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Approved Minutes
WRAC Meeting of the Board of Directors
November 18, 2024 – 6:30pm

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

1. Welcome/Introductions

- a. WRAC Secretary/Treasurer Laferriere called the roll at 6:31 pm, and quorum met with 11 present, followed by Chair Greenberg (BABCNC) calling the meeting to order at 6:33 pm. **Voting Members Present:** Robin Greenberg, Chair (BABCNC), Chris Spitz, Co-Chair (PPCC), Carolyn Jordan (BCC), Andrew Marton (MVCC), Tanya Leal (PalmsNC), Michael Lynn (SORONC), Nico Ruderman (VNC), Jay Handal (WLASNC), Terri Tippit (WNC), Steve Sann (WCC), and Lisa Chapman (WWNC). Quorum was maintained with 10 present after the departure of Member Ruderman (VNC) at 7:35 pm. **Nonvoting Alternates Present:** Barbara Broide (WNC), Walton Chiu (WLASNC) and Nickie Miner (BABCNC) **Also Present:** Jared Rivera – Deputy Mayor of Community Engagement and Liaison to the Department of Neighborhood Empowerment (DONE) with West Area Representatives Marian Ensley and Kenneth G. Miller; Cairo Rodriguez – Council District 5/Yaroslavsky; Carlos Penilla – Lola Smallwood-Cuevas, California Senate District 28; Anthony Avila – Assemblymember Jacqui Irwin, 42nd District; Sherman Shamoeil – Assemblymember Rick Chavez Zbur, 51st District; Zac Gaidzik – County Supervisor Lindsey Horvath, 3rd District; and Dawn Cotterell – LADWP Liaison.
- b. **Chair Updates -**
- (1) Next Board meeting: January 20, 2025 (no meeting on 12/16/24, per Board consensus on 10/21/24).
 - (2) Appointment of WRAC representatives to the “NC Funding Workgroup”: Kay Hartman/PalmsNC, Nico Ruderman/VNC and Jay Handal/WLASNC.
 - (3) Possible future in-person WRAC Board meetings: Following discussion, Member Sann/WCC will see if he can set up a meeting one morning in the upcoming year at the Belmont.

2. Government Reports/Speakers

- a. **Jared Rivera, Deputy Mayor of Community Engagement (accompanied by West Area Representatives Marian Ensley and Kenneth G. Miller)**

Jared Rivera shared information about his background in the labor movement and in government, and his current role with the Mayor's office (which includes oversight of DONE), having been with the Mayor's office for a year and a half now. He updated us on some of the Mayor's initiatives and answered several questions from Board members.

Jared emphasized the Mayor's launch of a Citywide *beautification campaign*, where entire areas, such as corridors where encampments have been cleared under the Inside Safe program, will be fully cleaned by City workers/LA Sanitation, with NC & CC volunteer involvement and participation welcomed. Starting in early January, they'll be inviting community partners, NCs and volunteers across the City with City departments to tackle things in the City every couple of months. They've been hosting events for NCs with the Mayor, relying on the Department to send invites, and Jared asked us to let him know if we are not getting them.

Jared noted that if we don't know who to contact in the City or someone is not getting back to us, he can help connect you to solve problems. He also invited and encouraged our Member Councils to register for upcoming listening sessions with Mayor Bass, such as that held while deciding about the next Chief of Police. He explained that their vision is to have these types of listening sessions quarterly, with the next planned for early December regarding the Olympics, and that they want to have these types of conversations every couple of months.

For information about the initiatives and to register for listening sessions, contact jared.rivera@lacity.org. We thanked Deputy Mayor Rivera for graciously attending our meeting and speaking with us. He thanked us all for what we do.

Questions were asked and answered, including but not limited to comments from Member Handal (WLASNC) as to efforts made in a neighborhood that was cleaned up by volunteers with trees planted which resulted in fines. He hopes that the Mayor and staff would advise and ensure that these things don't happen again, as the stakeholders were told they could be fined for doing the work they do. Additionally, as chair of the Budget Advocates Team, Member Handal reported having had great difficulty reaching someone from the Mayor's office to schedule a meeting regarding the budget now, especially in light of the upcoming World Cup and Olympics.

