

BOARD OF THE WEST ADAMS
NEIGHBORHOOD COUNCIL
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West Adams Neighborhood Council
Meets Every Third Monday of the Month @
Vineyard Recreation Center, 2942 Vineyard Ave,
Los Angeles, CA, 90016



Steven Meeks - President
Yolanda Davis-Overstreet - Vice President
Brian Piatek - Treasurer
Kristyn Yancy - At Large Representative
Sean Curley - Parliamentarian
Dorsay Dujon - At Large Representative
Connye Thomas - At Large Representative
Clint Simmons - Homeowner Representative
Vacant - Youth Representative
Vacant - Community Interest Representative
Richard Williams - Business Representative
Vacant - Business Representative
Abel Sun - At Large Representative
John Ma - At Large Representative
Jace Dawson - At Large Representative

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West Adams Neighborhood Council

General Board Monthly Meeting Zoom Meeting online or by telephone

May 17, 2021, 6:30 PM

MINUTES

Approved by the Board on July 19, 2021

1. Call to order and Roll Call

A meeting of the West Adams Neighborhood Council (WANC) was held on May 17, 2021 over Zoom, Webinar 959 3661 2418.

Steven Meeks (President) called the meeting to order at 6:35 p.m. and made welcoming remarks. Sean Curley (Parliamentarian) called the roll. There were nine (9) board members present at roll call (Mr. Meeks, Brian Piatek (Treasurer), Kristyn Yancy, Ms. Curley, Dorsay Dujon, Clint Simmons, Abel Sun, John Ma, and Jace Dawson). Quorum is eight (8) and was met. Three (3) were absent at roll call and joined later (Yolanda Davis-Overstreet (Vice-President), Connye Thomas, Richard Williams).

At this time (6:36 p.m.), Item 3 was taken up.

2. Government Representatives

This item was taken up at 6:42 p.m. after Item 3.

Jennifer Perkins (jennifer.perkins@lacity.org, (213) 308-7901) said she was the new Southwest Area Representative for the Office of the Mayor.

Daniel Park (DPark@bos.lacounty.gov, (213) 974-2222) introduced himself as field deputy for County Supervisor Holly Mitchell for the area from La Cienega to Hoover and Exposition to Wilshire. He reported that children as young as 12 were now eligible to receive COVID vaccines. They had achieved a good number of sign-ups. County teams were providing vaccinations to homebound individuals. Stakeholders could reach out with requests or questions.

3. General Public Comment: non agenda items

Tracy Weisert stated that LAPD Senior Lead Officer (SLO) Crystal Garcia was unable to attend the meeting and that she shared had future meeting dates with Garcia.

Ernest Moore urged WANC to issue a vote of no confidence for Councilmember Ridley-Thomas, who he did not believe was "duly elected." Westminster Presbyterian Church had called Ridley-Thomas to dedicate a new building for Black American senior citizens, but it had been filled up with Koreans. Mr. Moore had been unable to get an application. It was "corrupt," and Mr. Ridley-Thomas did not address his complaints.

At this time (6:42 p.m.), Item 2 was taken up.

4. Administrative items:

This was a section header.

5. Secretary's report: Discussion and possible action approval of February, March and April minutes

Connie Thomas and Richard Williams were present at 6:45 p.m.; there were now 11 board members present. Ms. Davis-Overstreet joined at 6:51 p.m. All 12 board members were present.

The minutes taker explained that a 21-day turnaround for draft minutes would be typical.

Mr. Sun moved to approve the minutes for February 22, 2021. Ms. Davis-Overstreet seconded. There was no board discussion or public comment.

The motion carried by a unanimous vote of all twelve (12) board members.

Mr. Sun moved to approve the minutes for March 18, 2021. Ms. Davis-Overstreet seconded.

The motion carried with all 11 present voting in favor (Curley, Davis-Overstreet, Dawson, Dujon, Ma, Meeks, Piatek, Simmons, Sun, Thomas, Yancy); **Mr. Williams was absent from the vote.**

Mr. Sun moved to approve the minutes for April 19, 2021, Ms. Davis-Overstreet seconded.

