



MINUTES

WRAC Meeting of the Board of Directors November 20, 2023 – 6:30pm

Webinar link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/8727511207>
Or Dial (669) 900 9128 **Webinar ID** 872 7511 1207

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<https://tinyurl.com/23afyejf> and <https://westsidecouncils.com/meetings/>

*Items on the Agenda may be taken in any order at the discretion of the Chair –
Any attendees who do not identify themselves upon request
of the Chair will be removed (see Item 5 below)*

1. Welcome/Introductions

a. Call to Order and Certification of Quorum:

Chair Greenberg (BABCNC) called the meeting to order at 6:33pm. Vice-Chair Spitz (PPCC) called the roll with 9 present and quorum met. Member Broide arrived at 6:54pm. **10 present:** Robin Greenberg, Chair (BABCNC), Chris Spitz, Co-Chair (PPCC), Ravi Sankaran (DRNC), Marcello Robinson (NWNC), Tanya Leal (PalmsNC), Michael Lynn (SORONC), Walton Chiu (WLASNC), Barbara Broide (WNC) who arrived at 6:54 pm, Steve Sann (WCC), and Lisa Chapman (WWNC).

Nonvoting Alternates Present: Nickie Miner (BABCNC).

Also Present: Senator Ben Allen, CA Senate District 24, along with staff members Jake Ettinger & Rad Nowroozi; Cairo Rodriguez, CD5 & Michael Amster, CD11; Sherman Shamoel, Office of Assemblymember Rick Chavez Zbur, & Deborah Hong, LADWP.

b. Chair Updates – Chair Greenberg thanked Tyler Laferriere who was with family, Vice Chair Spitz, and Cathy Palmer for all they do, and related the following updates:

- (1) Next Board meeting: **January 22, 2024** (guest speaker: Veronica de la Cruz, Deputy City Attorney (Community Law Corps); *no Board meeting in December; change in the January date approved by the WRAC Board, due to MKL Day on the 3rd Wed.*)
- (2) LAPD WLA Community Station Toy Drive, Nov. 1-Dec. 20, 1663 Butler Ave. More info: Officer Melgar, 40264@lapd.online 310 444 0731
- (3) Tragic death of LAPD WLA Division Officer Darrell Cunningham – resulting from a two-car collision with a suspected drunk driver. Donations to the Blue Ribbon Trust in his honor: <https://www.lapra.org/blueribbontrust-donation.html> (account #5830995843)

2. Government Reports/Speakers

a. State Senator Ben Allen – State Senate District 24: Chair Greenberg gave a warm welcome to Senator Allen, 24th District now, which covers West Hollywood, Beverly Hills, Santa

Monica and the Santa Monica Mountains, Calabasas and the Coastal South Bay to Palos Verdes; a big district that also includes ten of our member councils in Bel Air-Beverly Crest, Westwood, Brentwood, Pacific Palisades, Venice, West LA-Sawtelle and portions of Mar Vista and Westchester/Playa del Rey.

Senator Allen was first elected in 2014 and is now serving his third and final term in the Senate. He briefed us on his background and service as a Senator, noting his membership on several important committees and caucuses (including chair of the Environmental Quality Committee, co-chair of the Environmental Caucus, chair of the legislature's Joint Committee on the Arts, and member of the Jewish Caucus). He reported on legislation he has authored or supported, including notable bills such as SB 43 (updating the definition of "gravely disabled" for purposes of 5150 holds) and SB 411 (allowing Neighborhood Councils to conduct virtual meetings), as well as other legislation involving the climate and environment, the State Water Board, energy, fire, coastal resilience, housing and homelessness. He provided insight as to the direction of the Senate – such as the ongoing legislative efforts to address the need for more affordable housing – and commented as well on budget matters.

He additionally mentioned the terrible loss of four Pepperdine students due to reckless driving, and that he is trying to make the PCH safer, working with State Assemblymember Jacqui Irwin (District 42) on how to improve safety. He noted that they've secured an additional three CHP officers, with more to come, a speed camera system, are pushing CalTrans to finish the light synchronization program, and are looking at ways to reimagine the PCH with dividers, left turn lanes, etc., to rethink the highway. They were able to get funding for a bridge over the PCH which he hopes will help. He noted that for Hollywood Project Angel Food's work, they have secured three million dollars to expand their footprint and service area delivery for homebound Angelenos. They have recently celebrated anniversaries of Brentwood and Pacific Palisades Community Councils.

Questions were asked, and answered by the Senator, beginning with extensive and thoughtful remarks as to whether, in light of recent events, there is anti-Semitism in the Democratic Party, to which he acknowledged that a small group within the party have anti-Semitic views, but that the same was true of a small group within the GOP.

Other issues were raised including the bill related to fire zones and affordable housing with attendant concerns about evacuation and density, to which Senator Allen noted that he feels strongly that yes, we have housing challenges and need more housing in the state but that it is silly to encourage more housing in VHFHSZs and that we need to plan for evacuation if we are going to build significant housing in those zones. He said he will keep working on it and is working closely with Senator Henry Stern (District 27) and others. He noted that while he understands the pro-housing agenda he thinks there is a fire problem and there is a real difference between high density constructions in DTLA in contrast with the VHFHSZs. The idea behind the bill was to do better planning for evacuation if there is building density in those zones. He is trying to figure out ways to modify the bill to get it through.