Member Handal noted that the Budget Advocates (BAs) need to be able to look at all of the budget issues department by department and meet with the Mayor and department heads during this budget process. Jared responded that he heard Member Handal on both points and that he has connected Matt Hale, Deputy Mayor of Budget & Finance, with a number of members of the BA team. Jared expects that a meeting with the Matt Hale and his team will be scheduled soon. Member Handal reiterated the need to get a meeting with the Mayor.

Member Broide (WNC) acknowledged the importance of the need to get housing built for the homeless but expressed concern that without community input, these projects will be in our neighborhoods forever in our lifetimes and that the voice of the community should *not* be removed. She is concerned about the approval of the massive digital billboard program, to place digital signs along city streets and freeways, as we are already seeing digital signs on transit shelters where advertising structures like giant cellphones will be placed all over our streets. She noted that upcoming events will be short term but the presence of these digital signs create long-term blight which will remain. She also expressed concern about the poor condition of city trees having an 18-year tree trimming cycle, and noting that the Departments of Building & Safety and Planning allow building projects without trees.

Member Jordan (BCC) mentioned that she had received the email about a meeting regarding the Police Chief (referenced above), then an email that the meeting date would be changed but her group didn't get further information on it. She appreciates the need for the City to be beautified and is glad there will be a campaign in preparation of upcoming events such as the Olympics, however, feels as City residents we deserve to have the City take better care of the infrastructure, graffiti and falling trees, among other things. She hopes we reprioritize these not just because we'll be on TV across the world in four years, but as we all live here and pay taxes to the City. Jared refuted the idea that priority for these beautification campaigns are for upcoming events only, stating that the Mayor is clear that the goal is to reinvest in our community and beautify for all.

Jared responded to Member Broide that the goal of Executive Directive 1 (ED1) is to make building faster and, though he understood her concerns, the Mayor's goal is to address the unhoused. He stressed that they want to make sure to have community input and build as much as they can, and that the Mayor did a revision on ED1 and takes feedback very seriously. He'll talk offline if there are future revisions down the road.

Member Sann thanked Jared for joining us, referencing the upcoming meeting on the Olympics on the 5th of December, trusting that there will be unanimous agreement from the City to do these beautifications. Member Sann encouraged Jared to connect with groups at UCLA as well as scout groups. He next related that the LA Times has had articles on what has been going on in the MacArthur Park area for the last 30 years, and in light of what they are hearing about the budget crisis, 90% of LAFD calls to that area are in response to drug overdoses, fentanyl, repeatedly, sometimes up to three in one day, which Member Sann feels is a massive waste of City resources. Member Sann thinks that firefighter EMTs need to respond to people with medical emergencies not only to those trying to kill themselves, and in light of the budget crisis feels it's fiscally irresponsible to use our money this way.

Jared responded to Member Jordan's concern about getting notifications for events, by encouraging us **to sign up for text and/or email updates from the Mayor's Office of Community Engagement at this link:** <https://app.impactive.io/campaigns/mayor-s-office-of-community-engagement-moce/activities/d6dpcgbh?start=0>.

Jared responded to concerns regarding MacArthur Park, that the Mayor has convened a wide-ranging working group on MacArthur Park with LAPD and other agencies, a top priority for the Mayor. He expects significant announcements will be out soon. He agrees that City residents deserve so much more, especially those in that area without access to open space, with children walking by and emphasized that it is a top priority that they look forward to announcing publicly soon, and are working on daily.

Vice Chair Spitz (PPCC) welcomed Jared and Marian back again and reminded everyone that WRAC passes motions and always sends them to the Mayor. She noted that while we don't always expect a response from the Mayor, we want her to know our concerns. Vice Chair Spitz referenced a letter that we sent recently, requesting that the City on its website establish a homeless dashboard similar to that of Culver City's for constituents to get data they need. Jared thanked her for that, and noted that he had seen Culver City's dashboard. He asked if she looked at Inside Safe to see what other information should be in there.

