would impose conditions on the oil company for greater protections, or to support the oil company which was appealing several of the conditions. The hearing ended with a compromise by the Commission: the oil company got most of what they wanted and most restrictions were removed. The city was avoiding a lawsuit from the oil company, a disappointing outcome. He thanked everyone for the support of WRAC and the NCs/CCs.

Chair Greenberg congratulated him for bringing forth this issue.

**Barbara Broide (WNC)** – gave a report on the Metro TCN ordinance status, noting that the City Planning Commission (CPC) met on September 14<sup>th</sup>, and unfortunately, they have compromised their prior stand by approving the program; the letter of determination has been issued and the project is moving quickly to PLUM, apparently to a November 7<sup>th</sup> hearing date. The only thing to do to stop the program is to have a huge outcry to the Mayor’s office and the City Council and PLUM, and to have each NC across the city go to their councilmembers and request removal of the signs in their district, to make it less dangerous if we can’t stop it citywide. She urged members to contact CD 5 and CD 11 and say this is wrong. Metro wants to extend the program from 20 years to 30 years, asking for hours of operation of 5am to 2am instead of 7am to midnight. The CPC voted to recommend allowing the billboards to be turned on at 5am. She further urged members to testify at upcoming hearings and spread the word.

**Chris Spitz (PPCC; WRAC Vice-Chair)** – Vice Chair Spitz noted that PPCC voted to oppose the program again, and has requested that Councilmember Park have these billboards removed. Vice Chair Spitz also emphasized that we appreciate the improvements at the sites mentioned earlier as part of Inside Safe operations, and the Mayor’s office did respond to the letter we sent requesting more data on Inside Safe, but the WRAC Homelessness Committee (HOC) felt the response was inadequate, as specific data were not given. As a result, a WRAC follow-up letter was sent at the request of the WRAC HOC (see below). She further noted the following:

(1) Inside Safe data request:

a) WRAC letter 9/20/23:

<https://westsidecouncils.com/wp-content/uploads/2023/09/WRAC-Request-Inside-Safe-Data.pdf>

b) Mayor’s office response/fact sheet 10/12/23:

<https://westsidecouncils.com/wp-content/uploads/2023/10/FACT-SHEET-Inside-Safe-Initiative-Data-and-Progress-1.pdf>

c) Follow-up letter 10/25/23 (requested by WRAC HOC):

<https://westsidecouncils.com/wp-content/uploads/2023/10/WRAC-Inside-Safe-Data-Follow-Up.pdf>

(2) Short Term Rentals enforcement:

a) WRAC letter 9/21/23:

<https://westsidecouncils.com/wp-content/uploads/2023/09/WRAC-Letter-STRs-Enforcement.pdf>

b) Planning report 10/4/23:

[https://clkrep.lacity.org/onlinedocs/2014/14-1635-S10\\_misc\\_10-05-23.pdf](https://clkrep.lacity.org/onlinedocs/2014/14-1635-S10_misc_10-05-23.pdf)

(3) Light pollution – WRAC letter 9/22/23:

<https://westsidecouncils.com/wp-content/uploads/2023/05/WRAC-Letter-re-Light-Pollution.pdf>

(PalmsNC also passed a modified version after the WRAC letter sent)

#### 4. Committee Reports –

- a) **WRAC Transportation & Mobility Committee** – Meeting on 10/18; no actions taken; ongoing discussion regarding Marina Freeway replacement proposal (note: Mayor Bass has rescinded her prior support for federal funding of a feasibility study). Next meeting 11/15.
- b) **WRAC Land Use & Planning Committee** – No meeting in Oct. Next meeting 11/13.

c) **WRAC Homelessness Committee** – Meeting on 10/24; various actions taken, as described in items 3.c(1)(c) above and 7.a and 7.b below. Next meeting 11/28.

5. **Public Comment** – There was no public comment.

6. **Approval of Minutes**

The September 2023 Meeting Minutes were **approved** with 13 yeses, 0 noes, 1 abstention from Carolyn Jordan (BCC), as moved by Chair Greenberg (BABCNC) and seconded by Member Wishon (WNC).