The motion carried with all 11 present voting in favor (Curley, Davis-Overstreet, Dawson, Dujon, Ma, Meeks, Piatek, Simmons, Sun, Thomas, Yancy); **Mr. Williams was absent from the vote.**

6. Monthly Expenditure Report: Discussion and possible action April MER

Mr. Piatek reported from the MER. The board was “caught up” in older expenditures. There remained outstanding commitments, much of which was in the Outreach budget. Licenses to Microsoft Office were available to board members. Mr. Piatek would post MERs and Board Action Certification (BAC) forms to a shared space on the Microsoft Office account, which he encouraged the board to use for business matters.

Mr. Sun moved to approve the April 2021 MER. Ms. Davis-Overstreet seconded.

The motion carried with all 11 present voting in favor (Curley, Davis-Overstreet, Dawson, Dujon, Ma, Meeks, Piatek, Sun, Thomas, Williams, Yancy); **Mr. Simmons was absent from the vote.**

7. Department of Neighborhood Empowerment: Octaviano Rios

Mr. Rios discussed the pending WANC elections, the seating of the new board, and funding trainings for financial officers. June 1st was the deadline for FY 2020/21 check requests and June 20th was the final date for card payments. He recommended agendaing a discussion of targeted investing in the community at a board retreat. Community Impact Statements (CIS) from other NCs regarding the proposed FY 2021-22 City budget could be found under Council File 21-0600, and WANC could file its own CIS. Board members were encouraged to keep their Zoom apps up to date. Zoom licenses and Robert's Rules Made Simple had been extended by one year. The Board of Neighborhood Commissioners (BONC) was interested in feedback regarding virtual meetings and the possibility of hybrid meetings with in-person and remote participation. Feedback could be sent to commission@empowerla.org.

Mr. Ma asked for the location of the drop box for depositing completed NC ballots. Mr. Rios deferred to Mr. Sun, who said that while the official drop box was outside the Baldwin Hills Branch of the Los Angeles Public Library, any Region 10 drop box could be used; and ballots needed to be inserted by the posted deadline on May 25th or postmarked by that date.

Ms. Weisert expressed disappointment that not all candidates were in attendance and for their poor showing at the candidate forum. She asked if there were attendance requirements for candidates. Rios said DONE was “super lenient” as to who could participate in the system — its requirements included funding and ethics training and the Code of Conduct — however, an individual NC could create its own additional requirements.

Ms. Davis-Overstreet said it was a “big red flag” when a candidate did not publish a candidate statement or present themselves as a candidate, was not involved in the community, or did not attend monthly meetings.

8. Standing Committee and City Liaison Reports

Mr. Meeks said the Land Use Committee had not met “this time,” but that it had met at least quarterly.

Ms. Curley said the Educational Committee previously was focused on empowering youth by getting them involved in the West Adams community; but now it was more focused on educating the community about practical matters like contacting City services and representatives, in order to live with “more knowledge, more peace, and more resolve within our community.” The committee was expected to assume a bimonthly schedule soon.

Ms. Davis-Overstreet gave the Public Safety Committee report. On June 26th, from 9 a.m. to 12 p.m., as part of a Vision Zero partnership with CD10, the committee and CD10 representatives would “walk the boulevard” with posters describing planned improvements for pedestrian safety. A consultant engaged by the City was providing information regarding “safe and legal equipment” for street food vendors in West Adams. Trees would be planted in the summer on both sides of Adams Blvd. for “less shaded areas” between Fairfax and Hauser, and would be maintained by LA Sanitation and Environment (LASAN) for years. The committee would look into continued maintenance following the initial three-year term.

Mr. Ma added to the committee report: two emergency preparedness sessions remained in the 6-session series, including a May 29th training in radio operations and a later mapping exercise to identify area hazards and plan a response.

Mr. Ma provided the Ad Hoc Homelessness Committee report. It was focused on three initiatives: Shower of Hope project was every Wednesday; hot meals were being distributed on Sundays in the Church of Christ parking lot; and support for needy families who were at risk of becoming unhoused, through food vouchers and other ways to access groceries. Volunteers were needed on Wednesdays from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. and Sundays at noon.

