



# Venice Neighborhood Council

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## VNC Neighborhood Committee Meeting Minutes

**Meeting Date:** January 23, 2012

**Meeting Time:** 7:00pm to 8:00pm

**Meeting Location:** Oakwood Park Rec Center, 767 California, Venice CA 90291 (enter from 7th Avenue)

**Contact:** [marc.saltzberg@VeniceNC.org](mailto:marc.saltzberg@VeniceNC.org)

1. 7:00 - Call to Order & Roll Call

Adam Glick	Absent	Linda Lucks (ex-officio)	Present
Bill Boyd	Present	Marc Saltzberg (Chair)	Present
Colleen Saro	Present	Michael Stenger	Present
Jessica Coakley	Present	Nicholas Hippisley-Coxe	Present
Maxine Leral	Absent	Robin Rudisill	Present
<b>Guests:</b>			
Paola Kreefft	Present	Arturo Pina	Present

2. Approve Agenda – **Item 7B moved to 7A, 7A to 7B – Agenda Approved unanimously**

3. 7:05 - ANNOUNCEMENTS – Information about specific events important to Venice - **Marc encouraged all people attending to take budget survey. Link to survey was given: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/2012LABudgetSurvey>. New budget out in June and will be approved by city.**

4. 7:10 - PUBLIC COMMENT – non-agendized items related to Neighborhood Committee only.

5. 7:15 – Approve minutes from previous meeting – 1/04/12 CIP Project Rankings  
**Motion to approve minutes from 1/04/12 by Nick, second by Bill. Approved unanimously**

6. 7:20 – Old Business

- a. Results of VNC Board Meeting on CIP Projects **Board approved projects as recommended by Committee**
- b. Neighborhood Reports

Bill (Silver Strand) reported numerous power outages, and wants to know from BWP why this keeps happening. He also wanted to acknowledge Rosendahl and Cecelia for getting the sidewalk area near Silver Strand that has been taken over by vegetation taken care of. Construction is working on other issues.

Nick (N of Rose to Lincoln & 5th, which meet boundaries of Santa Monica) He reported the cut thru on Dewy/SM where residents go to Whole Foods is a hazard. He petitioned Rosendahl to do something or at least cut the hedges down to be able to see the park. Yesterday, 1-22-12, there was a city worker there, being paid time and half cutting. A sign has also been installed 7' x 22' ht on Dewy that also states no parking from 2 – 6.

Robin (S of Venice beach, N of Washington to Dog park) She reported that the leash law is still not being enforced and when some people walk dogs without leashes and others do, it causes a problem with dogs being more superior. Not safe and wants it enforced. Also concerned about the flooding that is taking place on Speedway. There have been no repairs.

Colleen (Brooks to Washington to Pacific.)

7. 7:30 – New Business

- a. 2012-2013 Community Improvement Projects  
The next round of Community Improvement Projects will be for 2012-2013. Applications need to get out in next month, leading to a June ranking meeting and VNC Board approval in July. Before the applications can go out, the Neighborhood Committee needs to discuss and approve any changes to the process (several have been suggested).

Ivan went over following items of concern for 2012 in reference to Community Projects. The city changed rules this year that you can't carry monies to next fiscal year if not used. So the board has to approve the amounts in June. New applications need to be out in February. The question is, can Neighborhood Committee plan how much money we can allot without knowing the total amount in VNC Budget (based on amount allotted from the city)?

**Decided that we will process the ranking of applications and then deal with monies when we know amount from the city.**

The Mayor's office said all departments should plan on either a 6% to 12% cut. Applying that to CIP funding, 11,600 will be available. But that ignores other budgetary requirements that may have a higher priority – and those requirements are unknown at this time. It could be that NO CIP fund can be awarded next year.

**A disclaimer will be added to applications in the event this occurs, so applicants will be made aware that the projects may not be funded this year.**

Discussion of matching funds requirement for CIP applications when the entity applying has already received funds in a prior year. The Committee previously decided that matching funds should be required to wean off repeat applicants. Since matching funds are easier to come by for larger organizations, we want to be sure this is fair to smaller artist and groups.