7. **New Business**

a. **Action (recommended by WRAC HOC/Steve Sann)** –

Board approval of a letter to the Mayor and City officials, regarding recent dismissal of the President of the Board of Transportation Commissioners.

*(Requested action: Board approval of letter to be sent directly to the Mayor and City officials, based on WRAC’s Statement of Principles, standing policies & positions.)* See link to draft proposed letter attached below.

- Member Sann (WCC) introduced this item as addressing a problem that predates this Mayor. He provided historical background on the system of commissions, under the City Charter, which was reformed recently; the structure we have now with a Mayor with a weak system was put in place long ago with many commissions in the city (virtually every department has one), to prevent corruption, which is why this letter was brought forward. (Member Sann provided a good deal of history on this.)

Member Sann (WCC) moved, Member Chapman (WWNC) seconded, and further discussion was held, including comments from Member Broide and Vice Chair Spitz, the latter noting that this is based on WRAC’s Statement of Principles, for the letter to go directly to the relevant city officials.

The **motion to approve** the letter **passed** by 12 yeses, 0 noes & 2 abstentions by Members Plummer (SORONC), & Chiu (WLASNC).

b. **Action (recommended by WRAC HOC/Chris Spitz)** –

Board approval of a PRA request to LAHSA, requesting a complete list of all individuals and/or entities that have received funds to operate a facility to house or shelter unhoused individuals under the Inside Safe program *(Requested action: Board approval of the request to be sent directly to LAHSA, in furtherance of WRAC’s request for Inside Safe data, item 3.c(1)).* See draft PRA request attached below.

- Vice-Chair Spitz (PPCC) introduced and moved this motion, which was seconded by Member Chapman (WWNC). Steve Sann (WCC) responded to the question of why we are requesting this specific data, and provided a detailed answer as to this regional problem, noting we want to have accurate complete

information; the committee felt it was important to have a baseline of information to agree on, especially in light of the billions of dollars that are being spent, so we can say what is accurate and what is not.

Vice-Chair Spitz noted that the committee wants to come up with recommendations for positive actions to address the problem; the problems have not been addressed adequately. The committee felt the only way to do that adequately is to have every bit of information at their fingertips. This is only one piece that they need.

Member Wishon noted that though they are talking about multijurisdictional things, that doesn't tell where the locations are, only the organizations contracted with. We want to know what to do with that data. Member Sann named several elected officials joining LAHSA, and discussion was held on whether to do this as a PRA request, which Sann noted that the public is entitled to. Vice Chair Spitz noted that the Chair and committee felt it was important to make this request, and that WRAC needs to be taken seriously to sit at the table with LAHSA and our elected officials.

**Motion to approve** the PRA request **passed** by 14 Yeses, 0 noes & 0 abstentions.

- c. **Motion/s regarding up-zoning of neighborhoods** (recommended by BABCNC/Robin Greenberg and WWNC/Lisa Chapman; alternative language passed by BABCNC & WWNC, respectively. This item was for a possible Board decision on whether or not to recommend either motion, or a revised version).

- Chair Greenberg passed the gavel to Vice Chair Spitz, who explained that prior to the meeting Chair Greenberg (BABCNC) and Member Chapman (WWNC) had agreed on language of a revised version, combining the two alternate motions into one motion, which had been distributed to the Board and was posted on the WRAC website and Google Drive. The following is the combined motion that was presented to the Board and moved by Chair Greenberg & seconded by Member Chapman, in place of the two prior motions separately passed by BABCNC and WWNC:

“Re Council File # 21-1230, Housing Element / General Plan / 2021–2029: City data, including in the Housing Element and Community Plan Updates, demonstrate more than enough capacity and zoning opportunities in our underutilized commercial corridors, **previously developed** public lands and through adaptive reuse to meet State mandates. Our residential neighborhoods have already been rezoned through SB 9 and ADU laws that allow duplexes and ADUs on a single lot. There is no need to rezone, through overlays or other zoning devices, R1 zones or sensitive, rent-stabilized multifamily housing.

