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MINUTES

WRAC Meeting of the Board of Directors January 22, 2024 – 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:

<http://tinyurl.com/sr43sxfn> and <https://westsidecouncils.com/meetings/>

1. Welcome/Introductions

a. Call to Order and Certification of Quorum

Chair Greenberg (BABCNC) called the meeting to order at 6:34 pm. Secretary Laferriere called the roll with quorum met.

11 present: Robin Greenberg, Chair (BABCNC), Chris Spitz, Co-Chair (PPCC), Ravi Sankaran (DRNC), Marcello Robinson (NWNCC), Michael Lynn (SORONC), Alexandra Polin (WLASNC), Steve Sann (WCC), Lisa Chapman (WWNC), Jane Wishon (WNC) Drew Ruesch (MVCC) and Carolyn Jordan (BCC).

Nonvoting Alternates Present: Nickie Miner (BABCNC), Barbara Broide (WNC) and Andrew Marton (MVCC).

Also Present: Tyler Laferriere, WRAC Secretary; Veronica de la Cruz, L.A. Deputy City Attorney; Michael Amster, Representative of CD 11 Councilmember Traci Park; Janet Turner, Representative of Congressman Ted Lieu, 36th District; Michelle Persoff, Representative of Assemblymember Isaac Bryan, 55th District; Denzel Henderson, Planning Dept. Liaison. Deborah Hong, LADWP & Aldenae Williams, DWP Community Liaison.

b. Chair Updates –

(1) Next board meeting was to be 2/19/24 (Presidents' Day)

Motion to reschedule to Monday 26th of February **passed unanimously** by all 11 members present, as **moved** by Member Sann (WCC) and Vice Chair Spitz (PPCC).

(2) Board suggestions for future guest speakers/topics: The board suggested a number of government officials as possible speakers at upcoming board meetings, including U.S. Representative Ted Lieu; Planning Dept. Director Vince Bertoni, regarding the Housing Element for the City; Public Works Commissioner Vahid Khorsand and/or the Chair of Public Works Aura Garcia re infrastructure. Public Works Commission:

<https://dpw.lacity.gov/commissioners-boardroom>

2. Government Reports/Speakers –

a) **Veronica de la Cruz, Deputy City Attorney** (Community Law Corps) formerly Neighborhood Prosecutor (NP) with the West LA Criminal Division – provided information and answered the

board's questions about the work of the City Attorney's new "Community Law Corps" (CLC). Ms. de la Cruz (one of 4 Deputy City Attorneys/DCAs now assigned to the CLC) explained that the CLC, a brand-new unit within the C.A.'s Municipal Law branch, is tasked with improving the quality of life in neighborhoods citywide and focuses on *civil* (not criminal) issues.

The CLC's DCAs are tasked with fielding each request. Similar to their work in the former NP program, the DCAs assigned to the CLC are focused on improving quality of life in neighborhoods. They serve as the first point of contact and are tasked to take preventative and proactive measures that affect our neighborhoods. The CLC's DCAs continue to establish partnerships with different City partners. They also continue to collaborate with community members, with outside government agencies and with law enforcement partners on blighted property and chronic nuisance activity, as well as on identifying emerging concerns.

Ms. de la Cruz is the DCA assigned to Council Districts 5 and 11(WRAC), as well as Districts 8, 9 and 15. She, along with her assigned "Community Resources Specialist," Nicole Ruiz, will respond to inquiries from constituents in these Districts and will also work pro-actively on measures to address and/or prevent problems as they arise on the civil side. All questions should first be made via phone call or email to the CLC; staff will enter the data and forward the inquiry to Ms. de la Cruz or Ms. Ruiz (if from one of their assigned Districts). Phone: 213-978-7878; they have one email address: att.communitylawcorps@lacity.org; web: <https://cityattorney.lacity.gov/clc>.

Ms. de la Cruz related that the CLC's DCAs have worked on the municipal side with members of Council District offices in cases involving possible amendment of an ordinance to address a specific issue. Some issues the DCAs work on are new and some are similar to what they have worked on before, except that now they are on the civil side and are no longer prosecutors. Ms. de la Cruz explained that she was an NP for 22 years and it is a little emotional for her to no longer be a NP.