Rocky - In favor of limiting applications to only new entities – new applications from an entity that has already received funds should be denied..

Bill - money limited, we should just be acting as an incubator, get ideas going and let them have access to monies for 1 or 2 years, after that pull plug. Felt we are too generous with schools, example: Marc Twain Ringers received monies this year, what if another group from them asks next year for outdoor classroom. Should this be allowed?

**Motion from Nick, 2nd from Robin: 3 year limit on funding, 100% of max available in year one of funding, 75% of max available in year 2 of funding, 50% of max available in year 3 of funding.**

Vote: **Motion passes 3 for** – Nick, Robin, and Colleen; **2 opposed** – Rocky, Bill; **1 abstained** – Marc

Community involvement sheet: In the most recent round, it was decided that if no sheet submitted, an automatic 0 points awarded for category.

Suggestion: an incomplete application should be marked down.

Nick – felt if you don't feel out properly, then void all together.

Ivan – if we only have 6 applicants, and 3 don't fill out correctly, then what?

Marc – further discussion on this item later.

Repeat application from a different but affiliated entity – example: if school fills out one year and then next year, friend of school fills out in lieu of school then we ask to match?

Committee: **YES**

Should applicants who are invited to a Board Meeting but don't show up be disqualified? At the board meeting, this year, only 1/2 applicants showed up and some board members felt if they couldn't be there in person, they should be disqualified

**Question: Should attendance at Board Meetings, when invited, be mandatory for applicants?**

**No motion made. Leave it up to board's discretion.** It was suggested that we should include in application that it is highly recommend that applicants appear before VNC when invited.

**Marc: motion that max project amount be 2000.00. Robin second, motion passed unanimously**

b. Neighborhood Committee Recruitment and Regular Meeting Time & Day

Committee Recruitment: We are looking for better representation across Venice on the Committee. We could easily add 7 new members on the committee. A member from the Milwood area, a 2nd rep for East of Lincoln

(to focus on South), a second rep for the Marina Peninsula, 2 reps for Oakwood, a rep for the Oxford Triangle, and a rep for Presidents Row.

**Regular Meeting Date: Motion by Marc, second by Colleen: The regular meeting date of the Neighborhood Committee shall be the 4th Thursday of the month, with start time to alternate each month between 8AM and 7PM.**

**Motion Passed unanimously.** Next meeting will be February 23rd starting at 8AM.

- c. Ocean Front Walk (OFW) Park Hours and Inclusion of OFW as part of Park (begins promptly at 8pm)  
LAPD announced last week that the Venice Beach Park will be CLOSED from 12am to 5am and that people in the park after closing will be warned / ticketed / arrested. They also announced that Ocean Front Walk will be considered to be a part of the park – so it will also be closed between 12am and 5am.

Enforcement of these regulations will begin in a few weeks, after signs informing the public of the regulations are posted.

According to LAPD, these are not "new" regulations; they have been on the books for several years and have not been enforced due to court decisions. The City Attorney decided the regulations are enforceable after City Council District 11 received complaints about late night loitering / camping / partying in the park and on OFW.

**NOTE: a recording of this segment of the meeting can be found at: <http://venicenc.org/node/2147>**

- i. Presentation by LAPD on regulations, enforcement procedures and impact on residents

LAPD Lt. Paola Kreefft explained new enforcement of Ocean Front Walk closure between 12AM and 5AM and impacts on residents, Lt. Kreefft said officers have been assigned to enforce the curfew. The ordinance closing the beach park area has been in effect since Jan 8, 1989 – Municipal Code 6344B14B, section on Beach Park Area: no person shall enter or stay in park from 12AM – 5AM. While investigating the new Vending Ordinance, Parks & Rec found that OFW is part of the beach park and should be regulated according to the same curfew hours.

