

## Minutes - Neighborhood Council, Valley Village

1-27-21

1. The meeting was called to order at 7:03 pm. 15 Board members and four student members were in attendance.
2. Special Guest Speaker - Congressman Brad Sherman

Brad Sherman began by noting that the past 30 days have been an interesting month. The Democrats got what they needed, Joe Biden's victory over Donald Trump and three Senate seats, but lost seats in the House of Representatives, retaining only a narrow majority. Part of the national vote for Biden was in response to Trump's attempts at voter suppression. Trump's denigrating the integrity of the elections and the Georgia State officials that upheld the election results helped the Democratic candidates to win the two Georgia Senate races, not just Stacey Abrams and her fellow organizers. On January 6 he thought that the hard part would be getting into the Capitol building. Vice President Mike Pence played it straight, presiding over the debate on certifying the states' Electoral College results and not attempting to invalidate them. Then all hell broke loose. The rioters shouted "hang Pence" with Brad Sherman as an appetizer. He sheltered in place in his office in the Rayburn building next to the Capitol building for seven hours and then, after the Capitol was cleared of rioters, Congress got the election certification done at 4:00 am rather than 3:00 am.

For approving Biden's agenda, Joe Manchin and the Senate parliamentarian are the most important persons in the Senate. Ten Republican Senators cannot be picked off to support Democratic legislation, only three or four. The Republicans will oppose impeachment with the rationale that a president who has left office cannot be impeached. A majority will vote to convict but not the two thirds majority needed to convict Trump and bar him from holding a public office in the future.

Tony Braswell asked what are the chances of another stimulus package? Mr. Sherman responded that what is likely is that only \$300 rather than \$600 will be added to state unemployment insurance benefits, an additional one time payment of \$1400 will not be approved but rather a lower amount and there will be a lower threshold for cutting off the stimulus payments. A Federal \$15 an hour minimum wage will not help California very much. Some assistance to state and local governments will be approved. A drop in local government revenues is what is actually defunding the police.

Suzanne Lewis asked what is the plan for coronavirus vaccination? Mr. Sherman replied that the source of the problem is an inadequate supply of vaccines, not the distribution system. There are long lines at the immunization sites due to the shortages of vaccines. Due to limited trials, the vaccines might not work. We did not buy all of the vaccines that are available. Remaining portions of vaccines have been thrown away due to a five shot limit. There are actually six doses in each bottle. Also, halves of a dose of vaccine can be mixed together to get one full dose. It can be half Pfizer and half Moderna. The cost of manufacturing vaccines is low. It is development costs and profits that make up most of the price of a vaccine.

Desmond Faison asked what safeguards are being worked on for protected groups, so that they are not harmed by a future Republican president similar to Trump? Mr. Sherman responded that some

states are focusing on age or medical conditions, which are more difficult to determine. Trump voters and working class people are resisting the vaccine. Better educated and higher income people are getting vaccinated. Doctors and nurses are getting the vaccine while custodial staff are not. To prevent discrimination and voter suppression, vote for those who favor justice and not those who do not.

Desmond Faison asked a follow up question, what about legislation rather than just executive orders? Mr. Sherman answered that the courts have been at the forefront of protecting individual rights and striking down harsh policies that are not legally valid. He noted that the Democrats were in the minority during the first two years that Trump was president. The Senate filibuster stopped almost all Republican legislation in the Senate but it could stop us. Executive orders, while good, can be overturned by another Republican president. Some protections will be enacted as legislation.

Paulette Stokes observed that there is a need to track and schedule people better and cited the long lines for vaccinations. Mr. Sherman replied that people should be told what the risks of vaccination are, when they should come back for the second shot and whether the vaccines are from Pfizer or Moderna. He recalled that when he was young there was no desperate rush for the polio shots.