Since the CLC's launching, as of last week they've received 685 requests for assistance from the City and the DCAs must respond to each one; by this time are probably over the 700 mark. They have four attorneys and four non-attorneys in their unit to work on these concerns. One attorney is a supervisor who oversees admin stuff, and the other three are teamed up with a Community Resource Specialist; each of these two-person teams is assigned a third of the City, equaling 5 Council Districts each.

Regarding the types of issues the CLC deals with: As an example, Ms. de la Cruz noted that she spent most of her time that day handling one party house in CD5 on Beverly Grove that has been in the news recently, and is a property involved in litigation; people moved in, established tenancy and are throwing major parties. LAPD will reach out to the CLC to help fill holes created in the absence of the NP program. She noted that a majority of the CLC's work is coming through Council District offices, and which in turn comes through the email address and phone line. Asked when to reach out to her versus to the Council District, Ms. de la Cruz noted that many times people reach out to both. Questions were asked and answered. The Chair thanked Ms. de la Cruz for engaging with the board and providing insight into the CLC's work.

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 was not present.

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

- Michael encouraged everyone to participate in the Homelessness Count, where data is collected to determine where resources need to be directed.
- He invited us all to attend a cleanup Saturday in Brentwood in conjunction with tree trimming of vulnerable eucalyptus trees at Montana & Gretna Green Way, by Brentwood Magnet School.
- Michael noted that after a lot of community and media attention, the Cultural Heritage Commission voted to recommend the preservation of Marilyn Monroe's former home as a historic cultural monument. It will go through the City Council PLUM committee and City Council before officially becoming a historical monument.
- He noted that an ideal spot for a dog park has been located along Temescal Canyon Road, and recently the Councilwoman helped make this happen. The Recreation & Parks (RAP) Commission approved the pursuit of funding through an application to the County Measure “A” Committee, and while going to the County, Michael will help Palisades’ advocates realize the dog park.
- He gave an update on the WLA-Sawtelle Community Plan Update (CPU) Process: WLA is going through its community plan update. The Councilwoman, colleagues, and he have been engaged with Sawtelle Community and Neighborhood Council. The process will take a few more years. They are committed to making sure the Sawtelle constituency is heard by the Planning Dept., with each draft; a new draft will be released in Feb./March, and won’t be the last one. The Council office is dedicated to do all they can to preserve Historic Sawtelle and create the best for this CPU.
- Member Broide (WNC) related the need for increased staffing for this Community Plan, as current planners are *not* familiar with our communities, and encouraged the CD office to educate planners and take them on tours of the area.

d) Additional Government Reports –

Janet Turner, Representative of Congressman Ted Lieu –

Janet’s update from the Congressman included but was not limited to the passing of the National Defense Authorization Act for a better appeals process for State Department employees who have been denied assignments. Two other bills that passed the House and are on their way to the Senate are: Housing Our Military Veterans Effectively to furnish services & transitional housing for vets, as well as food, shelter, housing, transportation and smart of phones to help vets get benefits and stay connected to services, and, a bill on Care Givers, enabling care givers working outside the VA system to get 100% reimbursement in some cases rather than 65%. The Congressman co-sponsored the Social Security 2100 Act, HR-4583 that would cement Social Security for many years to come, increase benefits, improve the cost of living adjustment and increase benefits to the lowest income earners, and approve benefits for widows & widowers. She noted that they hope that these are resolved by March.

Michelle Persoff, Representative of Assemblymember Isaac Bryan, gave a brief report, noting that bills are being introduced and need to be introduced by mid-February. Asm. Bryan is now Chair of the Natural Resources Committee. They’ll have a full legislative package to share in a few weeks. He plans on having a town hall and she’ll share the date when available. Their district office will participate in the Homeless Count Thursday in the West Adams area.

Deborah Hong, of LADWP, introduced **Aldenae Williams**, her successor as Public Relations Specialist, who will be the new LADWP community liaison for the Westside. Aldenae will be the day-to-day contact for questions or outreach. Deborah will remain on the LADWP Community Relations Team and has been promoted to “Community Relations Team Manager.”

