

MINUTES

PACIFIC PALISADES COMMUNITY COUNCIL BOARD MEETING

August 11, 2022

6:00 PM – 7:30 PM

Via Zoom Videoconference

Recorded for Secretarial purposes only

1. The President called the meeting to order and read the Community Council mission.
2. The President called roll and certified quorum:
Voting members present: Maryam Zar, Randy Young, Jenny Li, Beth Holden-Garland, Joanna Spak, Steve Cron, Haldis Toppel, Karen Ridgley, Sue Kohl, Rick MgGeagh, Reza Akef, Andrew Frew, Cliff Roberts, Ryan Craig, Shirley Haggstrom.
Voting Alternates: Barbara Kohn.
Non-voting Alternates and Advisors: Courtney Macker, Janet Anderson, K.C. Soll, Miriam Schulman, Krishna Tanghavelu, Lou Kamer, Michael Edlen, Kimberly Bloom, Andrew Wolfberg, Nina Kidd, Richard Blumenberg, Richard Cohen.
3. Attendees were introduced and Zoom meeting rules announced, including that the meeting would be recorded for secretarial purposes only.
4. The minutes of 7/28/22 were approved with amendments: moved comments of Barbara Bruderlin from the newly formed Malibu Pacific Palisades Chamber of Commerce from Organization Rep comments to Public Comment. Amended minutes approved.
5. The agenda was considered as presented.
6. Treasurer reported issues with the PPCC bank account as it was opened as an individual account in 1978. The bank will require it to be changed to an organizational account in order to carry forward. US Bank has asked for Articles of Incorporation and a set of approved minutes citing the names of the new PPCC Officers. The President has asked our legal officer to read those names into the record at this meeting.
7. Public comment – Barbara Bruderlin from the Malibu Pacific Palisades Chamber of Commerce thanked everyone very much for ~~the~~ welcoming her to the meetings (this being her second time attending) and said the Chamber plans on having a breakfast in early September to invite people to mix outdoors, and have the community and businesses meet between the Palisades and Malibu. Haldis Toppel, Area 3 Rep and longtime board member, thanked Barbara for supporting the Palisades local theater.
8. Reports & Announcements –
 - 8.1 From the President
 - 8.1.1 The President provided an update on Area and At-large elections, stating that there is now only one contested race. Allison Holdorff-Polhill has withdrawn her candidacy for Area 5, which leaves only Area 4 contested. The President read the statement from Holdorff-Polhill announcing her withdrawal and supporting

Kimberly Bloom. Alan Goldsmith also withdrew following the July meeting. The President read a statement from him supporting Chris Spitz and acknowledging her valuable contributions to PPCC in previous years.

- 8.1.2 Rob Weber, Legal Advisor, affirmed the duly elected officers for the 2022/2023 term. He read for the record “I, as the Legal Advisor to the Pacific Palisades Community Council, hereby affirm for the record that the duly elected officers of the PPCC for the 2022–2023 term, which began on July 1, 2022 and will terminate on June 30, 2023, are as follows: Maryam Zar, President; Jenny Li, Vice President; Beth Holden Dash Garland, Secretary; Thomas Randall Young, Treasurer.”
- 8.1.3 The President also announced the appointment of two more advisors: Sabrina Messiha, who will be the Special Advisor on Communications and Social Media, and Allison Holdorff-Polhill who will serve as Education Advisor to PPCC
- 8.1.4 The President said a new WRAC committee has been launched and she has appointed a PPCC Rep to the newly formed Committee. The new PPCC Rep to the Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness Committee will be Krishna Thanghavelu, who won a Golden Spark Plug Award this last year for her efforts on public safety.
- 8.1.5 The Notice of Ballot Availability has been posted timely, online and via email campaign. In light of a mostly uncontested race, the election committee has determined to use only electronic ballots for the election. Electronic voting will begin at 8 am on August 19th and close at 9pm on September 2nd.
- 8.1.6 The president announced that there have been preliminary meetings with LAPD Captain Tom about a stop-in center for LAPD in the Palisades, and she will update as discussions continue. Captain Tom will join PPCC for a presentation in September.
- 8.1.7 The President announced that she will be forming a new Policy Advisory Committee of sorts, tasked with getting ahead of policy narratives we’d like to shape, rather than to be in reactive posture as they are handed down by our city, county and state elected reps. This is borne of conversation with LAPD Captains, LAPD leaders and our Neighborhood Prosecutor(s) from the City Attorney’s office who believe the voice of communities should be better reflected in policies, as they are written.

8.2 From Officers: None

8.3 From Area and At-large Representatives

- 8.3.1 Haldis Toppel, Area 3 Rep, reported her enduring concern about housing developments that are out of scale, particularly as she monitors at least two private home developments in the area she represents. She cautioned that an oversized build on Enchanted Way, which might not merit review since there are no variances applied for, might still obstruct access to a fire road that would impact nearly 200 homes and endanger residents in Area 3.
- 8.3.2 Rick McGeagh, Acting Area 7 Primary Rep, said Hundred Acre Park and Santa Monica Canyon are analyzing trees for risk of fire threats to determine which might need clearing. Randy Young shared information about reforestation that will occur by the end of the year. They discussed having Chief Fields analyze Will Rogers State Park and the switchback areas that block residents in a hazardous area. They are

hoping to get some progress on brush clearance again. The Forestry Committee is coming out this week. Both Randy Young and Rick McGeagh will be copied on correspondence in the future.

