

PORTER RANCH NEIGHBORHOOD COUNCIL

Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, February 7, 2006

Shepherd of the Hills Church

Porter Ranch, California

1. MEETING OPENING

a. Welcome

Becky Leveque called the meeting to order at 6:22 pm. and welcomed attendees.

b. Approval of Agenda

Paula Cracium moved to accept minutes; seconded by Joe Martin.

VOTE: Unanimous in favor.

c. Roll Call: Pam Birnkrant, Paula Cracium, Paul Drogichen, Susan Hammarlund, Becky Leveque, Joe Martin, Mel Mitchell, Ron Nagai, Tatiana Oueini, Patrick Pope. Absent: Matt Gluck.

d. Approval of Minutes for January 2006.

After a meeting with the City Attorney's office Paul Drogichen outlined procedures that must be followed per the Brown Act for communication between Board members. Mr. Drogichen discussed appropriate use of e-mail regarding discussions of PRNC issues. Mr. Drogichen also referred to procedures that must be followed for any meeting, especially that any PRNC meeting must have a notice posted and also must have minutes recorded. Becky Leveque mentioned that DONE is reviewing locations for posting meeting notices, and may be making procedural changes. Discussion followed regarding the PRNC posting locations as listed in PRNC by-laws. Mr. Drogichen stated that stakeholders are not required to sign in. Ms. Leveque listed the locations where PRNC meeting notices are currently posted. A special meeting will be held to discuss these issues, and Mr. Drogichen promised to provide information to Board members regarding the Brown Act. Mr. Drogichen outlined circumstances in which a violation of the Brown Act could occur, and promised to provide information to the Board members prior to the special meeting. Further discussion on this issue will be tabled until the special meeting. In response to a question from Joe Martin concerning liability of PRNC Board members, Ms. Leveque stated that the Neighborhood Councils are covered by the City of Los Angeles, and that the City is looking into the question of re-insuring itself.

Correction to Minutes of January 3, 2006, Becky Leveque suggested an amendment, to the first paragraph, line 7: "was sent to Ron Nagai's work e-mail address on the weekend." P. 2, 1st paragraph: The wording of a motion amended at a special meeting, to "between February 15th and March 30th of each calendar year" was provided by Paula Cracium. Susan Hammarlund noted an amendment to page 2, third line: "The Education Committee will order one more computer for Castlebay."

Pat Pope moved to accept January 3, 2006 meeting Minutes, as amended; seconded by Susan Hammarlund.

Ron Nagai noted that mention was made on the last page of these Minutes of a letter to the Fire Chief regarding a full-time paramedic rescue service to be written by Mr. Nagai: Ron and Becky will work together on a letter to Chief Bamattre.

VOTE: Unanimous in favor. The motion passed.

Pat Pope will send copies of the adopted minutes for publication on the website.

(Taken out of order) David Rahimian, Area Representative, Neighborhood & Community Services, Mayor Villaraigosa's office, presented a Certificate of Appreciation to Porter Ranch Neighborhood Council for its participation in the recent Mayor's Day of Service. Mr. Rahimian announced a second Day of Service, May 7, 2006, and asked for suggestions for potential locations and projects. Mr. Rahimian also discussed an executive directive signed by the Mayor regarding Rush Hour Ban on Road Construction violations, as well as the City of Los Angeles Homeland Security and Disaster Preparedness Initiative. Mr. Rahimian asked if there has been any collective PRNC disaster preparedness effort; Ms. Leveque listed individual efforts. Paula Cracium noted an upcoming disaster preparedness seminar sponsored by the Mayor's office and Devonshire Division in February. Mr. Rahimian also called the meeting's attention to the Los Angeles Police Department's e-Policing program (www.lapdepolicing.org), and explained how stakeholders can and should take advantage of this service. Becky Leveque discussed information provided to attendees regarding Devonshire Division crime and safety issues. Led by Ron Nagai, the Board thanked Mr. Rahimian for attending and providing valuable information. A stakeholder, Jim Kosinsky, asked about response time for an e-mail sent to the Mayor asking whether the City or School District could provide transportation to students who attend schools outside the neighborhood. Mr. Rahimian informed Mr. Kosinsky of the Mayor's Safe Passages program, which is currently in an experimental stage and focuses on younger children at the moment. Becky Leveque suggested contact Joe Martin to discuss how PRNC could

