

SILVER LAKE NEIGHBORHOOD COUNCIL ELECTIONS COMMITTEE MEETING

Thursday, February 7, 2019, 7:30pm
SLNC Office 1850 W. Silver Lake Drive L.A. 90026

MEETING MINUTES - DRAFT

Attendees:

Eric Kissack, Co-Chair
Nicholas Fox Robbins (not voting)
Jerome Courshon
Manuel Celadon
Daniel Berson

1. WELCOMING REMARKS

2. GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENTS ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS

Nick has to step down as co-chair of the committee because he is running for SLNC

Jerome would like to comment about something Anne Marie said at a recent Governor's Board meetin. She spoke that the EC could be engaging in conflict of interest.

Jerome states that this is a false allegation. One of her allies - one of the people running for reelect with her - has attended every EC meeting since the Fall (Scott, Betsy, Janis). Therefore, it's clear she's making a false allegation now, for a possible challenge down the road. If there was any malfeasance going on in this committee, one of her allies would have informed her of such and a grievance would have been filed by now.

Discussion of attacks at Jerome, Heather, and Lee at the executive committee meeting, which Jerome believes to be a violation of civil conduct.

3. SPECIAL PRESENTATIONS AND REPORTS

Timing of sending out the vote mailer.

Have been requested to change date in order to avoid conflict with TK

Takes a week between printing and mailing. Eric suggests a plan to submit on March 4th. The mailers would go out week of the 11th, giving a full week before the election. There is general agreement.

Question of whether the text from the mailer is in sync with the bylaws. In the mailer, it states that documentation is required if you are a community interest stakeholder (but not if you live or work in the neighborhood).

Text is reviewed - Jerome mentions that the current text does not match what was approved at the meeting last night. Need to check on exact language. Feels like Anne-Marie Johnson manipulating stuff. AMJ wants to make sure that the election could not be manipulated by outside parties. However we changed the bylaws to allow for self-affirmation.

Jerome recalls early EC meetings where this was discussed with Chris Garcia, and the question raised about documentation, and he was going to look into it.

Nick proposes that we contact the City Clerk directly with our text, and ask him to confirm the validity of it.

Jerome suggests we show Chris Garcia (City Clerk) the text that was approved by the governing board. And then ask about apparent confusion about whether additional documentation is required for community interest stakeholders.

Eric states for the record that Betsy made it seem like this text is what was approved. Jerome affirms that if that is true, Betsy is lying.

Nick suggests that we may need to include additional information about what the documentation is. Eric argues that the length of text required to describe is space prohibitive on the mailer, which is why a link is included for voters to look up for themselves. Nick counters that we could say "see article 4 here for list of documentation" (only if Chris Garcia confirms the text).

Jerome questions this approach as there is no list of documents available. What we can reference is a list of requirements. Nick suggests this is a failure of the bylaws in being non-specific about what these documents need to be.

Eric agrees that it was a mistake in the drafting, where a line was not drawn clearly enough between what the requirement is one one hand, and how to prove it on the other.

In re-reading the relevant passage in Article X Section IV of the the bylaws, the word "may" raises questions about what the exact requirement is.

Jerome argues that this is supposed to be a 'self-affirmation' election. He states that this was agreed upon by Lee, Anne-Marie, and others (though he himself was not as enthusiastic at the time) and now it seems she wants to backtrack.

Eric will email Chris Garcia and seek resolution on the matter.

Jerome questions whether the acronym is sufficient (whether people will know what it means) and Eric, Nick and Manny argue that it does work, and a concern with text size and readability outweighs that question. Jerome agrees.

Jerome objects to the suggested text in the mailer in any event, because it was not approved by the executive committee.

Candidate Forum

There are 3 non-competitive regions. Should they be included in the forum?

Argument for: leave more time for those in competitive races.

Argument against: aide with transparency and allow them their opportunity to speak

Nick argues that the perception is important. Manny strongly agrees that they should allow to be speak. Running a non-competitive election should not give you limited visibility. Daniel is more ambiguous about whether allowing them to speak is in service of the purpose of the event and the democratic cause. Jerome is concerned that they have already effectively won their seats, and we ought to give enough time to those who actually need to battle in the election. Even without them, we'd have 29 candidates, who don't get a lot of time at the forum as is. Each candidate getting maybe 3 minutes to speak.

Manual proposes allowing unopposed candidates to submit a written statement that will be passed out at the event.

Nick suggests that the event is a learning opportunity for the neighborhood, and if you are running you should be expected to show up for this event. He proposes that we allow them to introduce themselves, but not participate in the discussion.

Manny wonders if we might allow them to donate their time to the rest of the group.

Jerome likes the idea that we introduce them at the beginning.

Manny points out that it's hard to have a message that has been condensed down to 3 minutes. Will these candidates feel that this is unfair?