Jenny Li (former Area 7 Primary Rep) said the Forestry Committee, including Marilyn Wexler and David Card went to spot trees that are missing from the parkway on Kingman, Mesita, San Lorenzo, Attila and East Channel. They are discussing planting a few varieties of trees that will be beautiful in the area. Jenny also brought up “Canyon Square” which has a new coffee place that is very enjoyable and available to locals. There was also mention of advertising billboards on the construction site on Channel Road and Entrada. The President said from her days in the DRB, she can report that the developer is on notice about advertising and over construction. Julie Silliman said she also filed a complaint about the construction project, and wondered if they are incentivized to go slow, and advertise the posting of ads.

8.4 From Organizational Reps:

- 8.4.1 Friends of the Library Representative, Nina Kidd, announced a recent “Friends of the Library” Meeting where six specialists, including our Neighborhood Prosecutor, Veronica de la Cruz Robles, spoke about issues of homelessness and other enforcement matters. It was a productive meeting. She will have more updates the next time we meet.
- 8.4.2 Chris Spitz mentioned a motion that passed at City Council. It involves the anti-camping 41.18 law to prohibit camping in the PROW within 500 feet of schools. It was noted that our library is within 500 feet of at least one school, Corpus Christi, if not others, so that should protect enforcement of no camping in the PROW at the library as well. There will need to be signage placed to deter camping and allow for law enforcement. There was a discussion to give a list of schools and day-care facilities in the Palisades to both LADOT and LAPD, so that enforcement agencies know where our schools are and in what locations enforcement can be carried out.

8.5 From Government Officials/Representatives

- 8.5.1 The President read from a report sent in from Supervisor Sheila Kuehl’s West LA Field Deputy, Zach Gaidzik: Kuehl has launched a new program to address “hate”, called LA vs. Hate. She co-authored the motion with Supervisor Hilda Solis and is looking forward to ongoing success with that campaign. There is also rising concern about Monkeypox. As of August 8th, there have been 600 cases in LA County. The County is looking into State and Federal Aid to protect Los Angeles. [See report.](#)
- 8.5.2 The President read from a report sent in by Isabella Dennis, Councilmember Mike Bonin’s Office – CD11 Palisades/Brentwood Field Deputy, addressing illegal dumping, the use of MyLA311 service and Greek Theater events for the summer. [See report.](#)

8.6 From PPCC Advisors and WRAC Representatives:

- 8.6.1 Joanna Spak – WRAC / LUC Meeting. Not a lot new. The WRAC LUPC discussed and approved a template for use by NCs/CCs in approaching City Planning for information on dwelling unit capacity for use in Community Plan discussions. But the template will need approval by the WRAC Executive Team. Other motions were continued to next month.
- 8.6.2 Krishna Thanghavelu – reported on the first WRAC Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness meeting – they had a wonderful initial first meeting where people came in from across the westside with ideas. Members have been tasked with thinking of key project ideas to bring to the table. Krishna is considering a few ideas she will share with the President. Cert training is a priority for her as is getting the word out about emergency preparedness and public safety issues through a social media campaign.
- 8.6.3 K.C. Soll – Reminder that CERT Training is starting on Wednesdays from 6:30 to 9 pm on October 12th to November 16th at Calvary Christian School. If interested, email her at cert.palisades@gmail.com
- 8.6.4 Mariam Schulman – She attended Senator Ben Allen’s Emergency Preparedness meeting. A lot to learn about wildfire and how to harden your home. The seminar will be available to watch on Senator Allen’s website and covers many things residents need to do to make their homes safe(r). Embers are the reason that most homes burn down. Prevention is key. Firemen can only cover so much, and embers can fly many miles, and still be dangerous. Vent covers that don’t allow direct access to your home (i.e., that include inner baffles) are more effective. Pine needles can get into gutters and become a problem. Lush green trees like citrus trees can be proactive in helping prevent fires. Mariam has offered her availability to come out and inspect homes and is certified for fire protection and discussing vulnerabilities. Many Area Reps, including 7 and 4, were interested and said they’d reach out.

9. Reports From Committees:

- 9.1 Election Committee Chair, Jenny Li, led the Candidates Forum (see below) and urged everyone to remember to vote. She reiterated that voting will be online, and that reminders will be sent to the community via Mailchimp, website and social media as well as local media coverage. There will be a two-week voting period. Voting starts August 19th and closes September 2nd. Election winners will be announced on September 8th.

10. None

11. New Business:

- 11.1 Candidates Forum led by Election Committee Chair and PPCC VP, Jenny Li. Jenny thanked all the candidates for running and everyone for attending.