assist stakeholders and their children in coordinating such a valuable service. Ron Nagai discussed a program proposed in the past that researched providing DASH service to area students. Another stakeholder reminded meeting attendees that a school bus program existed for some time in the past; the stakeholder also thanked PRNC for assisting in effecting sidewalk renovations to the area around Castlebay Elementary School. Becky Leveque asked John Bwarie, Representative from Councilman Smith's office, to convey thanks to the Councilman for creating the forum by which this community service was affected. John Bwarie also mentioned www.cd12.org website for 12th district. Mr. Bwarie mentioned the Adopt-A-Street program. Mr. Bwarie discussed the Video Testimony pilot project, which allows stakeholders to participate in City Council meetings without having to travel downtown, every Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday. Van Nuys Courthouse is the pilot location for the San Fernando Valley. Mr. Bwarie reported on the Community Service Partnership Project (Northridge was the location of the first; next date is April 1st in Granada Hills and then May 20th in Chatsworth. Mr. Bwarie suggested follow up from PRNC regarding scheduling a local event.

Becky Leveque asked that stakeholders e-mail her a list of streets that need cleaning. Ms. Leveque reported that the Police Department has a program which needs locations to send community service crews; Ms. Leveque will relay stakeholders' suggestions to police authorities.

e. Approval of Minutes for Emergency Meeting (taken out of order)

Paul Drogichen noted that the meeting was not an emergency meeting, it was a special meeting; the minutes were to be changed accordingly.

Susan Hammarlund moved to approve minutes; seconded by Paula Cracium.

VOTE: 4 in favor; 2 abstentions; the motion passed.

f. Treasurer's Report

Paul Drogichen reported on the PRNC's current fiscal status, providing a detailed breakdown of funds allocated for individual budget lines and listed funds remaining in each budget line. Mr. Drogichen strongly advised that available funds should be spent in this fiscal year. In the discussion that followed: Ron Nagai noted that beautification funds could be spent on building center medians; Mr. Drogichen stated that an estimate should be obtained for any prospective work; Susan Hammarlund suggested providing more up-to-date computer equipment to Castlebay School. Mel Mitchell suggested compiling a list of viable projects and suggested building restroom facilities at "ET" park located at the end of Reseda

Boulevard. John Bwarie reminded the Board that the amount of funding does not increase, while construction costs are increasing. Mr. Bwarie also discussed a Leadership forum that recently took place, sponsored by Palms Neighborhood Council, in which brainstorming for ideas of worth to the community was one function performed.

2. OLD BUSINESS

- a. Election by-law change. Amend by-laws to state "Elections for the PRNC Board of Directors shall be held annually within the second quarter, based on a calendar year (April, May or June). (Taken out of order)
Paula Cracium reported on the rationale for making this change, and discussed the special meeting held to debate this issue.

Joe Martin moved that the language of the PRNC By-laws to state: Elections for the Porter Ranch Neighborhood Council Board of Directors shall be held annually within the second quarter, of the calendar year (April, May or June); seconded by Tatiana Oueini.

Irv Cohen, a stakeholder, suggested setting a specific date for the election to be held, rather than leave the three-month window. Becky Leveque noted that the amendment must be made prior to a date being set. Paula Cracium discussed the process by which the dates had been set, and stated that a number of variables, DONE and League of Woman Voters schedule issues made setting a date for elections problematic.

VOTE: Unanimous in favor. The motion passed.

Manny Durazo provided background information on the rationale behind changing the language of the by-laws, especially with reference to the election process. Pat Pope reminded the Board that the overarching issue is to assure a good voter turnout. Brite Aregs a stakeholder, made another suggestion regarding setting a specific date to hold elections. Becky Leveque invited any interested stakeholders to contact Paula Cracium to participate in the Election Committee.

Becky Leveque polled the audience to determine how effective outreach efforts were in aiding stakeholder turnout for the meeting.

