

Commissioners,

At our August meeting, we will be working on the Neighborhoods Commission 2015-16 Work Plan.

The purpose of the Work Plan (WP) is to define what we hope and intend to do in the coming year and when we plan to do it. The WP helps to assure that we accomplish the tasks that need to be done, and also to assure that we allocate sufficient time to do them.

The WP is only a “guide”: topics may be shifted around to accommodate the schedules of others, may be added as needs arise, or dropped if “overtaken by events”.

The process:

- List the “mandatory” items. ✓ done – Caucus process, Budget, and next year’s WP
- Collect additional suggestions. ✓ done – from community, Council’s “Top Ten”, and from the NC at the June meeting. (Can add more in Aug. if needed.)
- Have an ad-hoc committee review the list and make recommendations. ✓ done – see the attached report.
- Commissioners review, augment, and refine the list, and allocate the tasks to the various NC monthly meetings or special sessions. ← to be discussed at the August NC meeting.

At the August NC meeting, we will quickly summarize the work done to-date. We want you to have this background information in advance so that we can spend most of the time discussing decisions rather than reviewing processes.

The NC WP ad hoc committee consisted of

- Dan Keller– D9
- Nick Labosky– D10
- Gary Cunningham– D1
- Desiree Barragan– D3
- Terry Martin– D9
- Marie Arnold – D2
- Linda Locke– D4
- Larry Ames – D6

Juan Estrada (D5) had volunteered to serve but was unable to make the scheduled meeting, so Joe Horwedel (D1) attended as the Alternate. Nine attending from a 20-member committee: less than a quorum – not in violation of the Brown Act. We met at the West Valley Library on July 8th.

At the ad hoc meeting, we discussed a number of considerations:

- The NC only has 10 meetings per year, and we need to spread our work across them.
- We don’t want to be over-scheduled: we need to allow room for flexibility & last-minute changes
- Some topics are already defined (“mandatory”):
 - Aug.: Elect Chair & VC; Discuss/approve 2015 Work Plan
 - Nov.: Confirm Caucus process

- April & May: City Budget
- June: 2016 Work Plan
- Also around May, but not at the NC meeting: assist with the Caucus process.
- We reviewed the NC charter and then discussed whether the various topics were within it. Also, are they uniquely so – are we the only ones who can do it?
- Can the topic be “leveraged”? Can it help other projects, other Commissions?
- What communities are impacted? Citywide? Diverse? In need of assistance?
- What’s the “Level of Effort”?
 - small: Just request a report/presentation, perhaps requiring only half an hour
 - **medium**: Discussion & decision; perhaps draft and send a letter. Topic could take half a NC session.
 - **large**: Special / multiple sessions? Public outreach?
- Is there a “Champion” on the NC volunteering to shepherd the process?
- Impact: “Bang for the buck”? – will it be worth the effort that we on the NC put into it?

We discussed the various Categories of work within our charter:

- Code Enforcement;
- Public Safety;
- Transportation;
- Community Engagement; and
- Budget;

and we added “Housekeeping” – taking care of NC business. We are not required to work on one topic from each category, nor are we limited to only one per category. Nonetheless, a range of topics is probably good.

We made a list of topics:

- the roughly twenty topics given at the round-table at the June NC meeting (see http://www.wgbackfence.net/NC/LLA_NC-notes_June-2015.pdf);
- Unfinished business from 2014/15 WP (http://www.wgbackfence.net/NC/Sept_2014-notes.pdf);
- City’s “Top-10” Priorities (<http://www.wgbackfence.net/NC/CouncilPriority2015.pdf>); and
- the mandatory topics above.

The ad hoc committee then reviewed this entire list of nearly forty topics. We discussed them and judged them by the above criteria: within the NC charter, how much work, category, the “bang for the buck” and whether they could be leveraged.

In the discussion at the ad hoc meeting, we whittled the list down to twenty three topics. Afterwards, this list of 23 was emailed to the ad hoc committee members for individual voting.

- Each of us could cast two votes. The votes could be all for one topic or spread amongst several.
- If we were willing to help on the topic (e.g., help draft a letter or attend a special session), we could get up to three more votes; and
- If we were willing to lead the discussion on a topic, we could get a 6th vote.

The results from this voting process are given in the attached report, and will be used to guide the discussion in August.

In summary:

- The “mandatory topics”
 - revisit the process for Caucus election in Nov.; establish protocols, a small task in November,
 - actually do the caucuses, a **medium** task in May,
 - review Mayor’s budget proposal and give feedback: a **large** task spanning Feb - April, and
 - propose the 2016-17 Work Plan: a **large** task in June
- And from the ad hoc committee’s vote:
 - Policies on Police Body Cameras – a **large** task
 - Develop process for community input – **medium**,
 - Illegal dumping and blight prevention – a small task (request a report), and
 - Refine and document the process by which NC develops a work product, a **medium** task.

In addition, there are a number of small topics that can be added if there’s Commissioner interest, and a number of medium or large topics that we might take on if members of the NC are willing to take the lead or at least help with the topic. We can also add topics at the August meeting, based on comments received from the public and/or at the suggestion of Staff.

Note that some topics might be important and yet might be quick & easy. For example: Fireworks. We don’t want a 3rd repeat of “the standard talk”, and we have already formally submitted letter to the Mayor and Council (<http://www.wgbackfence.net/NC/Illegal-Fireworks.pdf>): we can just ask for a “Status Update” (in December or May?) to “remind” Staff of our continued interest.

Hopefully we will have our Work Plan by the end of our August meeting: I hope we can spend most of our time on the Commission “doing” rather than “discussing what to do”! But we also need to be careful not to take on too many tasks, lest we get spread too thin and unable to accomplish anything.

Looking forward to the August Neighborhoods Commission meeting!

~Larry Ames, Chair
July 26, 2015