Ms. Thomas said the Rules Committee would meet on May 26th at 6 p.m.

Mr. Piatek gave the Finance Committee report. He had sent all board members a spreadsheet with anticipated expenditures for FY 2020/21. He discussed details of the report. He said Outreach should include an Events category for the 2021/22 budget, however 2020/21 spending was below its \$6,400 budget. An amended FY 2020/21 budget would be needed to accommodate additional Outreach items. He said Mr. Sun had done a “fantastic job” on elections outreach, spending less than \$2,000 of the \$8,000 budget. \$21,000 of the \$26,500 Neighborhood

Purposes Grants (NPG) budget had been spent. Approximately \$10,700 remained in the current year budget, and certain encumbered FY 2019/20 needed to be spent or would be lost. Piatek said an adjusted \$10,502 remained in the budget, and (to Mr. Ma), \$1,500 needed to be spent on the website.

Ms. Davis-Overstreet commended Mr. Sun for his work on the elections.

Mr. Meeks announced that the Outreach Committee would host a “Black History 101” event on May 20th. He added that “months ago” another event on the history of law enforcement and people of African descent had been approved. He was waiting for “Shauna” for the “go-ahead,” after which time the event details would be shared.

Mr. Sun encouraged everyone to register and vote [in the WANC elections].

9. Presentation: Craig Lawson & Co., LLC on MCUP – ZA-2020-3281 - full line of alcoholic beverages 3321 La Cienega/Cumulus

Josh Kreger presented. He explained that a master CUP (conditional use permit) for the Cumulus development at La Cienega Blvd. and W. Jefferson Blvd. was approved in 2016 for ground floor commercial; however, tenants would still need to file with the City for master plan approval with “their specific concept and layout” before they could offer alcohol under the CUP.

Kreger said the development was adjacent to the Expo Line station and current and future office space, which would contribute to daytime retail sales for Cumulus tenants and also provide an amenity for area office workers. The Whole Foods Market had already been issued its own CUP.

Amidst the 1,200 residential units would be the “Zocalo Park” which would offer greenspace to residents, retail patrons, and to the “broader community.” Given the proximity to residential uses, the intent was to rent to tenants who would not create any “noise or nuisance.” Mr. Kreger shared a slideshow of site plans, maps, and details regarding the MCUP Request (ZA-2020-3281): there would be a maximum of 28 permits for a full line of alcoholic beverages, including 21 retail spaces, 3 outdoor kiosks, and 4 retail mobile units, providing a maximum seating of 1,000 indoors and 500 on the patio. A 9,617 sq. ft. events area would be capable of featuring a “DJ, sole performer, duo or trio,” and/or “comedy movie nights to support retail.” Hours would be 6am to 2am daily. There would not be “anything like big concerts.”

Kreger noted that more mature trees were being planted at the site.

10. Presentation: Michael Schneider of Streets For All/Ballona Creek bike path extension

Michael Schneider said he represented Streets for All; separately, he served as chair of the Transportation and Sustainability Committee of the Mid City West Community Council.

Schneider explained that the Ballona Creek Bike Path was constructed in the 1970s. The proposed extension would abut the West Adams area, extending the path from its current terminus west of La Cienega Blvd to Cochran Ave at Venice Blvd., as per the original, incomplete plan.

Schneider showed slides and described the proposed route which would integrate with existing public rights-of-way along portions of the alignment. There was an “opportunity for art, beautification, and lighting.” Schneider noted stakeholder organizations which were in support; and he listed the government agencies with jurisdiction over the land along the route. The Venice/Cochran terminus was a great opportunity for a park and “people space,” Schneider noted.

More details on the proposal would be at finishthecreek.org.

Mr. Schneider requested a letter of support from WANC to add to a coalition of supporters, which would help the project advocates to “jump on it” once funding became available.

11. Old Business

A. Discussion and possible action on budget amendment increase website maintenance/design not to exceed \$3000

Mr. Sun moved to increase the budget for website maintenance/design to \$3,000.
Mr. Dawson seconded.