Deborah reminded the board that LADWP has a monthly standing meeting with all the Neighborhood Councils, and is the only department that has an MOU with the Department of Neighborhood Empowerment (DONE). She would ask DONE if the Community Councils can also attend these meetings. They meet on the 1st Saturday of the month, online. She highly encourages everyone to attend; they discuss policy-related information, with higher-ups present.

Aldenae shared briefly that she came from Customer Service in LADWP, and was formerly in Field Investigation. She has experience with customers directly, over the phone and by email. The board welcomed Aldenae and congratulated Deborah on her promotion as LADWP Community Relations Team Manager. Questions were asked & answered.

Aldenae.Williams@ladwp.com

Denzel Henderson, Liaison with the LA City Planning Department, representing the Westside, spoke on the Citywide Housing Incentive Program (CHIP).

Denzel encouraged everyone to sign up with the CHIP program. He noted that there are a couple of ordinances being released. He and his teams send out a monthly update, and will be sending one on the CHIP program this week. It is currently on the Planning website. For access to this document, reach out to him at planning.liaison@lacity.org or Denzel.henderson@lacity.org. He also offered to help facilitate bringing Vince Bertoni to WRAC.

Member Broide asked that he take a message back to Planning, that the announcement that the Planning Department was proposing changes to the Noise Threshold and Historic Resource Evaluations under CEQA, which was released on December 8th, with a hearing and deadline for public comment in mid-December, was impossible for neighborhood councils to respond to. She understood that the comment deadline has eventually been extended to February 19th. Vice Chair Spitz concurred and related to Denzel that WRAC did write a letter on this topic, which he said he would share.

3. **Board Member Updates –**

- a) **Barbara Broide (WNC)** – Member Broide gave an update on the status of Metro TCN Ordinance (passed in City Council). For information on the litigation, please contact her. Member Sann noted that we cannot thank her enough for the heroic work she has done and continues to do. Chair Greenberg also gave a tribute to Member Broide.
- b) **Chris Spitz (WRAC Vice-Chair)** – Planning Dept. “Construction Noise Threshold” Proposal; WRAC letter sent 1/9/24; Planning Dept. response: deadline extended to 2/19/24 <https://westsidecouncils.com/wp-content/uploads/2024/01/WRAC-Letter-Planning-CEQA-Noise-Threshold.pdf>

4. **Committee Reports –**

- a) **WRAC Homelessness Committee (HOC)** – Met on 1/9/24.

Vice-Chair Spitz related that the HOC would like to schedule a special in-person meeting

- this spring (for committee members) with the LAHSA Executive Director, Dr. Va Lecia Adams Kellum, and with City and County elected officials including Supervisor Lindsey Horvath, to learn more about the work and methodology of LAHSA.
- b) **WRAC Transportation & Mobility Committee (MTC)** – Met on 1/17/24. Vice Chair Spitz noted that they passed on motion on this agenda. Next meeting: 2/21/2024.
 - c) **WRAC Land Use & Planning Committee (LUPC)** – No Jan. mtg.; next mtg. 2/12/24.
5. **Public Comment** – There was no public comment on items *not* on the agenda. *[See public comment below in connection with Item 7(d).]*
6. **Approval of Minutes** –
Motion (Robin Greenberg) – The November 2023 meeting minutes were approved by **10-0-1**, as moved by Chair Greenberg (BABCNC) and Member Lynn (SORONC).
7. **New Business**
- a) **Motion (DRNC/Ravi Sankaran & VNC/Nico Ruderman; recommended by WRAC HOC** – Support for CF 23-0914 / Park (regulation of oversized vehicle/RV parking):
“ ____ NC/CC supports CF 23-0914, which calls for recommendations for a citywide program to designate streets where RVs/oversize vehicles can safely park with access to services, including housing navigation, portable restrooms, automotive repair and septic tank disposal, and would also restrict RV parking in residential areas, commercial corridors and other sensitive areas.”
 Member Sankaran (DRNC) moved the motion, with a second from Member Wishon (WNC). Brief discussion was held and the motion passed by all 11 members present and voting.
 - b) **Motion (Chris Spitz; recommended by WRAC HOC)** –
 Request extending LAMC 41.18 to restrict *dwelling in vehicles of all sizes* within 500 feet of sensitive uses:
“ ____ NC/CC requests that the restriction in LAMC Sec. 41.18 on camping near sensitive uses be extended to expressly restrict dwelling in vehicles of all sizes within 500 feet of Sensitive uses, including libraries, parks, schools and day-care centers, and that Councilmembers representing WRAC Member Councils (CMs Park, Yaroslavsky, Raman and/or Hutt) bring a motion in City Council to amend LAMC 41.18 for this purpose.”
 This motion was introduced and moved by Vice-Chair Spitz and seconded by Member Ruesch (MVCC).
Amendment: restrict **dwelling in vehicles of all sizes as well as all forms of camping** within 500 feet... moved by Member Wishon (WNC), seconded by Member Sann (WCC), passed by 9 yeases, 1 no: Member Chapman (WWNC), 1 abstention: Member Robinson (NWNC).
Motion as Amended: *“ ____ NC/CC requests that the restriction in LAMC Sec. 41.18 on camping near sensitive uses be extended to expressly restrict **dwelling in vehicles of all sizes as well as all forms of camping** within 500 feet of Sensitive uses, including libraries, parks, schools and day-care centers, and that Councilmembers representing WRAC Member Councils (CMs Park, Yaroslavsky, Raman and/or Hutt) bring a motion in City Council to amend LAMC 41.18 for this purpose.”* passed by 9 yeases, 1 no from Member Chapman (WWNC), and 1 abstention from Member Robinson (NWNC).

