

OPNC Board Meeting Minutes

Date	9 Sept 2024 19:00
Location	Zoom
Type	Special Meeting ▾
Status	Pending Board Approval ▾
Submitted By	Max Hawkins

1. Call to order and roll call

The meeting was called to order by Ramsay Goyal at 7:00pm

	Samuel Bark, Geoff Birchfield, Jessica Celious, Robert Cresswell, Mitchell Edelson, Nathan Freeman, Natasha Fung, Michael Hagerty, Max Hawkins, Sheila Hill, Charles Jang, Paul Rogoff, Bev Rowe, Guy
Present (17)	Toley, Clem Wright, Ramsay Goyal, Frank Larrazaleta
Absent (2)	Gerry Pass, Yimu Xue
Excused (0)	—

2. Presentations from government officials

Jungmin Lee & Alan Antonio, Council District 10

- Office has concluded “Movies in the Park” and “Splish Splash” summer series.
- Emphasized the availability of a rapid response crew for bulky item pickup, weed abatement, and trash clean-up.
- LADOT Pico Safety Project
 - Left turn phasing upgrades at Harvard Ave, Normandy Ave, Catalina St, and Westmoreland Ave.
 - Installation of a pedestrian-activated beacon at Kenmore Ave.
 - Project is motivated by the high number of pedestrian collisions on Pico Blvd (76 severe injury/death collisions from 2014–2023).
 - Planned bike lanes to enhance connectivity between Mid-City and Downtown LA, supporting the city’s mobility plans for the 2028 Olympics.

Board Member Comments:

- **Jessica Celious:** raised concerns about the safety of bike lanes and the heavy traffic near Washington and Culver City.

- **Robert Cresswell:** Asked if the rapid response crew also handles illegally parked cars.
- **Guy Toley:** Inquired about homeless encampments on Country Club Drive.

Officer Harry Cho, LAPD Olympic Division

- The past four weeks have seen a reduction in crime, with reports of 7 vehicle break-ins, 7 vehicle thefts, and a package theft.
- No recent burglaries in the area, but vigilance was encouraged due to nearby criminal activity in the valley.
- New captains for the Olympic Division: Brian O'Connor and Rachel Rodriguez

Board Member Comments:

- **Mitch Edelson:** Inquired about the legality of nitrous oxide use, expressing concern about its open usage in public areas.
- **Jessica Celious:** Raised concerns about drug dealing and graffiti at the corner of Pico and Irolo.
- **Robert Cresswell:** Asked for updates regarding 1035 to 1047 South Crenshaw, which has been attracting homeless encampments.

Octaviano Rios, Department of Neighborhood Empowerment

- Congress of Neighborhoods scheduled for September 28th, registration is now open.
- Olympic Park is in Region 6 with the election day set for Tuesday, April 22, 2024.
- Candidate filing period opens December 20, 2023, and closes February 3, 2024.
- 2024 Neighborhood Council Perception Survey is now closed
- The City Clerk's office manages neighborhood council CIP projects such as tree planting, murals, and community gardens.
 - Neighborhood councils planning CIPs should reach out to their funding representative as soon as projects are approved to ensure proper guidance and completion of the project.

3. General Public Comment

- **Sue McCullough:** Raised concerns about the proposed underground tunneling along La Brea or Fairfax, citing potential home disruption and soil erosion. They suggested a high-frequency bus system as a cheaper alternative and inquired about a community impact statement from the Transportation Committee.
- **Larry Jonas:** raised concerns about potential removal of gates in the Country Club Park area. The board confirmed that there were no current updates available on the matter.
- **Robert Cresswell:** mentioned the formation of a neighborhood watch group in Oxford Square, offering to collaborate with the neighborhood council.
- **Hollis:** expressed concerns about transparency and communication regarding meetings and decisions affecting Country Club Park, particularly about the gates.

4A. Discussion and possible approval of a N.P.G. for World Harvest Food Bank in an amount up to \$4,999.00

- Mark Reagan of World Harvest Food Bank presented a proposal requesting funds to support food distribution programs targeting low-income families and seniors.
- Board members raised questions about how recipients are selected and whether there are any processes to ensure the food is not being misused.
- Public comment supported the grant, noting the visible presence of World Harvest trucks and food distribution activities in the community.