The web designer, Denise Shiozawa, explained that the site template was 12 years old and needed to be updated after a long pause in professional management of the site; a few months prior, the site had been successfully migrated to a new hosting server, the PHP had been upgraded to a newer version, but the design and technology were outdated, creating compatibility and support issues. Software updates for security were needed, the blog tool was not working, and the site was not mobile-friendly.

Ms. Shiozawa encouraged the Board to form a taskforce to determine what content to retain and to remove, and what content and functionality would support the community. Ms. Davis-Overstreet described Shiozawa as a “true team player.”

By the time a vote was called (8:17 p.m.), Mr. Simmons was absent.

The motion carried with all 11 present voting in favor (Curley, Davis-Overstreet, Dujon, Dawson, Ma, Meeks, Piatek, Sun, Thomas, Williams, Yancy); **Mr. Simmons was absent from the vote.**

12. New business:

A. Discussion and possible action on letter of support-Streets For All/Ballona Creek bike path extension

Mr. Sun moved to issue a letter of support as above. Ms. Curley seconded. Mr. Schneider agreed to send over a letter to use as a template. Schneider clarified that a portion of the route was within the WANC boundaries.

Ms. Thomas advocated for WANC “to have a voice” in “environment and ecology” decisions affecting children, seniors, and other WANC residents. Ms. Davis-Overstreet observed that West Adams had public safety objectives around biking and walking that that could be connected to the project.

Mr. Simmons advised of potential problems with traffic lights at La Cienega.

Ms. Dujon advocated for wayfinding signs indicating where the path was to cross or run along West Adams. Schneider suggested such signage could direct users to bike lanes in West Adams, which could encourage them to patronize its business district. He suggested that WANC could include such requests in any letter of support.

Schneider explained to Ms. Thomas that the path would be closed during times of flood risk; however, 100-year storm events needed to be addressed in any plans.

The motion carried with ten (10) in favor (Curley, Davis-Overstreet, Dujon, Dawson, Ma, Meeks, Sun, Thomas, Williams, Yancy); and **two (2) opposed** (Piatek, Simmons).

B. Discussion and possible action on ZA-2020-3281-MCUP on full line alcohol beverages

Mr. Sun moved to support the application as above. Mr. Williams seconded.

During discussion, Mr. Kreger said he would send the board an update of the commercial tenant businesses. He clarified that the mobile vending units would not be located on La Cienega Blvd.; but La Cienega retailers could lease the so as to participate in events in the Zocalo Park.

Ms. Dujon requested details regarding public parking rates, and Ms. Thomas asked for parking accommodations for those who were “coming from the outside.”

The motion carried with all 11 present voting in favor (Curley, Davis-Overstreet, Dujon, Dawson, Ma, Meeks, Piatek, Sun, Thomas, Williams, Yancy); **Mr. Simmons was absent from the vote.**

C. Discussion and possible action on approval-GO HUMAN Safety Campaign in West Adams

Nicholas Gutierrez described the safety campaign, which was sponsored by the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG). West Adams-area schools and churches would be invited to display banners encouraging slower traffic for the safety of children, elders, other community members.

Gutierrez said he was requesting permission to use the WANC logo on the project website and for social media and other graphics. He showed examples of the free print materials promoting mindfulness and traffic safety which were available to NCs and other organizations.

A later phase would provide messaging on bus shelters and benches, provided SCAG had the budget; however, postcards and digital ads were already budgeted.

The program did not seek any infrastructure changes like stop signs.

Ms. Davis-Overstreet moved to approve the Go Human safety campaign in West Adams. Mr. Williams seconded. **The motion carried by a unanimous vote of all 12 members in favor.**

D. Discussion and possible action on approval of letter of support-Downtown Crenshaw Rising/Purchase of Baldwin Hills Crenshaw Plaza

Mr. Piatek and Mr. Dawson were opposed because they had insufficient information.

Mr. Dawson announced he would leave the meeting at 9:00 p.m.

Mr. Simmons moved to write a letter in support of Downtown Crenshaw Rising purchase of Baldwin Hills Crenshaw Plaza. Mr. Williams seconded.