- c) **Motion/Request for Information (Chris Spitz; recommended by WRAC HOC)** – Request WRAC Board approval of letter seeking information from the LA County Board of Supervisors (BOS) about the delayed implementation of SB 43 (Requested action: Board to approve letter to be sent directly to the BOS without the need for further approval by Member Councils, consistent with past WRAC requests for information from City and LAHSA).

See draft proposed letter attached below.

The motion **passed** unanimously by all **11 members** present and voting, as **moved** by Vice-Chair Spitz (PPCC) and **seconded** by Member Wishon (WNC).

- d) **Motion (BCC/Carolyn Jordan; recommended by WRAC MTC)** –

Oppose further study, EIR and implementation of the Metro Traffic Reduction Study (TRS) (aka congestion pricing) on the Westside:

“The _____, a member of the Westside Regional Alliance of Councils (WRAC), strongly opposes implementation of the Metro Traffic Reduction Study (TRS) project, aka congestion pricing, on the I-10 west of the 405 and in the Santa Monica Mountain passes on the Westside. This includes Sepulveda Blvd., Benedict Canyon, Roscomare Road, and Coldwater Canyon. We request that no recommendation be made to the Metro Board to further study or to begin an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) in these areas until after the Sepulveda Transit Corridor (STC) project and Purple (D Line) Extension Transit project on Wilshire Blvd. are completed and their impacts on traffic reduction can be determined.

“Implementing congestion pricing in these areas before the completion of the STC and Purple (D Line) would simply displace cars from the freeways onto our already gridlocked streets. Without alternate modes of travel in place prior to implementation, we do not see how congestion pricing can achieve the desired goal of reduced vehicle trips. Merely displacing cars to side streets does not achieve the goal of the TRS.”

Member Jordan (BCC) introduced and **moved** this item, which was **seconded** by Vice-Chair Spitz (PPCC). Member Jordan explained that part of the concern of her community is lack of knowing what the alternatives are, and that this serves as a regressive tax to people who are most unable to afford that. She wasn't part of the committee conversation, but encouraged anyone from that group present to chime in. Some comments from members included:

Member Broide noted that she is a member of the Transportation Committee, and opined that this is another example of Metro's bait and switch or misbranding of programs, which in this case is called a Traffic Reduction Plan but is actually a road toll program.

Vice Chair Spitz related that she spoke to MTC Chair Selena Inouye, who gave her a summary, and that the gist of the motion is to *not* conduct this study until the impacts from the Sepulveda Transit Project and the Purple Line are known, and until the impacts are known, it makes no sense to go forward with this proposal. Discussion was held.

