

PORTER RANCH NEIGHBORHOOD COUNCIL

Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, May 1, 2007
Shepherd of the Hills Church
Porter Ranch, California

1.1 Call to order

The meeting was called to order at 6:20 PM by Becky Leveque

1.2 Roll Call

Board Members present were Paula Cracium, Chris Cooper, Mel Mitchell, Bright Aregs, Vasdev Singh, Pat Pope, Ron Nagai, and Becky Leveque. Absent and excused were Sue Hammarlund, and Paul Drogichen. During the meeting between twenty and thirty stakeholders and speakers were present for some period of time.

1.3 Approval of Proposed Agenda

Pat Pope moved to approve the Agenda. Ron Nagai seconded. The agenda was approved unanimously.

1.4 Approval of April 10, 2007 Minutes

Pat Pope reported that Becky and Mel had mailed him some corrections to the April 10 meeting, correcting names. No one else had corrections.

Pat Pope moved that the April 10 minutes be approved with the corrections. Bright Aregs seconded. The April minutes were approved unanimously.

1.5 Approval of Treasurer's Report

In Paul's absence Becky distributed the Treasurer's Report compiled by Paul. The total of funds available to the PRNC on May 1, 2007 is \$65,261.12

Becky said that she watched the City Council debate on the budget this week and that the council noted that a lot of Neighborhood Council money was not being spent. The city budget is not in good shape at present. She said that the PRNC should spend our funds to improve our community or risk losing them. She said that the City Council debate mentioned that Neighborhood Councils need to do a better job of outreach. Vas said that at the Neighborhood Congress a suggested proportion of funding was on the order of 37% on Operations, 27% on Outreach, and 26% on Community Improvement.

Stakeholder Joe Martin expounded on the Neighborhood Council Budget as the discussion ended. Stakeholder Dale Good asked if we were spending our money. Becky said yes. Ron Nagai moved that the Budget Report be approved. Vasdev Singh seconded. The Budget Report was approved unanimously.

School Board Candidate Tamar Galatzan

Ms. Galatzan addressed the PRNC and asked those present to vote for her for School Board. She is an Assistant Los Angeles City Attorney and a mother of children that attend school in the district. She will work with the PRNC to get the new Span School through the maze at LAUSD. She believes that LAUSD could spend taxpayer money more wisely.

Ms. Galatzan answered several questions from the Board and the stakeholders present.

Assemblyman Cameron Smyth

Christine Ward from Assemblyman Smith's office attended part of the meeting to here if there were any community concerns. Ron Nagai asked her about traffic mitigation. Ms. Ward responded that traffic on the 118 Freeway is getting worse by the day. Assemblyman Smyth is trying to get more funding for congestion control on the 118 and for Valley Freeways in general. Mel Mitchell also asked about congestion.

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Fire Station 28

Members of Light Force 28 attended to thank the PRNC for the recognition event for Fire Station 28 and retired Captain Casper. Chris Cooper introduced Fire Station 28's new B Platoon Captain, Mike Ketaily. Captain Ketaily is moving from Fire Station 37 in West Los Angeles. He is a graduate of Canoga Park High School.

2.1 Motion to Reimburse Pat Pope \$49.38 for Printing Expenses for the Fire Department Recognition.

Ron Nagai moved to reimburse. Paula Cracium seconded. The motion was approved unanimously. Pat Pope abstained from voting.

2.3 (Taken out of order) Motion to Reimburse Chris Cooper not to exceed \$300 for Porter Ranch Clean Up Day.

Ron Nagai moved to reimburse. Pat Pope seconded. The motion was approved unanimously. Chris Cooper abstained.

2.4 Motion by Mel Mitchell to Change the Bylaws to Set the Term between Elections for each PRNC Board Member to Four Years.

Mel stated that the current way that Neighborhood Councils are governed on elections makes it very difficult to attend to the business of the Council. The Neighborhood Council itself has to run its own election, while fitting in with other elections supervised by DONE and the League of Women Voters. DONE and the League are short handed, and the all volunteer Neighborhood Council members do not have the discretionary time available to run an election every year. Currently, Board members are elected to two-year terms, with half the Board running in alternate years. This becomes a full time job for at least two Board members for about 9 months of the year.

Mel and Paula both said that this change did not effect the eight year maximum term

Mel said that a June 2007 election would be impossible at this point anyway. The next election if this motion passed would be in June 2008.