Mover	Mitchell Edelson
Second	Geoff Birchfield
	Jessica Celious, Robert Cresswell, Mitchell Edelson, Nathan Freeman, Natasha Fung, Michael Hagerty, Max Hawkins, Sheila Hill, Charles Jang, Paul Rogoff, Bev Rowe, Guy Toley, Clem Wright, Ramsay Goyal, Frank Larrazaleta
Yes (16)	
No (0)	—
Ineligible (1)	Samuel Bark

The motion passes unanimously.

4B. Discuss and possible approval of a N.P.G. for ZZK Culture to support the Reina de Cumbia CDMX21 in LA in an amount up to \$5000.00

- Errors were noted in the application regarding talent expenses and other neighborhood council funding. A motion was made to table the item due to inconsistencies in the application.

Mover	Max Hawkins
Second	Frank Larrazaleta
	Jessica Celious, Robert Cresswell, Mitchell Edelson, Nathan Freeman, Natasha Fung, Michael Hagerty, Max Hawkins, Sheila Hill, Charles Jang, Paul Rogoff, Bev Rowe, Guy Toley, Clem Wright, Ramsay Goyal, Frank Larrazaleta
Yes (17)	

The motion passes unanimously.

4C. Discussion and possible approval to allocate funds and approve a N.P.G. for Heal One World in an amount up to \$5000.00

- Skye Kelly of Heal One World requests \$5,000 to support wellness classes, including yoga, Tai Chi, and meditation.
 - Free classes offered with no qualification requirements.
 - Funds will be used to provide stipends for volunteer instructors and purchase yoga mats for attendees.
 - The goal is to foster healthy habits through a 16-week program with an opening event and a “graduation” celebration.
- Board Member Comments
 - **Max Hawkins:** Asked about outreach efforts. Sky explained that outreach is done via postcards, social media, and signage. The grant would help expand community awareness.
 - **Jessica Celious:** Suggested connecting with at-risk youth programs for collaboration.
 - **Mitch Edelson:** Voiced strong support for the program, highlighting Skye’s commitment to the community.

Mover	Mitchell Edelson
Second	Guy Toley
	Jessica Celious, Mitchell Edelson, Nathan Freeman, Natasha Fung, Michael Hagerty, Max Hawkins, Sheila Hill, Charles Jang, Paul Rogoff, Bev Rowe, Guy Toley, Clem Wright, Frank Larrazaleta
Yes (14)	
No (0)	—
Ineligible (1)	Samuel Bark

The motion passes unanimously.

4D. Discussion and appointment of outreach committee members and chair.

- Guy announced that he would like to step down from the Outreach Committee chair role to focus on other priorities.
- Guy agreed to serve as interim chair for the next month while the board seeks a permanent chair.
- Members of the public are welcome to serve on the committee and can express their interest via email to rgoyal@opnc.org.
- As no volunteers for the permanent chair role emerged, the item was tabled for discussion at the next meeting.

4E. Discussion of attendees to the Congress of Neighborhoods.

- Nathan Freeman provided an update on the upcoming Congress of Neighborhoods at City Hall, scheduled for September 28th.
- OPNC is a platinum sponsor, granting the council a half-page ad, an exhibit table, and a 2-3 minute speaking slot. However, these items are still under discussion and Nathan will follow up with final details.

5. Consent Calendar

Mover	Mitchell Edelson
Second	Michael Hagerty
	Jessica Celious, Robert Cresswell, Mitchell Edelson, Nathan Freeman, Natasha Fung, Michael Hagerty, Max Hawkins, Sheila Hill, Charles Jang, Paul Rogoff, Bev Rowe, Guy Toley, Clem Wright, Ramsay Goyal, Frank Larrazaleta
Yes (16)	

The motion passes unanimously.

6A. Treasurer's report

- Geoff Birchfield provided an update, mentioning that he has not yet written any checks or paid any bills but is learning the role with Max's assistance.
- Geoff circulated a revised fiscal budget to the board and offered to resend it if needed.
- The board previously approved up to \$1,000 for a PO box. Geoff informed the board that the actual cost is likely to be much lower, around \$200-\$300, and clarified that the larger PO box would cost \$240 annually.

6B. Discussion and appointment of an alternate signer

- Max Hawkins explained the need for an alternate signer to ensure that financial documents such as the Board Action Certification form can be signed if the treasurer or second signer are unavailable.
- Currently, Michael Hagerty serves as the second signer, but no alternate signer is in place, leading to potential issues if both primary signers are unavailable.
- Guy Toley volunteered to serve as the alternate signer, and the board agreed to move forward with the appointment.