Member Sann (WCC) pointed out that, in terms of WRAC's credibility, the earliest date for completion of the Sepulveda Corridor Transit project would be 2035, at least 10 years from now, and that while the Purple Line will be completed sooner, in 2027, that is an East-West line and E-W lines will have a de minimis effect for those that travel north-south on the 405 Sepulveda Corridor. He doesn't think completion of the Purple Line will have an impact.

Member Sann noted that if what we are saying is we think that congestion pricing is very odious for a number of reasons, e.g., economically discriminatory to people of lower income, this should be said in the motion.

Member Wishon noted that she is not a fan of saying “don’t study” things. Member Ruesch stated that he is opposed to this motion; he is very pro-congestion pricing, noting that it works well in Europe, in England and Italy, and we shouldn’t say we are against a study or even mentioning the Purple Line. Member Broide thinks congestion pricing works when the public has a choice. Member Ruesch noted that in London, congestion pricing is during specific hours. Vice-Chair Spitz echoed Member Broide’s remarks, and noted that there are transportation alternatives in London. She also stated that per Member Jordan, there is a link to a survey in connection with the study, which she’ll add in the meeting recap.

Member Jordan mentioned, based on comments made, that one of the recommendations to the Metro Board as to the EIR is the concern that once an EIR is done it becomes a *fait accompli*, but issues always remain. Member Sann noted that he was trying to identify problems with the way the motion is worded and doesn’t want us to look like naysayers. He feels that if we want to say we are opposed to congestion pricing, that is what we should say but to say “wait 10 years” would be a roundabout way of saying we don’t support this. Vice Chair Spitz related that she is not prepared today to say she is unilaterally opposed to congestion pricing, as the MTC didn’t take that position. Per Member Jordan, in a follow-up conversation with representatives of Metro, they say it will be at least 6 months before Metro makes a recommendation to the Metro board, and there is time for the Transportation Committee to reconsider the language.

Public Comment:

Kelsey Figone, a member of Mar Vista Community Council, noted that she chairs the MVCC Transportation Committee, and was part of WRAC’s MTC meeting last week. She related extensive remarks in support of the congestion pricing proposal.

Nathan (last name unclear) noted that he lives in Mar Vista, and is opposed to the proposed congestion pricing which he believes is another form of taxation.

Motion to take this back to committee was moved by Member Wishon, and seconded by Member Chapman; **passed** unanimously. Member Sann volunteered to work with Member Wishon to provide the MTC with the questions and issues that the board requests be addressed.

8. Old Business

- a) **23.06. Parking Space Replacement Policy Request** – July 21, 2023 (passage deadline January 2024); 6 councils adopted: BABCNC, BCC, NCWP, VNC, WNC, WWNC
Motion to move this deadline to February, as two councils are taking this up, was moved by Vice Chair Spitz, seconded by Member Lynn, and **passed** unanimously.
- b) **23.07. Request to Revise the LAMC/Zoning** – August 21, 2023 (passage deadline January 2024); 4 councils adopted: BCC, NCWP, WNC, WWNC
Motion to move this deadline to February, as two councils are taking it up, was moved by Vice Chair Spitz, seconded by Member Jordan, and **passed** unanimously.

- c) **23.08. Request to Refer Metro TCN to Transportation Committee & LADOT** – August 21, 2023 (*passed* December 2023); 8 councils adopted: BABCNC,* BCC, NCWP, PPCC,* SORONC, WNC, WWNC (**modified version*); WRAC letter:

<https://westsidecouncils.com/wp-content/uploads/2023/08/WRAC-Letter-CPC-re-Metro-CTN-2-2.pdf>

- d) **23.10. Support Public Park/Skateboard Facility at West LA Commons** – September 14, 2023 (*passed* December 2023); 8 councils adopted: BCC, DRNC, MVCC,* PalmsNC, PPCC, WLASNC, WNC, WWNC (**modified version*); WRAC Letter:

<https://westsidecouncils.com/wp-content/uploads/2023/09/WRAC-Letter-re-WLA-Commons.pdf>

Vice Chair Spitz noted that there was a response to our letter from CD11 and the Supervisor's office, who explained that the County was going to provide some kind of open space within this project (although not "green"), and CD11 will try to make the former Felicia Mahood Center facility (which is City property) into a small park, including a green space. They are also considering putting in a skate board park nearby to the south.

