

Harbor Alliance of Neighborhood Councils
Meeting Notes – January 6, 2016
Kaiser Permanente Conference Center
Rosalie Preston, Harbor Gateway North, Chair

Attendees: Central San Pedro – Frank Anderson, Alexander Hall Coastal San Pedro – absent, Harbor City – Greg Donnan, Eric DeKlotz Harbor Gateway North – Rosalie Preston, Harbor Gateway South – absent, Northwest San Pedro – Diana Nave

Others: Octaviano Rios (Dept. of Neighborhood Empowerment), Carl Cooper & Deanne Dedmon (Recreation and Parks)

Discussion with Recreation and Parks:

Carl Cooper, Superintendent, Pacific Region, introduced himself and staff member Deanne Dedmon who is the Harbor Area Supervisor. They can both be reached at 310-548-7675. The Pacific Region covers that portion of the City that is South of the 10 Freeway. Carl is himself a graduate of Banning High School and so is very familiar with the area.

He expressed the frustration of himself and other department staff with the current state of our parks, particularly in the area of park maintenance and dealing with the homeless population. Over the past 7 years the department lost approximately 1/3 of its total staff due to budget cuts. The cuts were particularly harmful in the area of maintenance. Slowly the situation is starting to improve. Recently they hired 30 new maintenance staff citywide, however at the same time an additional 12 retired. They have built approximately 100 new parks in the past few years.

In response to a question, he indicated that the department is responsible for taking care of the landscaping at some public buildings, but not the Harbor Gateway Community Center. While the Center is owned by the City it is leased to the Boys and Girls Club and they are responsible for the upkeep. Since General Services is the leaser they should be asked to request that the Boys & Girls Club to do a better job of maintaining the property. General Services also has their own maintenance/landscaping staff.

During the economic downturn some staffing patterns were changed. For example, the maintenance staff no longer reports to the regional superintendents. Also maintenance workers have gone from generalists to specialists with roving crews for specific tasks. Juan Benitez transferred to another region. His replacement is Raul Leon who is in the process of hiring two new supervisors.

Park Rangers were initially absorbed into General Services and then into LAPD. LAPD is not however well equipped to deal with the specific problems that arise in parks. The Department has recently received approval to hire 10-12 new Rangers. It will take about 6 months to train them prior to assigning them to specific parks. The plan for allocating the positions has not been finalized, but it is probable that they will be assigned to regional parks and on call for other nearby parks. The Park Rangers are Peace Officers with the power to arrest but do not carry guns. They call in LAPD as needed.

In response to a question about Park Advisory Boards, Carl explained that historically Advisory Boards were only in parks that had full time staff. Recently however PABs have been created for Leland Park and Alma Park. Angels Gate has an advisory group composed on representatives of the various tenants. Frank suggested that it should be expanded to include community members. Carl promised to consider this idea. They are trying to find a full time staff position for Leland Park. Currently it shares a position with Peck Park.

The Hey Rookie Pool is about 30% complete. When they started work they found tunnels under the pool and had to work through that issue which has delayed the completion to 2017.

Normandale Park acquired some additional property and a skate park is being built on it. There are portable skate ramps at parks throughout the City. Building of additional skate parks is possible but funds must be identified.

Recreation and Parks previously considered bidding on the Cabrillo Youth Facility. Unfortunately the cost of bringing the facility up to City Park Standards is very high.

Design has been completed on the Exit Park in San Pedro and construction should begin soon. This is handled by the Planning Section in downtown LA and not the regional office.

The Parks still use some court ordered community service volunteers but not in the number they previously did because they cannot work where they are young people present.

There is currently a Park needs assessment being conducted Countywide. The main purpose is to identify projects to include in a ballot proposition. Proposition A and Proposition K which have been funding parks for the past +/- 20 years are coming to the end of their "lives." If you cannot attend the session in your area, you can go online and vote on the projects www.LACountyParkNeeds.org. Upcoming sessions are 1/21 6:30 pm at Peck Park and 1/30 at 10:00 am at Harbor UCLA Hospital, Assembly Room.

DONE update:

Octaviano Rios shared the invitation from the Director of the Sanitation Department to a special event for Neighborhood Council Public Works Liaisons to learn more about the Department. Each NC should send one, and only one person. Some of the topics to be discussed will include the Clean Streets Initiative and El Nino. When the date gets close, if they have room for additional representatives, Octaviano will let us know.

The next Funding Workshop will be at City Hall on Jan 29 from 1-4 pm.

There will be a workshop on using Nation Builder and Next Door on Jan 28, from 6-8 pm at the San Pedro Library. Rosalie asked how to get the password for Nation Builder and Octaviano will look into it.

Michael LoGrande has left the City's Planning Department and Vince Bertoni is the incoming Planning Director.

Rosalie reported that online voting requires submitting a photo ID that is a barrier for some people. Also it requires that you create your own password that you will need to remember when you go to vote.

Greg indicated that there is some confusion about what election procedures apply to those NCs conducting selections. On the Empower LA Website, Each Neighborhood Council has a 2016 Election Button.

Octaviano is arranging for training on how to have an impactful Community Impact Statement. Diana Nave suggested a February date but Jan. 30 is a possibility.

Budget Advocate selection: Since no one same seeking appointment, this will be put on the February agenda.

Sharing:

- Volunteers are still needed for the Homeless Count. Sign up at theycountwillyou.org
- Diana Nave has not heard back from the Council Office regarding dates for the half-day retreat with Councilman Buscaino. She will follow up again.
- There will be a Cert Training at Normandale Recreation Center – 7 Mondays starting March 7 from 6:00-8:30 pm

Meeting Time: Motion to change meeting time to 6:00 pm failed 3-1. Meeting time will remain at 6:30.

NEXT MEETING: February 3, Harbor Gateway South to Chair, Northwest to take notes. Pier Pass will be on the agenda.

Notes taken by Diana Nave – Northwest San Pedro