Mover	Michael Hagerty
Second	Jessica Celious
Yes (16)	Jessica Celious, Robert Cresswell, Mitchell Edelson, Nathan

Freeman, Natasha Fung, Michael Hagerty, Max Hawkins, Sheila Hill, Charles Jang, Paul Rogoff, Bev Rowe, Guy Toley, Clem Wright, Ramsay Goyal, Frank Larrazaleta

No (0) —
Ineligible (1) Samuel Bark

The motion passes unanimously.

6C. Discussion and appointment of a first cardholder

- The board discussed the appointment of the first card holder, which remains Guy.
- Mitch expressed that Guy may have professional commitments that may limit his availability.
- Jessica Celious moved to re-appoint Guy Toley as the first cardholder.

Mover Jessica Celious
Second Samuel Bark
Jessica Celious, Robert Cresswell, Mitchell Edelson, Nathan Freeman, Natasha Fung, Michael Hagerty, Max Hawkins, Sheila Hill, Charles Jang, Paul Rogoff, Bev Rowe, Guy Toley, Clem Wright, Ramsay Goyal, Frank Larrazaleta
Yes (16)
No (0) —
Ineligible (1) Samuel Bark

The motion passes unanimously.

6D. Appoint Geoff Birchfield as the second card holder

Mover Max Hawkins
Second Guy Toley
Jessica Celious, Robert Cresswell, Mitchell Edelson, Nathan Freeman, Natasha Fung, Michael Hagerty, Max Hawkins, Sheila Hill, Charles Jang, Paul Rogoff, Bev Rowe, Guy Toley, Clem Wright, Ramsay Goyal, Frank Larrazaleta
Yes (16)
No (0) —

The motion passes unanimously.

6E. Discussion and approval of OPNC budget for FY 2024-2025

Mover	Max Hawkins
Second	Frank Larrazaleta
	Jessica Celious, Mitchell Edelson, Nathan Freeman, Natasha Fung, Michael Hagerty, Max Hawkins, Sheila Hill, Charles Jang, Paul Rogoff, Bev Rowe, Guy Toley, Clem Wright,
Yes (15)	Ramsay Goyal, Frank Larrazaleta
No (0)	—
Abstain (1)	Robert Cresswell

The motion passes.

8A. Comments about parliamentary procedure

Michael Hagerty clarified the rules for public comment, stating that members of the public are allowed two minutes to speak on non-agenda items and two minutes to comment on agenda items, with no obligation for the board to respond. He encouraged the public to review the OPNC bylaws, available on the website, to understand how meetings are conducted. He emphasized that all meetings are transparent and stressed the importance of respecting these rules to ensure smooth and efficient proceedings for both board members and the public.

Board Member Comments:

- Jessica Celious raised concerns about the language used by Michael during the explanation of public comment rules, particularly around the impression that public comments would not be addressed by the board. She felt the board's language was confusing, as questions from the public were invited, but the responses seemed dismissive.
- Michael Hagerty clarified that the board is not required to answer public comments and that the board's primary role is to hear feedback from stakeholders, not engage in extended dialogue
- Mitch Edelson and other board members agreed that clear language is essential, but emphasized the need to limit discussions to ensure meetings run efficiently. The goal is to hear everyone while maintaining order.
- Octaviano Rios thanked the board members for their service, particularly the officers, and suggested that a retreat might be helpful to address some of the ongoing procedural issues, such as parliamentary procedures and Brown Act compliance. He also acknowledged the challenges of managing the roles and responsibilities of a neighborhood council.

- Max Hawkins sought clarification on whether the board is allowed to respond to public comments, referencing that at Board of Neighborhood Commissioners meetings, board members typically do not respond to public comments. He suggested that this might be due to Brown Act rules or Robert's Rules of Order and asked for clarity on whether this applies to their meetings.
- Michael Hagerty clarified that public comments are meant to inform the board but are not intended for direct responses or dialogue. He acknowledged the need to make this clearer at the beginning of public comment periods.

8B. Comment on Board Member's own activities / Brief announcements.

- Max Hawkins addressed the board regarding concerns raised at the previous meeting about potential conflicts of interest, specifically on a Venice Blvd for All motion. He explained that after consulting with the city attorney, it was determined that he did not have a conflict of interest. He encouraged board members to reach out to the city attorney if they ever suspect they may have a conflict, especially in cases involving economic interests or property within 1,000 feet of a project.

9. Adjournment

Clem Wright moved to adjourn the meeting, Max Hawkins seconded.