Stakeholder Neil Estrin asked if the change would effect how vacancies are filled. Mel said no. Stakeholder Irv Cohen objected to the change. He said that he felt that this matter should be voted on by the stakeholders. Ron Nagai asked if DONE insisted on term limits. Mel said yes. Stakeholder Joe Martin said he thought the longer terms were a good idea. Paula Cracium said that this topic has been discussed in the last several Board meetings and the public has had a chance for input. Stakeholder Neil Estrin was opposed to the longer terms from a philosophical perspective, but understood the practical aspects and time constraints on an all volunteer board. Becky Leveque said that the city is trying to make the election process easier. Mel said that the bylaws could be just as easily amended if four year terms don't work out or the city makes changes in the election regulations.

The Bylaw change is as follows:

Article VI

C. Board of Directors shall serve a two (2) year term commencing on the first day of the month following the election. Members shall be elected during alternate years, with the majority, at most six (6) being elected on even

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numbered years and the rest (5) elected during odd numbered years. Board members shall serve no more than eight consecutive years.

To be replaced with:

“C. Board of Directors shall serve a four (4) year term commencing on the first day of the month following the election. Members shall be elected every two years to stagger the terms of each elected board member. Board members shall serve no more than eight consecutive years”

Irv Cohen asked if only the Board has to approve the change. Irv said this should be voted on by the stakeholders. Mel said that DONE has to approve the changes. Bright Aregs said that the Board is the representative of the community and has the right and responsibility to make the appropriate changes.

Mel Mitchell moved that we approve the change to the bylaws, Paula Cracium seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

2.7 (Taken out of Order) Motion to Purchase a Washer and Dryer for Fire Station 28

Chris Cooper said that removing chemicals and debris from firefighter uniforms is critical for the health of the firefighters. A washer and dryer similar to the units PRNC purchased for Fire Station 8 would be very important for the firefighters at Station 28. Ron Nagai said to make certain the equipment was commercial grade since it could be used daily. Becky said she had talked to Sears with Captain Franklin. Captain Ketaily said that he would verify the requirements with Captains Franklin and Cooper, so that all three shifts are in agreement. Mel questioned if we were spreading the PRNC funds around properly. Pat said that the PRNC spent a big portion of our money on the school last year. Becky said that PRNC is spreading the money around to various needs very well. Ron said that this expenditure is consistent with past spending, which has been approved by DONE. Chris Cooper said this was in keeping with being a good steward of public funds. Neil Estrin said that we should make sure that the warranty would apply for use at a fire station.

Ron Nagai moved that the Board approve funding for a washer and dryer not to exceed \$4,500. Pat Pope seconded. The board approved the motion unanimously. Chris Cooper abstained.

Thank You from the LAFD

Light Force 28 Engineer Glen Shorey thanked the PRNC for the outreach event at Fire Station 28. He said the firefighters all appreciated it and Captain Casper was overwhelmed with the community outpouring of support. He thanked Pat Pope and Ron Nagai for the hard work to organize the event. Pat Pope mentioned how hard Sue Hammarlund worked and it was unfortunate that she could not be at the event. Sue is a Red Cross volunteer and was helping flood relief on the east coast.

2.8 Motion to Help Purchase a New Treadmill for Fire Station 28

Ron Nagai said that the treadmill at Fire Station 28 is worn out. The firefighters from Station 28 agreed. It is impossible for the firefighters to leave the station to exercise, since they have to be ready to respond to a call at any moment.

Ron moved to approve the purchase of gym equipment at Fire Station 28 not to exceed \$6,500. Vas seconded. The motion was approved unanimously. Chris Cooper abstained. Bright was out of the room at the time and did not vote.

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2.5 Motion to Send a Letter to the Mayor Expressing Opposition to the Removal of Funds for CERT in the FY 2007-08 Budget

Chris Cooper moved that the Board send a letter to the Mayor asking him to fully fund CERT in the next fiscal year. Chris Copper will craft a letter to the mayor, Fire Chief Barry, and Councilmen Smith and Parks. Pat Pope seconded the motion. The motion was passed unanimously.

