

Sunland Tujunga Neighborhood Council Special General Board Meeting Minutes

January 8, 2025, 7pm

DRAFT

This meeting is being held by the Sunland-Tujunga Neighborhood Council using teleconferencing pursuant to Government Code Section 54953.8(a)(2)(B).

1. **Call to Order, Welcome - Lydia Grant, President, 7:03 pm**
 - a. **In Memory of Mercedes del Castillo.** Lydia shared her experiences with Mercedes who was a great support to the STNC. Mercedes was very involved with National Night Out and would often pay for meals for people at Crow's Nest among other things. A moment of silence was observed for Mercedes.
2. **Pledge of Allegiance,** led by Leny Freeman.
3. **STNC President's Updates**
 - a. **Los Angeles Fires**
 - A discussion about the on-going fires in the City took place. Lydia share that she drove to see the fire(s) personally and gave an update about what the predicts were for the fires going forward, including the Eaton (Altadena) fire, the Lidia fire, a fire at Sylmar in the Hollywood Hills, and at Action and Angeles Crest. Lydia noted places that were saved (to date) including JPL, and some losses as known, and the current death toll in Altadena (5). Lydia said that for egress, bike bollards should be removed. Lydia discussed where current shelters are identified and commented on whether some would accept animals (pets) or not. If schools evacuate, it is recommended that the child be picked up quickly, within an hour. Past experience was that the children not claimed where taken to a school a distance away. Lydia commented on the loss of power for some of the community. Karen asked about how people would get a notice to vacate if they had no power or internet. Lydia said the City would call with a warning first for evacuation and possibly a mandatory notice would follow.
 - Jon reminded us to think of aged neighbors and if anyone ssee smoke, report it immediately (911).
 - Lydia commented that in her travels she saw a fire in a trash can with flames 7-10 ft high, and she called 911 to be told there was no fire-fighting personnel available and that Lydia should take care of it herself. With the help of others using water, the fire was extinguished. There was a pressurized paint can in

the bin which could have resulted in an explosion. This will be an agenda item to discuss in the future. Jon agreed with Lydia that we don't have an evacuation plan and we need to structure one ourself and not depend on City.

- Lydia's said that the local area ran out of gas and advised to keep cars fully fueled. Lydia contacted Barger's Office and said it isn't in their jurisdiction, but Lydia noted that cars that run out of gas and became stranded would be their problem; this needs to be discussed further. Lydia expressed concern about fires that could impact us and said that the entire Angeles Forest has been shut down.

- Voting eligibility** was discussed with Lydia noting that everyone in attendance is qualified to vote; Armen has finished his training. People should apply to positions they are interested in as soon as they can. May 17th is our STNC election date. A Plan will be provided for review; STNC has already gone over the draft Plan. Lydia wanted to know who is *not* planning to continue next year; no one identified themself.
- Board Vacancies:** Region 2 Representative & Region 4 Representative, Lydia read districts for Region Reps and noted we are still in need of Representatives.

- Announce any Board member recusals or paid lobbyists in attendance** - none
- Upcoming Community Events:** - **Annual Homeless Count is January 21, 2025 - sign up at <https://count.lahsa.org/>.** Lydia commented about the Homeless Count that will provide numbers about how many are homeless in our area.
- Roll Call, Voting Eligibility-** Karen Moran, Recording Secretary & Completion of City / DONE
Required trainings status for the STNC board & committees

Board Member	Roll Call	Funding Voting Eligibility	Board Appointment
Lydia Grant	Present	Yes	President
Armen Mardirousi	Present	Yes	1st VP
Ross Herman	Present	Yes	2nd VP
Carol Hutchinson	Present	Yes	Treasurer
Cindy Cleghorn	Present	Yes	Correspondence Sec
Karen Moran	Present	Yes	Recording Sec
Leny Freeman	Present	Yes	Region 1 Rep
KT Travers	Present	Yes	Region 1 Rep
Sherry McCoy	Present	Yes	Region 2 Rep
Vacant			Region 2 Rep
Mike Goglia	Present	Yes	Region 3 Rep

Board Member	Roll Call	Funding Voting Eligibility	Board Appointment
Peter Darakjian	Absent	Yes	Region 3 Rep
Jon von Gunten	Present	Yes	Region 3 Rep
Belinda Woodruff	Absent	No	Region 4 Rep
Trevor Schmidt	Present	Yes	Region 4 Rep
Mark Seigel	Present	Yes	Region 4 Rep
Deborah Ramirez	Absent	UNK	Education Rep
Cheryl Schmidt	Present	Yes	Public Safety Rep
Nina Royal	Absent	Yes	Senior Rep
Vartan Keshish	Present	Yes	Community Interest Rep
Quorum: 15 present at roll call, 4 absent (19 total).			

7. **Discussion/Action: Applications to fill board seats – last opportunities before May 17, 2025.**
Already discussed.
8. **Discussion/Q&A with LAPD, LAFD, Elected Officials/Representatives, DONE, NC Budget Advocates, City Departments** – There were no representatives from any department due to the on-going focus on the area fires. The following items were NOT discussed at this time.
 - a. Verdugo Hills High School
 - b. Haines Canyon area closed by LADWP due to Dept. Fish & Game requirements.
 - c. Tagging on Property
9. **Discussion: Poll STNC Board** for anyone not running in the May selection for the STNC Board. No one identified that they were not returning in the same position.
10. **Discussion: Outreach Plan** for the STNC Election Outreach including print, social media, community groups, other. Cindy was not able to show the Plan at this time and Lydia said it will be shown at the next meeting.
11. **CONSENT CALENDAR ITEMS (NON-FUNDING)** - MOTION: The STNC Board approves the non-funding consent calendar:
 - A. Discussion/Motion: To approve December board meeting minutes.
 - B. Discussion/Motion: To add Karen Moran as Community Impact Statement submitter.
[currently Cindy Cleghorn, Carol Hutchinson and Jon von Gunten are submitters]
 - C. Discussion and Possible Action: Support for the LAFD Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) Program. Lydia read the following draft for the CERT letter. Lydia said our NC has more CERT people than anyplace else in the City; Lydia has taken it twice.