The format for the forum will be that the candidates will introduce themselves for one minute. Then the committee has two prepared questions to ask the candidates, who will have 1 minute to respond to each question. The candidates were called to introduce themselves:

Area 1 - Candidate Murray Levy – He has lived on Castellammare Drive for 49 years. He walks his dog every day in the neighborhood and he knows many of the neighbors because of that and because of his longtime residence. He spent 13 years on the Design Review Board, learned much from that experience, and believes that ordinary people can have an impact on their community.

Area 2 - Candidate Steve Cron – Steve Cron has served two terms that he found to be a rewarding and exciting experience. He mentioned that before the pandemic members of the community would meet at Starbucks on Sunday mornings to discuss community concerns. They would do clean ups and pick up trash with 15 to 20 people and haul out trash in the area as well. He has been working on dealing with the Highland bathrooms, with the Coastal Commission in getting them cleaned up from graffiti and trash. He also worked with CD11 to get Palisades Drive made safer by removing debris out of the culverts that have been a hazard for some time, to the relief of many neighbors.

Area 3 - Candidate Haldis Toppel – Haldis has served two terms in Area 3. She was a representative in earlier years, and her husband was President of PPCC in 2006. Her main concern is quality of life in our community. In her area, they have a very diverse community, large homes, up in Marquez there is a business community on Marquez Avenue, and they have the Bel Air Bay Club on the lower portion down towards PCH. Haldis is glad to represent her constituents in the Marquez area, and the greater area of the Palisades.

Area 4 - Candidate Reza Ronaghi – Reza is relatively new to the Palisades and has lived in this area for a little under two years. He would be new to the council but welcomes working with everyone. He is passionate about safety in our neighborhoods for our children and family members. He is a lung cancer specialist and would like to bring lung cancer awareness to the area, and tele-medicine awareness so we can offer health care coverage to those who may not be able to leave their homes.

Area 4 - Candidate Karen Ridgley – Karen is a 46-year-resident, she knows the community and its issues well. She has served two years representing Area 4 and is an effective advocate for her constituents. She is responsive in securing the information and CD11's services that are needed to resolve individual and community problems, and to maintain the community's quality of life. She has coordinated the neighborhood crime watch for seven years, and organized meetings for residents with our chief park ranger, West LA Police Captain, and SLO to address the many disruptive violations we have experienced at Asilomar View Park adjacent to our residential community. She is committed to enhancing our parks and common areas, and she supports Palisades Beautiful, PPTFH, and Palisades Pride. Her key concerns are fire safety, reducing crime, homelessness in the Palisades, and repair of unsafe and broken sidewalks.

Area 5 - Candidate Kimberly Bloom – She began renting in the Palisades in 1981 in the Highlands area and bought a home on Fiske Avenue in the Alphabet community in 1993 and has lived there since. She was born in a small town, and loves the small town feel here of the Palisades. She has served as an alternate for the last two years with Sue Kohl. It was a terrific experience, and she feels very prepared to assume this seat.

Area 6 - Candidate Cindy Simon –The President read her written statement because she was not present. Cindy Simon said thank you for the opportunity for the PPCC seat to represent the Huntington Area where her family has lived since 1990. She feels the PPCC provides a vital service to the Palisades by confronting and considering issues that affect our community. She hopes to be part of this “backbone” of the Palisades organization and will do her best to serve the concerns of fellow neighbors.

Area 7 - Candidate Julie Silliman – She has served in varying positions in the public sector in various areas of government. She moved to Santa Monica Canyon and her children attended Canyon Elementary School starting in kindergarten, for about 12 years. She first lived in the upper canyon next to the historic Marquez cemetery which was a wonderful introduction to the Palisades and its history. Then they lived in the Riviera, and now live in the lower canyon. She has participated locally from the very beginning of living in the area. She was very involved with Canyon School and elected parent rep to the governing council and has been on the park advisory for Rustic Canyon as well.

Area 8 – Candidate Reza Akef – Reza has been involved in the PPCC for the last 20 years. He has lived in the Polo Fields in the Riviera, in different parts of Area 8. He has a background in government and law, and he is a builder. He builds in our community, mostly in Area 6, and has built in Area 8. He is passionate about maintaining a certain quality of life.

At-large – Candidate Chris Spitz – This is a new experience for Chris, and she is excited to be running for this seat. She is very interested in a lot of the new candidates and hearing about their backgrounds. Most know her, as she’s a 31-year resident of the bluffs, a retired litigation attorney, and longtime PPCC Board Member - including serving as past Chair and Secretary, and numerous PPCC Committees. She has handled PPCC administration, and been extensively involved with analyzing and presenting on policy issues including homelessness, housing density, land use and zoning, fire safety & evacuation, signage, and police protection issues. She was honored to be recognized as Citizen of the Year for her efforts to defeat the disastrous homeless housing motion. For more information, please take a look at her candidate statement and her candidate website at cspitz4ppccatlarge.info.

Two previously noticed questions were asked to all candidates by the Elections Committee Chair and one question from the Zoom Chat. All were answered. The Committee Chair thanked all the candidates and reminded people to begin voting on August 19th.

12. Adjournment – The meeting was adjourned at 7:48PM.