The \_\_\_\_\_ NC/CC, a member of the Westside Neighborhood Alliance of Councils (WRAC), opposes the Housing Element’s proposed rezoning and densification of R1 and multi-family neighborhoods beyond what SB9 and ADU laws allow. We demand that Mayor Bass and all Councilmembers representing WRAC neighborhoods (Park, Yaroslavsky, Hutt and Raman) stand up for our communities and direct the City Planning Department to reject the upzoning of our single-family and sensitive multifamily neighborhoods, and instead, locate all upzoning on our underutilized commercial corridors.”

- Without objection, Chair Greenberg offered an amendment to add the words: “**previously developed**” to “public lands” (words that had been included in the previously passed BABCNC motion). Member Ruesch (MVCC) noted that his council took this topic up and passed a similar motion after a great deal of public comment over several months. Vice-Chair Spitz noted that similar motions passed by councils can be regarded as modified versions of the proposed WRAC motion.

The **combined motion passed** by 12 yeses, 0 noes, and 2 abstentions from Members Sankaran and Chiu, as moved by Chair Greenberg (BABCNC) and Member Chapman (WWNC).

## 8. Old Business

- a. 23.06. Parking Space Replacement Policy Request – July 21, 2023 (passage deadline October 2023); 4 councils adopted: BABCNC, BCC, WNC, WWNC.  
*(Possible motion to extend deadline one month)*  
- Member Ruesch noted that the motion didn’t pass in MVCC.  
**Motion** to extend one month passed, as moved by Member Ruderman (VNC).
- b. 23.07. Request to Revise the LAMC/Zoning – August 21, 2023 (passage deadline November 2023); 2 councils adopted: WNC, WWNC.  
- Member Ruesch noted that MVCC is taking it up. No action was taken.
- c. 23.08. Request to Transfer Metro TCN to Transportation Committee & LADOT – August 21, 2023 (passage deadline November 2023); 3 councils adopted: SORONC, WNC, WWNC.  
- Member Ruesch noted that MVCC is taking it up.
- d. 23.10. Support Public Park/Skateboard Facility at West LA Commons – September 14, 2023 (passage deadline December 2023); 5 councils adopted: DRNC, PPCC, WLASNC, WNC, WWNC.  
- Member Ruesch noted that the MVCC PLUM committee is taking it up on Thursday. Member Chiu thanked everyone who passed it; and asked that members email him for any questions.



**Motion** to extend this item to January (since the December meeting was canceled) **passed** with no opposition, as **moved** by Member Wishon (WNC).

**Prior to Adjournment / Good of the Order:**

Member Sann thanked Chair Greenberg, Vice Chair Spitz and Secretary Laferriere, for their heroic work in between these meetings. Member Sann acknowledged that this is a very challenging time, a lot of people who have loved ones are impacted by what is going on. He encouraged us to check in with our friends because there are a lot of people who are not okay.

Member Ruesch announced that he is posting a meet and greet on November 8th with candidate for D.A., Jonathan Hatami.

Member Miner (BABCNC) thanked Member Sann, as a very valuable member of all our groups. She noted that she was interviewed on television news in response to a fear mongering flyer.

9. **Adjournment:** The meeting was adjourned at 8:13 pm. Next meeting will be on **November 20, 2023** at 6:30 pm.

**ATTACHMENTS:**

**Item 7.a – Proposed Letter to the Mayor and City Officials re Commission President’s Dismissal**

Link to draft proposed letter:

<https://westsidecouncils.com/wp-content/uploads/2023/10/DRAFT-letter-Commissioners-Dismissal.pdf>

**Item 7.b – Proposed PRA Request to LAHSA**

Email to [pra@lahsa.org](mailto:pra@lahsa.org):

“Pursuant to the California Public Records Act (CPRA), the Westside Regional Alliance of Councils (WRAC) requests any and all documents (as defined under the CPRA) reflecting (1) a complete list of the names of any and all individuals and/or entities that have received funds or are contracted to receive funds to operate a facility to house or shelter unhoused individuals under the City of Los Angeles’ “Inside Safe” program, and (2) the amount of funds received or contracted to be received by such individuals and/or entities for this purpose, from January 1, 2023 to the time of your response to this Request.”