Jared recommended that we have a conversation with the current Chief of Housing and Homelessness Solutions, Lourdes Castro Ramirez, who will be moving to HACLA, (as President and CEO). He noted that the voters passed Measure A and want to know where their money is going. He noted that a 10% decrease in homelessness shows we are moving in the right direction, and having data that is able to be consumed around the whole City is a great point. He'll try to connect us with Ms. Ramirez when she gets settled in. Chair Greenberg (BABCNC) thanked him and welcomed him to stay for the rest of the meeting.

b. Council Reports –

Cairo Rodriguez, Sr. Field Deputy – Council District 5/Yaroslavsky

Cairo noted that 1) on November 7th the City Attorney's office released the Draft Wildlife Ordinance, and while this has not yet been scheduled for a public hearing, their office is doing outreach. 2) On Nov. 20th the Councilwoman's office in the LA Department of City Planning will hold a virtual town hall to address the draft ordinance and concerns. Additional meetings will be held in the coming weeks. 3) Cairo noted that the LAPD, WLA Division, is offering a unique opportunity for community members to participate in the Community Police Academy from Jan 15th to March 26th, Wednesdays at 6:00pm weekly at the WLA Police Station. Reach out to 310-444-0732 Community Relations Office. 4) The Councilwoman invited us and our neighbors for the Holiday and Harmony event on Sunday 12/22 at 2625 West Olympic Boulevard, a free event. Call 213-751-1433 or email him at Cairo.rodriquez@lacity.org with any questions or concerns.

c. Additional Government Reports –

Carlos Penilla, New Senior Field Rep for Lola Smallwood-Cuevas, California Senate District 28, introduced himself, noting that he had just started in the position and was given territories today. He'll reach out to some of us in his territories, and will speak to us more in the future. Carlos.Penilla@sen.ca.gov

Anthony Avila, Representative for Assemblymember Irwin, 42nd District, thanked us for organizing the Homelessness Committee Roundtable. Questions were asked and answered, including as to problems that some people who live in the Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones are having with renewing their homeowner's insurance. Anthony.avila@asm.ca.gov

Sherman Shamoeil, Rep for Assemblymember Rick Chavez Zbur, 51st District, congratulated Carlos Penilla for joining his office and echoed what Anthony said about the Roundtable last month. He noted that increasing the entertainment industry tax credit supports a strong local economy, as supported by studios and labor unions. He read aloud excerpts by the Assemblymember given at the conference with the Governor expressing this as a top priority. Member Ruderman (VNC) applauded the badly needed increase in film tax credits. sherwin.shamoeil@asm.ca.gov

Zac Gaidzik, Coastal and Westside Field Deputy for LA County Supervisor Lindsey Horvath, Third District, gave an update with some comments that the Board adopted the final LA County budget, and discussed priorities, including for climate adaptation and resiliency, gender-based violence prevention, homeless and encampment resolutions, mental health staff & critically needed acute beds, and Vision Zero Safe Streets. He noted that the LA County (LAC) is continuing to advocate for local solutions to end homelessness, especially in vulnerable communities such as for Veterans; LAC will protect our diverse communities from hatred and regressive actions, and will continue to protect our immigrant communities, affirm reproductive health care and LGBTQ rights, and rights of each person. They're happy to see passage of Measures G & A. zgaidzik@bos.lacounty.gov

Dawn Cotterell, from the LADWP noted that they are holding a virtual public meeting November 20th 7:00pm, regarding the Scattergood Generating Station Units 1 & 2 Green Hydrogen-Ready Modernization Project, and will talk about the CEQA process and Draft EIR; an opportunity for our input about this project for LADWP to upgrade the existing Scattergood Generating Station in Playa Del Rey. Dawn.Cotterell@ladwp.com. www.ladwp.com/scattergoodmodernization

3. Board Member Updates – None

4. Committee Reports –

a. **WRAC Transportation & Mobility Committee (MTC)** – Next mtg. 11/20/24

b. **WRAC Homelessness Committee (HOC)** – Special mtg. 10/28/24; next mtg. 1/28/25
Member Handal, HOC Chairman, gave an update that nothing has changed, we still have plenty of homeless, motions have gone through, and we're asking councils to work on things. The next meeting will be in January. Vice Chair Spitz commented on our in-person Homelessness

Committee Roundtable, that the elected officials seemed impressed and found our questions challenging but that we adequately conveyed our concerns, such as the need for transparency & accountability, which they seemed to agree with.