Ginny Hatfield asked can the Federal government take over the vaccination program, set priorities and involve the military? Mr. Sherman responded that the vaccinations cannot quickly be federalized but standards can be set and vaccine production increased. A whole new system can't be established. The problem is with inadequate production, not distribution. The immunizations should also be done in the rest of the world. Otherwise the United States will be vulnerable to infections, to mutations of the virus coming from other parts of the world.

Tony Braswell asked whether the coronavirus shots will be an annual thing, like the flu vaccine? Mr. Sherman answered that he doesn't know right now. Mutations of the virus will be an ongoing danger. The experts also don't know.

John Alford is an expert in pandemics and can be contacted at (714) 458-7331.

### 3. Finance Report - Dorothy Apple

\$2,484.22 was spent in November with \$3,174.15 in outstanding expenditures. There is a remaining balance of \$27,759.04 and the net available amount is 25,584.89. The November finance report was approved by a vote of 15-0 with the Student Committee approving by a vote of 4-0.

\$3,952.63 was spent in December with \$1,400.72 in outstanding expenditures. There is a remaining balance of \$23,806.51 and the net available amount is 22,405.79. The November finance report was approved by a vote of 15-0 with the Student Committee approving by a vote of 4-0.

### 4. Neighborhood Council Election - Ginny Hatfield

The 2021 election for the Board of Directors is scheduled for May 11. The filing period is from Jan. 9 to Feb. 23. Documentation that a voter is a stakeholder will be required. There is election information on My Valley Village.com. A candidate package is to be sent out. Some seats have candidates that have filed for them, others do not. May 4 is the last day to register to vote. The

election results will be posted on May 25. We should help spread the word about registering to vote. Students who are 16 years old can vote. The proposed budget is up to \$8,500. The motion is to reapprove the budget for up to \$8,500 for the election. Ginny Hatfield is getting quotes for a bulk rate mailing to the apartment units. She is trying to not go over the budget. Dorothy Apple cautioned that the election cost may be over the budget by about \$1,755. Jeff Walker was concerned about this as well. Ginny is looking for ways to reduce the election costs. We will be getting a \$702 refund from Light Up Valley Village. Because of this and other cost reductions the cost will probably not be \$8,500. The ballots will be prepared by DONE. This year's election will be different. The voters will have to be taught new behavior. We cannot go over \$5,700 for the bulk mailing. The motion to approve up to \$8,500 for the election budget was approved by a vote of 14-0-1 and 4-0 by the Student Committee. A reconciliation budget will be presented in February.

5. Cultural Heritage Commission Meeting, Magnolia Boulevard Oak Trees - Marc Woerschling

The January 7 hearing before the Cultural Heritage Commission on the historic monument designation for the Oak trees went quite well. Charles Fisher gave a good Powerpoint presentation with historic photos of the trees and Tony Braswell assembled an impressive lineup of speakers, including Joan D'Antonio with the Street Tree Advisory Committee, LAUSD Board member Scott Schmerlson's office, Councilman Krekorian's office, Beth Fulton, President of the homeowners association, Sandy Hubbard, past chair of the Vision Committee who initiated the nomination, Alice Hart from the Neighborhood Council and Tiffany Mar from the Student Committee. Marc Woerschling spoke in favor, citing the Vision Committee's role in advancing the nomination.

The unified support of the nomination by the community appeared to impress the Commission and in their remarks they came across as favoring the monument designation. The Commission voted unanimously to approve the staff's recommendation that the trees need further review and to take the proposed monument designation under consideration. The next step for the Commission is a site visit which is scheduled for February 25 and then a second Commission meeting and public hearing will be held to determine if the trees conform to the definition of a monument and, hopefully, approve the monument designation.

6. Student Committee Reports

Justin Berkowitz reported that the food and toy drive was a big success. There was a good representation of the office of the elected officials in the drive.

Luke Simon stated that the Light Up Valley Village show went smoothly. A lot of talented people participated. It was a success and thanked everyone for their support.