Q/A with Public and Committee

1. Has LAPD has been directed to give tickets to people who cannot pay them rather than people who can?  
LAPD – tickets are given to anyone who violates the rules.
2. What are the Venice Beach Park boundaries?  
LAPD – The park stretches from Santa Monica to El Segundo. Ocean Front Walk is considered part of the beach park.
3. If this has been in effect since 1989, why is enforcement starting now?  
LAPD – The problem with enforcement was that there was confusion about the park boundaries
4. Does the Ordinance prohibit entrance to park after midnight?  
LAPD – Yes. The Beach has always been closed at midnight. If people need to enter their house then it is OK, as long as they are not loitering. Riding your bike after midnight is not allowed (although riding through the park on the bike path might be OK). Walking your dog after midnight will not be allowed. People going from point to point are OK – as long as there is no lingering or loitering. Officers can determine if people are walking home rather than loitering or just out for a walk through observation
5. Re: beach access – Doesn't Coastal Commission allow 24 hour beach access?  
LAPD – City Attorney has allowed for restrictions as far as access to the park.

6. OFW is the only sidewalk between the beach and the east side of Pacific from Windward to Washington (and south). Speedway is a street. Will there be increased patrols on Speedway?  
LAPD - Don't know at this time – but reinforcements should be available from OFW once curfew is enforced.
7. LAPD will be asking people to move off OFW. How will Police deal with people sleeping on Speedway and adjacent walk streets? How will Police be patrolling this?  
LAPD - Don't know at this time.

ii. Presentation by CD 11 regarding complaints received and City Attorney Decision

ArturoPena from CD11 answered questions. – Hopefully the situation on Speedway will improve when the LAPD receives its summer reinforcements. Documents going back to 1924 identify OFW as part of the park; this was clarified a few months ago with a Bureau of Engineering survey. Part of the reason there was no enforcement of the curfew in the last year or two was due to the November 2010 injunction that tied the City's hands. So LAPD dealt with high crime issues but were unable to deal with "quality of life issues"

1. Was the City Attorney asked about sleeping on the sidewalks?

Arturo – The City Attorney has determined that the 2010 Jones decision, which prevented the City from enforcing laws against sleeping on sidewalks until sufficient beds were available for the City's homeless population, only applies to Skid Row. This determination allows LAPD to enforce the ordinance in Venice and gives the police a new tool to prevent people who are moved off OFW as a result of the curfew from sleeping on the walk streets and other neighborhoods in Venice.

2. The park area and OFW is starting to look like Mad Max – visitors are amazed at this. Why will the City now be able to clear the beach?

Arturo -The city attorney's determination on the park curfew clears the way for LAPD enforcement. Hopefully the police will be able to enforce the curfew now.

3. Have you seen a written opinion re: Jones?

Neither Lt. Kreefft nor Arturo has seen the opinion. Arturo will find out if one is written and get back to us.

4. Will residents leaving bars and going home be ticketed?

LAPD – police will use discretion. Obviously, you can enter the park to get to your house.

5. A – back alleys are dark. There have been incidents where people have been sleeping in these back alleys. In the past, Pacific division and where told that they can't move people out.

LAPD – people sleeping on private property is trespassing. That's a no-brainer – they can and should be moved out by LAPD. People can't sleep in the middle of the street – they will be moved out. can't speak to this situation, but will train officers correctly, hope to.

6. If loitering and camping in park after 12AM are already illegal, why do we need a new law? Why can't we simply target those that are committing crimes instead of enforcing this new law? It seems you're using an axe when you should be using a scalpel.

Arturo – to clarify, the LAPD will not be using new, separate laws. They will be enforcing the existing park law.

7. What will the Coastal Commission say about this new enforcement program?

Arturo – Our City Attorney reps are in constant dialogue with the CC. The CC has no enforcement authority. LAPD is responsible for Public Safety.

8. Under what circumstances can we call and ask LAPD to respond when someone is in our yard? Is posting no-trespassing signs required?

LAPD – We can enforce trespassing ordinances whether signs are posted or not. If no-trespassing signs are posted, people entering your property have been warned. This helps with prosecution if they are arrested. And it gives officers responding to a radio call the authority to enter your property. It's called a trespass letter.