2.6 Candidate for Youth Reprehensive, Ali Dabirian

Becky reintroduced Ali Dabirian to the Board. He is 16 years old and is a student at Granada Hills High School. Ali stated that his main goal was to bring a younger person's perspective to the Board. Irv Cohen spoke very highly of Ali and said he was a great help to the library and was a very good young man. Paula said that no vote was necessary, Becky can appoint him. Becky made the appointment. School Board member Jon Lauritzen swore Ali in.

School Board Member Jon Lauritzen

Mr. Lauritzen is a candidate for re-election. He spoke to the audience to ask for votes. He had been a teacher for 35 years before coming to the LAUSD Board. He has actively advocated the new K-8 Span School in Porter Ranch. He took several questions from the Board and stakeholders. Many questions revolved around training kids not just for college but also vocational training as well. Mr. Lauritzen said that it was hard to find vocational education teachers with shop backgrounds because there is more money outside of teaching for skilled mechanics and craftsman. Ron asked about a shortage of school nurses and a general nursing shortage. Jon said that many positions are hard to fill like school nurses and science teachers. Mr. Lauritzen said that the district was making progress with hiring math teachers though.

2.2 Porter Valley Country Club Improvements

Mel introduced Ian Gardner the General Manger of Porter Valley Country Club, Don Johnson the Golf Course Superintendent, and Phil Habegger their architect. Mel said that on February 28 the Land Use Committee met with PVCC about changes at their facility including adding a tennis court, improving vehicle access, restriping the parking lot, and adding a guard gate. Mel stated that he had a motion on the April agenda to endorse the improvements, but there were several questions from stakeholders.

Ian stated that the members of the Country Club expressed a great need for another tennis court, which will be placed at the west end of the parking lot. Becky said she had heard concerns about increased traffic back-ups with a guard gate. Ian said the gate was necessary, but that two lanes of entry traffic could be accommodated for a large event. PVCC members will have windshield stickers to expedite their entry. Stakeholder Joe Martin asked about handicapped parking spaces. Ian said that PVCC exceeds the required number of spaces. Stakeholder Jim Kocinsky lives close to PVCC. He asked about barbed wire fencing and trash dumpsters. Ian said that PVCC uses between on and five dumpsters per month mostly for gardening wastes, and that the barbed wire is necessary to keep out trespassers. Mr. Kocinsky said that he has left several voice mail messages for Ian, which have not been returned. Ian will work with Jim to improve the eyesores of barbed wire and a swampy area near the street. Ian apologized for not returning Jim's calls. Ron Nagai voiced approval for the improvements, and talked about working with PCVV on a \$10,000 Community Beautification Grant.

Mel moved to approve the Land Use Committee request. Chris Cooper seconded. The vote was unanimous to approve.

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New Business

The Granada Hills Neighborhood Council needs election volunteers. Pat noted that the election date was April 28, which has passed. The item was tabled.

Bright said that he sent Becky an agenda item. She apologized that she did not receive it. Bright has been hiking in Lime Kiln Canyon. He has noticed a lot of graffiti and rubbish in the canyon. He noted that there was also workout equipment in spots in the canyon. Bright wants to establish a committee to oversee conditions in the canyon. Becky said that Prop O funds are being requested by Councilman Smith's office for clean up. Ron said that Recreation and Parks only has funding to clean the canyon once a year.

Pat Pope said that there were 9 thefts from cars in Sorrento during one night last week. LAPD may have a lead on a suspect. The cars were all parked on the street, unlocked. There have been similar thefts in other gated communities in Porter Ranch.

May 11 is Parent's Day at Castle Bay School. They will be taking a poll of parents regarding their biggest concerns in Porter Ranch.

Ron said that the Beautification Committee had approved shade covers for the playground equipment in Holleigh Bernson Park. They will be Laguna Blue with beige polls. We will have an event when they are finished.

Vas reminded everyone that the non-emergency number for Los Angeles city services is 311. Some wireless providers cannot route calls to 311. The alternative number is 866 4 LA CITY (866-452-2489)

Vas said that the city will give residents and businesses up to 5 gallons of paint for graffiti removal.

Bright suggested an engraved plate with something mentioning the PRNC be placed on the new washer and dryer at Fire Station 28.

Becky said that SOLID will be sponsoring a pancake breakfast at Devonshire Community Police Station on Saturday, May 5. She will use our call out system to notify everyone.

Pat Pope motioned to adjourn the meeting. Mel Mitchell seconded. The meeting adjourned at 9:10 PM.