Also, in regard to housing and the effort that cities need to meet the RHNA requirements, the Senator noted that he thought the governor would be happy about the builder's remedy, but that we need to do everything we can to lower the barrier to housing construction. He is hopeful, would like to look into some sort of surgical fix – but feels that the problem with the status quo is if you really allow for all these projects to go through with literally no oversight, you'll have what is happening in Santa Monica and how that interacts with the Skinner Law. So, he would like to see if there is some way to provide for some sort of local review and thinks they'll have to figure out how to craft it in a way that it won't be seen as too detrimental to housing production. He thinks there should be some room for local feedback.

Chair Greenberg and Vice Chair Spitz thanked him for his important work, for engaging with us so fully and candidly, and wished him happy holidays. He welcomed our ideas on future topics.

b. Mayor's Office – Marian Ensley, West Area Representative, was not present.

c. Council Reports –

- (1) **Cairo Rodriguez, Sr. Field Deputy – Council District 5/Yaroslavsky** introduced himself, and related that on Tuesday the Council granted approval for additional funding for the Pico Walk project: beautification initiatives and pedestrian safety, bump-outs, planting of trees, planting of trees Pico and Overland Avenue. <https://wssmhoa.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/06/Walk-Pico.pdf>

Cairo noted that over 1.3 billion pumpkins end up in the landfill and CM Yaroslavsky had a Pumpkin Bash at Pan Pacific Park, which over 1,000 residents attended. Thanks to Public Works, Bureau of Sanitation and other partners, they collected a great deal of waste and distributed pails to collect for composting at home and/or to properly dispose of organic waste for LA San to turn into compost. They repurposed fresh pumpkins and made them into pasta, which was donated to non-profit kitchens who could make meals. On Thursday the Councilmember would be distributing 500+ meals for people in need, and invited people to sign up, though they accept walk-ins. Cairo can be reached at 323-866-1828 or at cairo.rodriquez@lacity.org

- (2) **Michael Amster, Field Deputy – Council District 11/Park**

Michael gave updates including:

- 1) Temescal restriping should be done, back to status quo, for safety.
- 2) There would be an online meeting December 5th for the Palisades Community for engagement about a proposed bridge over PCH from Potrero Canyon, for which Sen. Allen obtained state funding.
- 3) Two events: a) December 7th, Thursday, a resource fair for Veterans on the VA campus about city jobs, legal clinics, and other resources, as well as free stuff for the vets;
- b) December 9th a holiday party at Westchester Office for the City to showcase what it is doing to make CD11 a better place to live. He had no updates for the Westside.

Member Sann gave an appreciation to CD11's Councilwoman for providing services for the unhoused in his area, and the work that she did with CD5 and the Mayor on an overpass in his area. michael.amster@lacity.org

d. Additional Government Reports – At the discretion of the Chair:

- (1) **Deborah Hong, from LADWP**, provided updates with some comments including that last week they had a press conference to announce the LA 100 Equity Status Report. To learn more about the push to get to 100% renewable energy go to www.ladwp.com/LA100ES. They are partnering with UCLA as to getting to renewable energy, noting that this is a landmark study, first of its kind in the country, and they are getting reports from cities in other countries that are copying us. She noted that we have to find ways to use renewable energy and get off of fossil fuel, and to address historically disadvantaged communities.

She announced a few new initiatives including an increased rebate on used electric vehicles, and noted that a lot of information will be coming out about this.

Other projects around town include the Barrington Avenue Earthquake Resistant Ductile Iron Pipe Project, and the Scattergood to West LA – Sawtelle Modernization Project. Brentwood water mainline replacement project will begin week of 11/27.

Deborah discussed possible scams coming through on our phones to be on the lookout for, and noted that if you see crews of kids, where someone knocks on the door saying they want to inspect your meter, give them a call at 800 dialdwp = 800-342-5397 (LADWP's Customer Service number) and verify it. They'll look into it.

- (2) **Sherwin Shamoeil, Assemblymember Zbur's office**, thanked the Senator. He invited everyone to their upcoming open house December 3rd, at 1445 North Stanley Avenue 90046 and wished a Happy Thanksgiving to everyone.

3. Board Member Updates

- a. **Barbara Broide (WNC)** – Member Broide spoke on the status of Metro TCN Ordinance, having joined the meeting at 6:54 pm, covering for Member Wishon who couldn't be here. Some comments included that on the Metro TCN project in LA City's PLUM Committee, a couple of report backs were requested; however, she felt that the PLUM committee failed to restore protections for scenic roadways from advertising structures, under the proposed program that is 200 feet currently. She noted that hours of operation are important for people to fight and recommends that the members request their Council members remove proposed digital billboards in their Council districts.