The motion carried with six (6) in favor (Davis-Overstreet, Ma, Simmons, Thomas, Williams, Yancy); and **four (4) opposed** (Curley, Dawson, Piatek, Sun); **Two (2) abstained** (Meeks, Dujon), which Mr. Meeks said would count as votes in favor.

E. Discussion and possible action on approval to collaborate on research with Dr Karen Lincoln and Bryan Gaines of USC Suzanne Dworak-Peck School of Social Work

The item was postponed to the next regular board meeting without objection as the presenters were not in attendance.

F. Discussion and possible action on purchase of meals for two day vaccine site not to exceed \$300

Mr. Piatek advised that NCs could only fund entities, not provide food directly. Mr. Meeks would “pay someone else” to provide the food. Reverend Raymond Phillip said the West Adams Church of Christ, where the Shower of Hope was currently operating, was collaborating with the County Department of Health to provide vaccines to the homeless population, who would receive “something to eat” while waiting in an “inviting environment” with music. Vaccinations had already been administered on April 28th with additional events planned on May 26th and in early June. Rev. Phillip would pick up the food purchased by WANC.

Mr. Simmons moved to purchase meals for a two-day vaccine site, not to exceed \$300. Mr. Piatek seconded.

The motion carried with all 11 present voting in favor (Curley, Davis-Overstreet, Dujon, Ma, Meeks, Piatek, Simmons, Sun, Thomas, Williams, Yancy); **Mr. Dawson was absent.**

G. Discussion and possible action on budget increase of \$250 for video/audio person Black History 101/365

Mr. Simmons moved to increase the budget by \$250 for video/audio person for Black History 101/365. Mr. Williams seconded.

Mr. Meeks clarified the funding was to edit several items for the program.

The motion carried with all 11 present voting in favor (Curley, Davis-Overstreet, Dujon, Ma, Meeks, Piatek, Simmons, Sun, Thomas, Williams, Yancy); **Mr. Dawson was absent.**

H. Discussion and possible action on purchase of pet waste station and if any accessories in the amount of \$142.06

Mr. Williams moved to purchase as above. Mr. Ma seconded.

Mr. Meeks clarified that two pet waste stations for dogs had been approved several years prior and had been stored at the office and later moved to storage, at which time some parts had gone missing. Mr. Meeks had purchased the replacement parts. He provided further clarifications, and agreed with Ms. Dujon there should be a plaque or similar informing that the stations were provided by WANC.

The motion carried with all 11 present voting in favor (Curley, Davis-Overstreet, Dujon, Ma, Meeks, Piatek, Simmons, Sun, Thomas, Williams, Yancy); **Mr. Dawson was absent.**

I. Discussion and possible action reimbursement to Steven Meeks for pet waste station pole in the amount of \$142.06

Mr. Williams moved as above. Ms. Yancy seconded.

The motion carried with all 11 present voting in favor (Curley, Davis-Overstreet, Dujon, Ma, Meeks, Piatek, Simmons, Sun, Thomas, Williams, Yancy); **Mr. Dawson was absent.**

J. **Discussion and possible action on option of seating new Board at the regular monthly meeting of June or July**

Mr. Meeks explained that the motion would need to be stated as either June or July, as the Bylaws required seating the board in June at the regular monthly meeting.

Mr. Piatek moved to approve seating of new board at regular monthly meeting in June. He later withdrew the motion.

After some discussion, Ms. Thomas moved to seat new board members at the regular monthly meeting of July 2021. Ms. Davis-Overstreet.

The minutes writer, Mr. Starr, quoted from the new policy: “on July 1st, all powers shall immediately be transferred over to the newly elected or selected Board.”

The motion carried with all 11 present voting in favor (Curley, Davis-Overstreet, Dujon, Ma, Meeks, Piatek, Simmons, Sun, Thomas, Williams, Yancy); **Mr. Dawson was absent.**

13. Discussion and possible action on selection of Youth and Business Representative vacancies

This item was not taken up.

14. Discussion on agenda setting future monthly and Special Meetings

This item was not taken up.

15. Adjourn

Mr. Meeks declared the meeting adjourned at 9:28 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted by Conrad Starr.