

**Report on 4/7/06 Meeting- Oakwood Recreation Center
Venice Beach Free Expression Protection Working Group (formerly named Ocean
Front Walk Committee**

The meeting was co-chaired by Linda Lucks, GRVNC Representative and Lydia Ritzman, LA City Recreation and Parks- as per LAMC Ordinance 42.15, implemented on 3/25/06

The formal name change of the committee was made to bring the committee into compliance with the newly implemented ordinance requiring the committee be so named and the co-chairs Representative the NC and Recreation and Parks. Other City agencies were present to report on ordinance status and to answer questions as they arose: Mark Grant-Councilman Rosendahl's office; Gita O'Neil, Neighborhood prosecutor with City Attorney's office, Robert Haskin and Valerie Punzel of the LA Recreation and Parks Department. No representatives from LAPD were present.

Reports were given on the following old business:

- 1) Bill boards on OFW- as a result of the City losing litigation to enforce signage, currently all signage legal. The California Coastal Commission has given approval. An action item request to send a letter objecting to the alcohol signs will be placed in the next meeting agenda. Which will include a request that 50% of the funds collected by the advertisers be given to a fund to restore old and fund new murals.
- 2) Peacemakers- Steven Fiske gave an update on his efforts to secure funding for the Peacemakers while trying to insure the peace on the boardwalk.

Stakeholder Comment was taken about the implementation of the ordinance. Recreation and Parks reported that there is very good compliance, including the addition of new artists.

Members of the community expressed very specific concerns and problems and various vendors petitioned the committee to clarify the legality of selling specific items. The Neighborhood Prosecutor was clear in each case as to what is and what is not allowable under the new ordinance (No- jewelry or crafts , including prayer bead bracelets, whistles, books not written by the seller, incense, lotions and art not made by the artists). Testimony will be taken at each meeting to determine the specifics at issue as the ordinance rolls out and to identify "gray areas..

Complaints were heard about the limitations of the proscribed spaces, the space allocation/lottery system, the 12 O'clock rule, noise levels, size of canvas easels (4'rule) and how to report violations. Many were unhappy that their items are no longer salable on the West side of the boardwalk.

Stakeholders may call in questions or violations to 311 (City clearing house number), Pacific Division LAPD Substation- 310-391-5131 or 391-5170 between 11 a.m.-7:30 p.m. Or, go to the Recreation & Parks Office at the end or Windward to see Robert Haskin and where the new rules are posted. 1 Park Ranger is also assigned to the beach from 10-8 daily. LAPD will increase officers in May.

Next meeting will address issue of Encroachment by East side businesses.