A straw poll of attendees was taken:

- 63 people believe that curfew enforcement is essential to controlling sleeping on OFW
- 18 people believe curfew enforcement is the wrong action to take and there are other ways of controlling sleeping on OFW
- 18 people don't feel the issues are clear enough and don't have sufficient information to decide

#### Public Comment

- Sleeping on OFW doesn't seem to be as much of a problem south of Windward. Moving people off OFW means they will be on Speedway and backyards. How does this help? More explanation is needed
- This enforcement is required – OFW is out of control at night.
- The people who are homeless need to be housed
- This curfew was "sprung on is – the VNC was never informed this was taking place until the last minute, so the VNC couldn't inform Venice stakeholders. We need better and more effective communication from the City to the VNC
- Enforcement is needed. Not allowing transitional youth to drink and sleep on OFW is a win-win for residents and may help kids stop drinking
- A proper and just solution isn't a police response to homelessness, addiction and mental illness under the guise of public safety. The beach and OFW curfew is a violation of the Coastal Act. Being outside next to the ocean keeps me sane. We must have access to OFW and the beach 24/7
- OFW has been a public thoroughfare for 106 years. If a curfew can be prescribed for OFW, it should apply across Venice. People walking home from bars make lots of noise on OFW and Speedway. Now there will more noise drunks on Speedway. People will be forced onto walkstreets to sleep.
- There is an encampment in front of my house 24 hrs a day. I look forward to enforcement of the curfew. It's out of control day and night, Children are afraid to be there during the day. If it's made better at night, maybe that will help during daytime.
- Abbot Kinney gave us OFW as a treasure. We have to preserve it. It's a treasure for visitors from all over the world. We have an obligation to provide safety. I know it's not perfect but I'm willing to give it a chance.
- I've worked in homeless services. I'm in full support of enforcement. It's out of control and unsafe. Once the shelter opened, that didn't help. People are choosing not to access services. I hear fights every night – to date the cops haven't been able to do anything. Enforcement is long overdue.
- I have 50 tenants living on the Boardwalk. It's insane. This ordinance is not perfect, but it is all we have. I look for the day, maybe in a couple of years, when we can be less stringent, when we can ride our bikes again on the Boardwalk after midnight. But right now we need it. Residents are not safe walking from the parking structure to their building. And the Boardwalk is filthy.
- Maybe things are different north of Windward. If there's a problem north of windward, I sympathize. But I wonder how any of this will solve the problem because you're making criminals out of responsible citizens and the problem is going to remain the same. I see feel people out with their dogs, roller blading, running, between midnight and 5AM. This includes single women. They apparently feel safe. I don't understand how this will help when criminal and undesirable acts aren't being addressed now., and they could be given existing laws.

- There is an enormous encampment at the end of my block. Its' a life style choice to camp. There's a party going on at 6AM when I run. This is a park. Police enforcement will help make it a better park. I've worked with indigent people in many citizens. This is something that need to be done for Venice.
- We should enforce this ordinance. Venice does not need to be a Skid Row. This is an important, first attempt to try to clean up Venice. Whether it's perfect or not, why not give it a try?
- The homeless in Venice are from all over the country. We must remove the welcome mat.
- Coastal Commission has said the parks must be open 24 hour a day.
- The ordinance invites selective enforcement and lawsuits. The wording of the ordinance has nothing to do with homelessness. It's about closing the beach. It deprives us of our coast and coastal activities. We shouldn't give up our rights.
- We need safety, and we need to make the decision for ourselves about what's safe and what is not.

iii. Discussion and possible recommendations regarding the regulations and enforcement procedures

- a. Motion from Robin: Request the board to ask the City to take emergency action to improve the lighting on Speedway and on the and on the walk streets. Second by Nick.  
**Motion carried unanimously.**
- b. Motion from Jessica that we request the Board to ask the City to alter the curfew ordinance such that residents of Venice not be ticketed between 12AM and 5AM for use of OFW, the grass area and the Bike Path. Second by Colleen. **Motion defeated, 2 in favor, 3 opposed, 2 abstentions.**

8. 9:00 Adjourn