- b. Update on new school in Porter Ranch. Becky Leveque introduced Donna Smith from LAUSD Board Member John Lauritzen's Office and discussed the process to date with regard to the new school. Ms. Leveque mentioned the three meetings to be held by the School Board. Ms. Smith provided an update on efforts to date and discussed possible designs and configurations for the new school (elementary, middle school, span school). Ms. Smith emphasized that nothing is settled at this point. Ms.

Smith outlined plans and schedules for updates to the public. Ms. Smith noted that the building process will take four years on the "Fast Track". Ms. Leveque noted that the School Board appreciates the Porter Ranch Neighborhood Council's involvement, that the Porter Ranch Neighborhood Council's involvement is unique and that no eminent domain is required to build this school.

Donna Burrows asked about Donna Smith's experience and qualifications. Ms. Smith discussed her long-term commitment to the community and also discussed John Lauritzen's role and activities. Ms. Smith is a retired teacher and was Principal at Chatsworth High School. Irv Cohen asked about including a cultural center or community center in the plans, and asked how much money has been budgeted for the new school. Becky Leveque noted that a senior center, a community center and a bigger library have been discussed with S&S. Ms. Smith stated that no firm amount of funding has yet been discussed. In response to Kathy Ham's question, a site on Mason between Sesnon and Rinaldi is being considered. Stakeholder Neal Estrin gave a detailed description about how construction will be funded. Matt Navach asked about time to completion; Ms. Leveque responded that, at the most, it will take seven years. Ms. Smith stated timelines will be provided later on. Alex Barder asked why a seven-year timeframe was mentioned; Ms. Smith noted requirements by the state that are intended to protect students are a driving force. Joe Martin reminded attendees of the Belmont High School fiasco. A stakeholder who suggested hiring an attorney to put pressure on the School Board to move quicker on the development was assured that there is no reason to put pressure on governmental agencies. Judy Daniels, Chatsworth Neighborhood Council Vice President stated that every school takes 4-5 years to construct, and that she had been told that no overcrowding in West Valley schools and that no special circumstance exists. Ms. Daniels quoted a John Lauritzen survey noting there were not enough children in Porter Ranch to justify constructing a school. Joe Martin stated that regardless of the statistics and circumstances to which Ms. Daniels referred, a school is being built. Further general discussion took place about how long until completion of the school project.

- c. Discussion about spending the remaining PRNC funds (approximately \$85,000).
- d. Status of Paramedics in Porter Ranch. As noted earlier in these Minutes, Becky Leveque and Ron Nagai will write a letter based on one sent some time ago, and will ask for a status report from Chief Bamattre

3. **NEW BUSINESS**

- a. Address using funds to have the tree wells and streets cleaned of weeds (Mayor's sidewalk funds use). Tabled until committee meeting.
- b. Report on PR Design Review Committee Meeting held on January 23, 2006.

Mel Mitchell reported that a new sign will be installed for Porter Ranch Pizza.

- c. General PRNC Board Announcements

Request for traffic signal at Porter Ranch and Rinaldi resulted in traffic being made worse, not better, per Ron Nagai.

Susan Hammarlund's grandson won an essay contest concerning the importance of bilingual education.

4. COMMITTEE REPORTS

- a. Update on new schools in Porter Ranch

Provided by Becky Leveque earlier in the meeting.

- b. Transportation Committee and NUSA

Joe Martin recommended sending a PRNC representative to the NUSA meeting; this item will be on the next meeting's agenda. Mr. Martin noted receiving 23 complaints about bus service in PR area and relaying those complaints to MTA and DOT via e-mail.

- c. Outreach

Pam Birnkrant updated the Board on outreach efforts, including contacting the State Senator, George Runner. Mel Mitchell asked about banners and signs; Ms. Birnkrant noted that some signs may be missing. Mr. Mitchell asked if additional copies of the PRNC newsletter are available.

- d. Safety Committee

Reported by Becky Leveque earlier in the meeting (taken out of order).

- e. Report on Budget Day with the Mayor

Joe Martin reported attending the Mayor's budget meeting and mentioned dissatisfaction with changes made in street cleaning in Porter Ranch.

f. Hospitality Committee

Tabled until the next meeting.

g. Education Committee

Susan Hammarlund noted that efforts to obtain additional computer equipment are underway.