The Sunland-Tujunga Neighborhood Council strongly supports the Los Angeles Fire Department's (LAFD) highly effective Community Emergency Response Team (CERT)

program. This invaluable program provides community members with essential training in disaster preparedness, equipping them with the knowledge and skills to respond effectively to emergencies such as earthquakes and other disasters. CERT-trained volunteers are uniquely prepared to assist themselves, their families, neighbors, and the broader community during critical moments, allowing the LAFD to focus their resources on the areas of highest need.

In addition to their preparedness role, CERT volunteers play a vital part in supporting the LAFD’s routine and emergency responses. Some volunteers choose to advance their training further, joining specialized Call-Out Teams that provide critical support during major incidents.

This year alone, the CERT program has achieved remarkable milestones:

- **2,357 community members trained in CERT principles.**
- **2,700 participants instructed in Hands-Only CPR techniques.**
- **961 individuals trained in fire extinguisher use.**
- **940 hours of service performed by CERT Call-Out volunteers.**

These figures underscore the CERT program's profound impact on community resilience and preparedness. In the event of a city-wide emergency, the investment in CERT will prove invaluable, directly enhancing the city’s ability to respond, recover, and rebuild.

Considering the ongoing risks of natural disasters and other emergencies, the Sunland-Tujunga Neighborhood Council urges city leaders to prioritize and continue funding the LAFD CERT program. This continued support will ensure the sustainability of this critical initiative, safeguarding the well-being and resilience of Los Angeles communities for years to come.

Item 11. Motion to approve the non-funding consent calendar items A, B and C.					
Motion: Freeman, Second: Hutchinson					
Yes	No	Abstain	Ineligible	Recuse	Absent
Grant, Mardirousi, Herman, Hutchinson, Cleghorn, Moran, Freeman, Travers, McCoy, Goglio, von Gunten, T Schmidt, Siegel, C Schmidt, Keshish					Woodruff, Darakjian, Ramirez, Royal
15 yes, 0 no, 0 abstain, 0 ineligible, 4 absent					

12. **GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS-** KT said that the 9th annual Hannakah in the Foothills celebration, held December 28th, had more than 200 people attend and was a great event

with very positive feedback. KT also gave a report for completion of 1/3 of the irrigation effort which will continue to put plants into the mediums, and encouraged people to participate. KT said that only 23 volunteers completed the effort in 4 hours time.

13. **Committee & Liaison Reports** - by committee chairs present (See last page for committee members and meeting locations):

- Land Use Committee (LUC) – Cindy said that the next LUC meeting will be Monday, January 13, and will discuss the change of use presentation for 10043 Commerce. Also the Valley Alliance will be held tomorrow night per Cindy, and Budget Advocates’ reports will be available in the coming weeks. Demolition notices include: Tujunga Canyon, Hillhaven, Apperson, Provo.
- Selections Committee Meeting: TBA
- Community Improvement & Government Affairs - TBA
- Beautification: Jan 16 @ 6PM - in person @ ST Library
- Outreach Meeting - Jan 16 @ 7PM - virtual Zoom. Ross said work would continue at the next Outreach meeting.
- STAT - Jan 28 @ 6PM - virtual Zoom
- STARC: Jan 28 @ 7:30PM - location TBA – KT said that past artists who have presented have been very interesting, including Evelyn Serrano, a local painter, and encouraged people to attend the next meeting
- Youth & Adult Education: - TBA
- Budget & Finance: Jan 29, Carol said Budget committee is looking for members; with the loss of Pati Potter, there wasn’t quorum at the last meeting. The meetings are short, 30 minutes, and joining is encouraged. Reach out to Lydia or Carol for more information.
- Executive: Jan 29

Lydia said that Deborah couldn’t make meeting because she is involved in evacuation of her daughter, it won’t count as a formal absence.

KT said that everyone interested in damming Topanga Cyn, both the Feds and State have rec’vd videos of all the dams and they are going to do reports and take actions to get the dams taken out; they are serious about it.

Leny update on on-ramp metering at Lowell Avenue and two north transition to left, activate. Acknowledged it and committed to do something about it. Also Leny has forwarded communications from Caltrans

14. **PRESENTATION & TRAINING on the Neighborhood Council (NC) System.** *Note: The following items were NOT discussed at the meeting.*

- A. Bylaws, Standing Rules, BONC Policies, Brown Act (Meeting Agenda Posting, ENS)
- B. NC Meetings: Agenda Items, Presenters, Meeting Agendas, Making Motions, Community Impact Statements
- C. NC Alliances (Valley Alliance of Neighborhood Councils - V ANC meets 2nd Thursday on Zoom; LANCC meets 1st Saturday at 10am; PlanCheckNC meets 2nd Saturday at 10am, STNC Community Events/Meetings, Other Training Opportunities

15. **FINAL ANNOUNCEMENTS**

- Lydia said that there is a plan with the City that NCs could access \$1,000 for emergency purposes although it would come out of their own budget. Spending is at the discretion of the President and may cover food and water as an example. It can be used with voting occurring during the next meeting.
- KT said there was a T-Mobile tower that was knocked down in the wind resulting in sporadic coverage throughout the day. KT said we should not rely on cell phone coverage during an emergency.
- Lydia reminded everyone to be safe, and to keep their cars filled.

16. **ADJOURN**, 8 pm