Nick says if he was running unopposed, he would be happy to give up his time. But he likes the idea of just allowing people to say their names, and what region they're running. Moderator can explain why each of them are not speaking further.

Eric suggests allowing each person 1 minute to say whatever they'd like to say. Nick suggests limiting it to 30 seconds. Everyone agrees that that feels reasonable.

Jerome adds that these folks will have a platform for two years to express themselves.

Question is raised - do we need to submit this plan to the governing board for approval?
Consensus is we don't believe we need to but will check into what was done three years ago.

Host

Last time we had Alison Cohen from the Los Feliz Ledger. She did a good job, we could reach out to her again. Nice to have a journalist who is aware of the issues in the neighborhood. Nick wonders if there is a Silverlake-based publication? Several options turn up from a google search. Jerome recalls Alex Michaelson at ABC was a consideration last time as well. The Eastsider is a well-known newspaper, could consider Jesus Sanchez. Unclear what kind of moderator he would be. Jerome would not advocate for Barry Link, because he may not be objective with regard to certain members of the Council.

Daniel is not especially bothered by the Los Feliz aspect of Alison Cohen's work. Nick suggests Charles Fleming, who writes for the LA Times, and writes about walks in LA, and leads them in Silver Lake.

Jerome proposes Steve Lopez, another LA Times columnist who lives in SL, or at least did at one point.

How to reach out to the prospects?

Nick offers to text Charles Flemming about the idea.

Eric raises question of how aware he is about local Silver Lake issues. Nick knows he went to a recent SLNC committee meeting. Jerome suggests Eric and Nick do a conference call with Charles and assess. Nick agrees to email him, see if he's interested, and if so would he hop on the phone with Eric and Nick to talk about it. Second choice will be Alison Cohen.

Jerome says that we, the committee, should probably not provide the questions. The moderator should come up with the questions themselves.

Nick reads proposed email to Charles aloud to the committee. With minor adjustments to include mention of time commitment required, email is considered read to send, and is sent.

Food

Last time we had a food truck, though we did not explicitly include that in our budget this year. It was approx \$1K, which feels a bit much this year.

Nick asks if it would be unethical for a business to donate food and its agreed that it probably would be against the rules.

Nick suggest simply inviting a taco truck and attendees have to pay for the food themselves.

A look at the budget reveals \$450 to be available for snacks and refreshments. Jerome suggests using those funds at Costco/Trader Joes, rather than full meals from food truck, etc. Nick advocates for inviting taco truck(s) in any case. We should not promote the food truck, in case they don't show, and instead just say "light refreshments served."

Eric moves that we spend up to \$450 on food and refreshments for the candidate forum on March 23, 2019 at the SIJCC. Jerome seconds. The motion is unanimously approved.

Jerome suggest that in the motion form, we specific that this \$450 is coming from the already allocated \$600 (not a new expense).

Outreach

The mailer has the info, will go a long way. We will have Facebook advertising.

Jerome requests that when Eric is working on the advertising for the forum and the election, he keep in mind that when advertising was done for something else recently, Taran did not target Silverlake exclusively. She included numerous surrounding areas, which he believes was a waste of money. He suggests that Eric review which geographic areas are being targeted, and make sure he agrees with the approach. If he does not agree, he should bring it to the governing board. Jerome does not think we should be including Glendale, for example.

Could we get the Los Feliz Ledger to mention it?

The Easider has been doing posts about events, and Eric will reach out to them. Jerome suggests that Anne-Marie Johnson, who writes a column there, should be able to mention it.

The City sends out a newsletter that mentions the events.

SJNC Newsletter will mention it. Jerome suggests we try to get it to be one of the first items in the newsletter.

Daniel asks if NextDoor is a viable option? Anyone with an account is encouraged to post there. Jerome will post there, and suggests others use a photo with their text when posting.

Hannah, who is on the board and spoke at the previous info session (and is a member of the Outreach committee), is identified by Nick as an apparently good resource to reach out to and see if she has any fresh ideas about outreach for this.

Banners

Eric has 3 banners from the last election in his garage. They need a small patch to update the date.

Nick has to leave the meeting early, taking with him the computer being used for the recording of minutes.

Eric makes a motion to spend up to \$125 to print patches in order to bring the three banners from last election up to date.

Daniel seconds. Motion passes unanimously.

Eric makes a motion to spend up to \$150 to place advertisements in 3 bus shelters in Silver Lake to promote the election.

Jerome seconds. Motion passes unanimously.

Eric makes a motion to approve the December 13, 2018 Election Committee minutes.

Manuel seconds. Eric, Manuel, Daniel votes yes. Jerome votes present, not voting.

Next meeting set for Tuesday, February 26th at 7:30pm.

5. REQUESTS/MOTIONS FOR FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

Agenda for next meeting... discuss ways to use the rest of the money.

6. ADJOURNMENT

Meeting adjourns at 9:08pm.