Tony Braswell noted that, working with the Council office, 4,000 bags were donated by Ralphs and other stores.

7. Reports from Elected Officials/DONE

Ryan Ahari, the new deputy in Assemblyman Nazarian's office, is taking over from Emma Taylor. They are happy to work with community members on events. They are having a town hall on February 2 about the financial stress of the elderly and are assisting with Covid-19 vaccination scheduling. The MTA is in charge of managing the pedestrian tunnel under the S-170 freeway. The

State Legislature is considering extending the moratorium on evictions until June. Suzanne Lewis asked when will the Laurel Canyon off ramp from the Route 101 Ventura Freeway be cleaned. Ryan responded that they will add that to their list of maintenance items to be done.

## 8. Committee Reports

Planning Committee - Glenn Block The refunds of the improper Specific Plan project permit fees will finally be done. It got done because of our advocacy, which resulted in obtaining Krekorian's support. Glenn and Sandy Hubbard get most of the credit. There will be a joint meeting of the Planning and Community Plan Restudy Committees on February 10, to be about the Community Plan restudy. The Committees will also discuss S.B. 9 and S.B. 10 from State Senators Weiner and Adkins to eliminate single family zones and allow two homes per lot. Ten units per multifamily lot would be allowed by right. This is heavy handed, State imposed legislation. Suzanne Lewis and Glenn Block noted that the new developments allowed by S.B. 9 & 10 will reduce the City's tree canopy. Tony Braswell observed that small new trees will be replacing old canopy trees.

On Burbank Airport Paul Hatfield reported the General Accounting Office is analyzing the route shifts back to the north.

Events and Outreach - Maribel Ulloa-Garcia The Committee is working on getting out the notices for the May 11 election for the Board. Registration will be on the Neighborhood Council web site. The goal is to get 25% participation by Valley Village residents.

Student Committee - Gabriella Goldenberg reported that they are preparing a web site for the student volunteers for their events. Aysha Igbal is doing a volunteer student tutoring program, collaborating with the library on virtual tutoring sessions. Tiffany Mar is working on a town hall for the student volunteers.

City Services - Suzanne Lewis The pruning of trees at North Hollywood High has been delayed to the summer due to the coronavirus and the cold. The Slow Streets Program signs have been removed and run over by disgruntled motorists. Bollards have been installed to protect the welcome sign in the Laurel Canyon median at the 101 Freeway off ramp. The Committee is working with the Mayor's Office on Sustainability to do a community cleanup by adopting a block to pick up trash from. Tony Braswell noted that the only part of Valley Village that has the slow streets signs are the blocks west of Valley Village Park. The residents must support the program in order for it to be established and be successful. Jessica Fulgate of Krekorian's office stated that the signs are the result of a contract between the Department of Transportation and the local community. Education of the community on the need for the signs is needed. Slow streets signs being removed are being collected and put back up. New, durable, heavier signs will be installed, which are harder to knock down. We will partner with the homeowners association to educate the residents.

A motion to allocate \$5,000 for the second phase of painting the utility boxes is proposed. It would hire Muralism to finish painting the utility boxes. 14-18 boxes are left to do. The Council office will match the \$5,000 from the Neighborhood Council. They would like to see the Olympic rings painted on some of the boxes to get the message out about the 2028 Olympics. Dorothy Apple asked whether we have \$5,000 available in the budget for this? It was decided to roll over the money for the Magnolia Oak tree trimming into the next fiscal year to free up the funds. There is

\$3,500 allocated for the trimming and \$1,200 for fertilizing. The \$1,200 for fertilizing can be shifted to the next fiscal year. The homeowners association can contribute to painting the utility boxes.

The motion to approve up to \$5,000 for the second phase of painting the utility boxes was approved 14-0 and 5-0 by the Student Committee.

9. The minutes for the five previous Board meetings will be distributed at the next meeting in February.
10. The meeting adjourned at 9:20 pm.