5. **GUEST SPEAKER**

a. Councilman Grieg Smith's office

Becky Leveque read a letter from Councilman Smith's office (attached) preliminary to a presentation by Jim Hollister, and noted that the intent is to improve cell phone reception in Porter Ranch.

b. Cingular (taken out of order)

Mr. Hollister introduced his staff and led the Cingular presentation. Mr. Hollister said that contiguous coverage on the major roadways is the top priority for wireless companies. Reception inside of structures is also important but can have spottier results, especially in a hilly area. Mr. Hollister stated that he would discuss some of the wireless options available and address stakeholders' concern. Mr. Hollister also reported on how improvement in cell phone signals can be affected, and listed where cell sites will have to be installed (macro cell sites, covering large areas effectively require forty foot high towers. Micro cell sites cover smaller geographies, thus more are required, and can be placed in less imposing towers, for example street lights. Mr. Hollister also discussed plans for advanced wireless services like high speed data transport that are driving up the need for more bandwidth. He discussed "Maximum Permissible Exposure". (MPE) is a standard set by FCC regarding health risks. He presented several graphs showing power levels at various distances from the towers. He also showed many pictures of towers disguised to fit into the local environment.

Becky Leveque asked about how Cingular plans to make sure its cell site equipment is kept up to date and voiced concern that these antennas will at some point in the future become obsolete. Mr. Hollister stated that in 17 years, he has not yet seen an antenna become obsolete and remarked that cellular technology depends on access to a limited range of frequencies. A stakeholder asked when service will improve once changes have been initiated; Mr. Hollister's response was 6 months to a year with the support of the community and the Council District office. Mr. Hollister stated that the average time for this process in LA County is 18

months. Susan Hammarlund suggested sharing cell site locations with other cell phone companies. The Cingular team said that the city will require sharing of macro sites by the various providers. They said that there are physical and electronic constraints to share micro sites that are often hidden in street light polls. Ron Nagai suggested that Cingular provide compensation to the City for sites installed in public areas. Cingular said that they are open to negotiation. Discussion about technical issues ensued. Mr. Hollister reported that the most recent cell site was installed approximately a year ago near the Porter Ranch Drive Park and Ride, and that another cell site is being considered. Mike Dobry commended the Board for providing the forum for discussion of this subject and noted safety concerns that motivated his interest in improving cell phone service in the area.

Mr. Hollister expressed interest in finding the best solution with the stakeholders. Ms. Leveque suggested a round table discussion with other cell phone companies, community members and interested government officials, and suggested including choices between cell phone sites as part of the Porter Ranch Neighborhood Council election process. Further discussion included comments about aesthetic concerns, details of the maps and materials presented by the Cingular representatives, cell phone individual consumer equipment, effect of new development on cell phone service, the importance of community involvement to engineer an acceptable solution, and efficient high-speed data transmission. Paula Cracium, noting that this issue falls naturally under the purview of the Land Use Committee, suggested that this topic be brought up at the next Land Use Committee meeting. A list circulated among attendees to indicate interest in participating in the Land Use Committee. Judy Daniels provided information based on Chatsworth Neighborhood Council experience, noting that a cell phone company had presented a "sample book" of cell phone sites. Becky Leveque asked Jim Hollister to coordinate with Mel Mitchell, and thanked Cingular for the presentation.

6. STAKEHOLDER COMMENTS

Becky Leveque introduced Mike Dobry, the new president of Supporters of Law Enforcement in Devonshire (SOLID).

Tom Newman wants an official neighborhood designation of Porter Ranch by the city. John Bwarie reported on recent City Council ruling on renaming neighborhoods. Mr. Bwarie advised contacting Claudia Dunn, at the City Clerk's office, for the proper application form to delineate the geographic area to be named, and obtaining the requisite 500 signatures. Mr. Bwarie then described the subsequent formal hearing process was described. Mr. Bwarie emphasized that the Neighborhood Council cannot start the process, it has to be begun by a stakeholder. Further discussion followed about the reason for this request.

Motion to adjourn by Mel Mitchell; seconded by Susan Hammarlund.

For the record, Ron Nagai took the Certificate of Appreciation and will return it.