(Member Ruderman left the meeting at 7:35 pm)

Member Sann noted that there was very good dialog with the three elected officials that we had. As to Measure G which just passed, Member Sann highlighted the significant change to the County BOS, expanding from five to nine members and the addition of an ethics component. He emphasized the point made by Senator Allen that, given that the City of LA is only one of several cities in the County, in the Senator's opinion one of the most impactful things that could happen would be creation of a County Chief Executive Officer (CEO). The CEO's #1-10 priorities would be homelessness, homelessness and homelessness, and having someone countywide to address this would be a very significant change. The Senator acknowledged that we won't get this County CEO for a number of years, but thinks this was a significant development for which he credited Supervisor Lindsey Horvath, a chief proponent of Measure G, in the creation of this change to County government. Chair Greenberg thanked everyone who worked on the in-person Roundtable.

c. **WRAC Land Use & Planning Committee (LUPC)** – No Nov. mtg.; next mtg. 1/13/25

Member Broide noted that tomorrow at 1:00 pm, PLUM has a meeting as to implementing ordinances for the Housing Element including the CHIP ordinance. She explained the CHIP Ordinance as a measure that will define some of the local programs that will allow the City to reach its RHNA goal; that the City has prepared a document in Draft #3 of CHIP that meets all of the requirements that provides ample zoning to reach the state's goals. She understands the report has been released this week by UCLA saying that was not the case. There are those who believe that study is biased. Member Broide pointed out that the Council File on this is open for comment; however, only in-person testimony will be taken by the PLUM Committee.

She believes that a lot of misinformation has been circulated in the media, noting that Controller Mejia has just sent an X post that she deemed to be very misleading, fueling the anti-R1 conversations, having to do with the statement that that 70% of the land is zoned R1, which she clarified is not true. She noted that in fact 35% of the parcels of single-family zoning are in the Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones (VHFHSZs) or areas of vulnerability to sea-level rise exposure, so when you take the 35% and apply it to 70%, you get that 45% of the City's residentially-zoned land is zoned R1, even less of the total amount of City land. Member Broide noted further that the problem with rezoning R1 land, as suggested as an exhibit to the CHIP program that the Planning has prepared but the CPC did not approve, is that if up-zoning is done in the Housing Element, corrections will be very difficult if not impossible for the City to make because the State will look at any changes as down-zoning and will require equal up-zoning elsewhere. She believes this will allow speculators & developers to become the planners of the

City and put density where they wish, not where infrastructure supports it, or where communities need or value it. She noted that, in fact, the community planning process is where these decisions can be made. She noted that there will be a lot of lobbying tomorrow, and if you have a Community Impact Statement (CIS) from your council and a position adopted, she recommends that you attend the PLUM meeting.

5. **Public Comment** – None

6. **Approval of Minutes**

- a) The October 2024 meeting minutes were **approved** by 8-0-2 with 2 abstentions from Members Leal and Jordan as moved by Chair Greenberg and Member Lynn.

7. **New Business** – None.

8. **Old Business** (possible action to extend deadlines to Jan. 2025 – motions d, e, g, h).