- e) **23.11. Oppose Rezoning of R-1 and Sensitive Multi-Family Neighborhoods** – October 30, 2023 (*passage deadline* February 2024); 7 councils adopted: BABCNC,* BCC, MVCC,* NCWP, PPCC, WNC,* WWNC* (**modified versions*) –

It was noted that WCC also took up and passed the motion, and it has therefore reached majority passage with eight (8) councils. Vice Chair Spitz asked the board to let her know within five days if any councils have taken up and opposed the motion, as per WRAC bylaws.

- f) **23.12. Support CF 21-1469-S2 / alternative corrective sidewalk repairs** – November 22, 2023 (*passed* January 2024); 9 councils adopted: BCC, DRNC, MVCC,* NCWP, PPCC, VNC,* WLASNC, WNC,* WWNC (**modified versions*); WRAC letter:

<https://westsidecouncils.com/wp-content/uploads/2023/11/WRAC-Letter-Sidewalk-Repairs.pdf>

Vice Chair Spitz related that she received thanks for this letter from CD5 and CD11, and that CD11 staff advised that Councilwoman Park will share this position with her colleagues in the City.

9. **Adjourn** – Next meeting will be held on **Monday February 26, 2024 at 6:30 pm** (*and not February 19, 2024, which is a holiday*)

ATTACHMENT:

Item 7(c): Proposed draft letter requesting information re delayed implementation of SB 43

To: LA County Board of Supervisors (BOS) – BOS Chair/Supervisor Lindsey Horvath & Supervisors Kathryn Barger, Janice Hahn, Holly Mitchell and Hilda Solis

Re: BOS Decision to Delay Implementation of SB 43 – Request for Information

Dear Supervisors:

The Westside Regional Alliance of Councils (WRAC) is a cooperative coalition, founded in 2009, of all fourteen neighborhood and community councils on the Westside of Los Angeles located in CDs 5 and 11 and portions of CDs 4 and 10. WRAC Member Councils collectively represent approximately 500,000 Angelenos – including unhoused individuals with severe mental illness and / or who are suffering from substance abuse disorder.

WRAC is aware that on December 19, 2023, the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors (BOS) passed a motion by BOS Chair Lindsey Horvath to delay implementation of Senate Bill 43 in Los Angeles County until January 2026.

Severely mentally ill and/or drug or alcohol-addicted unhoused individuals are present throughout communities on the Westside of Los Angeles and have long been a matter of concern for our neighborhood and community councils. Many of WRAC's Member Council board members and constituents have worked for years with government and private-sector partners to obtain services (including mental and physical health and addiction assistance as well as shelter/housing) for such individuals. WRAC's Member Councils are familiar with the serious needs and challenges, including those of mental health and substance abuse, facing unhoused individuals on the Westside.

WRAC therefore requests that the BOS provide the following information:

1) Reasons for Delayed Implementation:

- What are the *reasons for the delay*, and more specifically, why was the delay extended to two years, until January 2026, rather than a shorter delay of 6 months or one year (*i.e.*, either to July 2024 or to January 2025)? *Please provide specific details* to help us understand why such a delay is necessary.
- What *specific measures and/or protocols* must be put in place in order for the County to implement SB 43 effectively, and what time frame does the BOS estimate is required for implementation of each such measure and/or protocol? What County entity is or will be charged with developing such measures or protocols?

2) Plan to Save Lives in the Interim:

- During the two-year interim before implementation of SB 43, what *specific plans to save the lives of unhoused individuals* with severe mental illness, and / or who are suffering from substance abuse disorder, does the BOS intend to put in place?
- Please *describe any such plans in detail*. If BOS does not currently have such plans in place, what specific steps, if any, does BOS propose in order to develop and implement such plans before SB 43's implementation?

This request for information was proposed by the WRAC Homelessness Committee at its public meeting on January 9, 2024, and approved by the WRAC Board at its public meeting on January 22, 2024.

We look forward to your responses. Thank you for your anticipated cooperation with this important matter.

[Signed]

Robin Greenberg, WRAC Chair and Christina Spitz, WRAC Vice-Chair

cc: LA City Councilmembers Traci Park, Katy Yaroslavsky, Nithya Raman and Heather Hutt

End Attachment