- b. **Chris Spitz (PPCC; WRAC Vice-Chair)** – Vice Chair Spitz gave an update on the following:
- (1) WRAC letter 10/31/23 re Commission President Dismissal
<https://westsidecouncils.com/wp-content/uploads/2023/10/WRAC-letter-re-Commissioners-Dismisal.pdf>
 - (2) WRAC CPRA request to LAHSA 10/30/23 and LAHSA response 10/31/23 (spread sheet with names of Inside Safe providers and funding amounts provided by LAHSA, to be reviewed by the WRAC HOC).

4. Committee Reports – Vice Chair Spitz gave update on the following:

- a. **WRAC Transportation & Mobility Committee (MTC)** – Met on 11/15/23; next meeting 1/17/24
- b. **WRAC Homelessness Committee (HOC)** – Next meeting 11/28/23
- c. **WRAC Land Use & Planning Committee (LUPC)** – Nov. meeting canceled; next meeting 1/8/24

5. Public Comment –

Member Chiu (WLASNC) related that he wanted to give a shout out to Jay Ross, who has been a partner and collaborator for 13+ years, and has left the state and is no longer on the WLASNC’s PLUM Committee. Vice-Chair Spitz and Member Broide also expressed good wishes for him.

6. Approval of Minutes

- a. The October 2023 meeting minutes were unanimously **approved**, as moved by Chair Greenberg and seconded by Member Lynn (SORONC).

7. New Business

- a. **Motion** (recommended by Jane Wishon/WNC & Drew Ruesch/MVCC) – to support CF 21-1469-S2 / alternative corrective sidewalk repairs:

“_____NC/CC supports CF 21-1469-S2 in addressing the need for more cost effective and efficient processes for repairing sidewalks, which are dangerously risky throughout the Westside.” Member Broide (WNC) presented and moved the motion. Vice-Chair Spitz related that MVCC also passed this, and that Members Wishon and Ruesch wanted this language.

Vice-Chair Spitz (PPCC) added a friendly amendment (in red) to the main motion to read:

“_____NC/CC supports CF 21-1469-S2 in addressing the need for more cost effective and efficient processes for repairing sidewalks, which are dangerously risky throughout the Westside.”

“_____NC/CC further requests that the report-back include recommendations for measures to protect existing street trees during sidewalk repair. Vice-Chair Spitz seconded the motion as amended. The motion as amended **passed** by all 10 present and voting.

8. Old Business

- a. **23.06. Parking Space Replacement Policy Request** – July 21, 2023 (passage deadline November 2023); 6 councils adopted: BABCNC, BCC, NCWP, VNC, WNC, WWNC (*possible motion to extend deadline to January 2024*)

Motion: Vice Chair Spitz moved to extend the deadline to January. Member Broide (WLANC) seconded, and the motion passed without objection or abstentions.

- b. **23.07. Request to Revise the LAMC/Zoning** – August 21, 2023 (passage deadline November 2023); 4 councils adopted: BCC, NCWP, WNC, WWNC (*possible motion to extend deadline to January 2024*) *Motion:*
Motion: Vice Chair Spitz moved to extend the deadline to January. Member Broide seconded, and the motion passed without objection or abstentions.
- c. **23.08. Request to Transfer Metro TCN to Transportation Committee & LADOT** – August 21, 2023 (passage deadline November 2023); 7 councils adopted: BABCNC,* BCC, NCWP, PPCC,* SORONC, WNC, WWNC (**modified version*) (*possible motion to extend deadline to 01/2024*)
Vice-Chair Spitz related that the matter is going back to PLUM soon; we should get a letter out before it gets to Council. Member Broide noted that Council President Paul Krekorian wants this done ASAP and doesn't know if we have a chance.
Motion: Vice Chair Spitz moved to extend the deadline to January. Member Broide seconded, and the motion passed without objection or abstentions.
- d. **23.10. Support Public Park/Skateboard Facility at West LA Commons** – September 14, 2023 (passage deadline January 2024); 7 councils adopted: DRNC, MVCC,* PalmsNC, PPCC, WLASNC, WNC, WWNC (**modified version*)

Discussion was held in which it was noted that Member Robinson's council (NWNC) will be taking this item up. Member Chiu offered to show up to his meeting to provide context, to which Member Sann noted that their council (WCC) will also be taking it up and encouraged Walton to attend and support Member Robinson's council. It was noted that this is regional, that we need to think about green space and increase walkability of the entire region.

- e. **23.11. Oppose Rezoning of R-1 and Sensitive Multi-Family Neighborhoods** – October 30, 2023 (passage deadline February 2024); 6 councils adopted: BABCNC,* MVCC,* NCWP, PPCC, WNC,* WWNC* (**modified versions*)
Members Robinson's (NWNC) and Lynn's (SORONC)'s councils will revisit this.

9. **Adjourn** – Robin Greenberg spoke briefly on the Thanksgiving Holiday, and expressed her gratitude for all of us on WRAC having the ability to do the good things that we do and wished us a Happy Thanksgiving. The meeting adjourned at 7:54 pm.

Next meeting will be held on **January 22, 2024** at 6:30 pm.