- a) **24.05 Request cap on waivers for ED1 and Affordable Housing Streamlining projects** -- Feb. 26, 2024 (passed November 2024). 8 councils adopted: BCC, NCWP, Palms NC,* VNC, WCC, WLASNC, WWNC, WNC* (modified version). **Position letter pending.**
- b) **24.09 Support the “Housing Unhoused Disabled Veterans Act” (HR 8340/Sherman)** - September 2024 (**passed** October 2024). 8 councils adopted: BABCNC,* BCC,* NCWP, NWWNC, PPCC, WLASNC, WNC,* WWNC (*modified version).
Position letter: <https://westsidecouncils.com/wp-content/uploads/2024/09/WRAC-letter-vets-housing.pdf>.
- c) **24.11 Support for CW Park Letter re Governor’s Executive Order # N-1-24 / Addressing Encampments on State Land in CD 11** – September 2024 (passed November 2024). 8 councils adopted: BCC, DRNC, MVCC, NCWP, PPCC,* WLASNC, WNC, WWNC (*modified version). **Position letter pending.**
- d) **24.12 Request CW Yaroslavy to Send Similar Letter re Governor’s Executive Order # N-1-24 / Addressing Encampments on State Land in CD 5** – September 2024 (Passage deadline Dec. 2024). 6 councils adopted: BCC, NCWP, PPCC, WLASNC, WNC, WWNC.
- This will be taken up by BABCNC this Wednesday.
Motion to extend this deadline to January **passed** by 8-0-0, as moved by Vice-Chair Spitz and Member Jordan.
- e) **24.13 Support for Brentwood Community Council Resolution and Requests to LA County Board of Supervisors** – September 2024 (passage deadline Dec. 2024). 4 councils adopted: BCC, NCWP,* PPCC, WLASNC (*modified version).
- This will be taken up by BABCNC this Wednesday.
Motion to extend this deadline to January **passed** by 8-0-0, as moved by Vice-Chair Spitz and Member Jordan.

- f) **24.14 Support Request for City Homeless Reporting Dashboard that Mirrors the Culver City Homeless Reporting Dashboard** – September 2024 (**passed** November 2024). 8 councils adopted: BCC,* MVCC, NCWP, NWNC,* PPCC,* WLASNC, WNC, WWNC (*modified version). **Position letter:** <https://westsidecouncils.com/wp-content/uploads/2024/11/WRAC-Letter-Homeless-Dashboard.pdf>.
- g) **24.15 Request Suspension of Work on Westside Community Plans until Housing Element Policies and Mapping are Adopted** – September 2024 (passage deadline Dec. 2024). **5 councils** adopted: BCC, NCWP, WLASNC, WNC, and WWNC. **Motion** to extend this deadline to January **passed** by 8-0-0, as **moved** by Vice-Chair Spitz and Member Jordan.
- h) **24.16 Request Revision of Landscape Ordinance to Clarify that Front Yard Paving for Extra Parking is Prohibited** – September 2024 (passage deadline Dec. 2024). 5 councils adopted: BCC, NCWP, WLASNC, WNC, and WWNC. BABCNC Modified to **6 councils**. **Motion** to extend this deadline to January **passed** by 8-0-0, as **moved** by Vice-Chair Spitz and Member Jordan.
- i) **24.17 Request Investigation into Use of Federal, State, County and City Funds to Address Homelessness** – October 2024 (passage deadline Jan. 2025). **5 councils** adopted: MVCC, PPCC,* WLASNC, WNC, and WWNC (*modified version). BABCNC and WLA are both taking it up on Wednesday. (Member Tippit confirmed that WNC passed it as written.)
- j) **24.18 Support CF 24-1128 (report on incomplete/abandoned construction)** – October 2024 (passage deadline Jan. 2025). **6 councils** adopted: BABCNC,* BCC, DRNC, PPCC, WWNC, and WNC*(*modified versions).
- k) **24.19 Oppose Metro TCN Structures Along the 405** – October 2024 (passage deadline Jan. 2025). **4 councils** adopted: BCC, WNC, WWNC, and PPCC* (*modified version).
- This will be taken up by BABCNC this Wednesday.

9. **Adjourn** – Prior to adjournment, Chair Greenberg (BABCNC) expressed gratitude for all the members of the WRAC board, and reminded us that there is a holiday toy drive at the WLA Community Police Station. Member Handal (WLASNC) announced the 42nd annual Westside Thanksgiving Community Dinner and Celebration, at the WLA Civic Center, on Thursday, November 28th, with sponsorship from many of the NCs in this group. He thanked those who passed NPGs and donated to it along with Councilwoman Traci Park and some other government entities. He noted that they will serve 3,000-4,000 people at a free sit-down holiday dinner, and will be offering clothing, shoes, haircuts, coffee and goodies. He invited every NC here to send someone by, noting that they usually have 600-800 volunteers on the day and welcomed volunteers.

The meeting ended at 7:55 pm, until we meet again on **January 20, 2025**, at 6:30 pm.