

Harbor Alliance of Neighborhood Councils
Meeting Notes
November 7, 2012
Kaiser Permanente Conference Center
Olive Reed, Harbor City, Chair

Attendees: Harbor Gateway North NC – Rosalie Preston Central San Pedro NC –Carrie Scoville, James Allen, Northwest San Pedro NC – Diana Nave, Harbor Gateway South NC - Jane Tokubo; Harbor City NC– Olive Reed, Grant Reed

Other –Joe Hari (DONE), Doug Epperhart (BONC), Bill Carter (City Attorney’s Office), Veronica de la Cruz (City Attorney’s Office)

Deputy Mayor Tori Osborne

Deputy Mayor Tori Osborne was unable to attend, asked that we reschedule her to the next meeting.

Neighborhood Prosecutor Program

Bill Carter, Chief Deputy, and Veronica de la Cruz, Deputy City Attorney, discussed the Neighborhood Prosecutor Program. When it began in 2002 it was an extra resource for the community with one Neighborhood prosecutor assigned to each LAPD station. This was in addition to the Gang Prosecutor and the Abatement Prosecutor. This format allowed the Neighborhood Prosecutors to be visible in the community. Due to the budget cuts there are now only 7 Neighborhood Prosecutors. Veronica covers the Harbor, South East and Olympic LAPD areas and tries to divide her time evenly among the three. She indicated that the types of issues she works on differ from area to area.

The City Attorney’s Office is divided into a Civil and a Criminal Branch. Bill Carter is the Chief Deputy reporting directly to Nuch Trutanich and supervises both branches. The Neighborhood Prosecutor Program is within the Criminal Branch, Safe Neighborhoods and Gangs Division along with the Gang Prosecutors and the Abatement Prosecutors. Having combined the programs this way has increased their ability to deal with community issues.

Veronica works closely with the Senior Lead Officers who take problems to her and also responds directly to complaints from citizens, Neighborhood Councils, and the Council Office. Responses range from evaluating and referral to vertical prosecution. The focus is primarily on solving community problems.

Examples of issues and responses include referring a neighborhood dispute where there is no crime to the dispute resolution section, working with LAPD to get the proper documentation for nuisance abatement, issuing orders in a public drunkenness or trespassing case to stay away from a specific area, and criminal prosecution. They also issue mandatory evictions where an individual has been arrested on a drug related offense within 1000 feet of the individual’s residence. They are

developing an Avalon Corridor Block Project to address the high number of Registered Sex offenders in Wilmington. Veronica pointed out that the law requires that paroled sex offenders return to the County where they offended but cannot restrict where they live in that county. Many settle in Wilmington due to the low rent. The City Attorney's office is looking at how the laws might be changed.

They also create partnerships to deal with multi-agency solutions such as working with the County Health Department on health related issues (e.g. cleaning up skid row) and the County Sheriff on tagging.

Bill discussed the overall functioning of the City Attorney's Office noting that they have gone from 1,057 employees in 2009 to 880 today, with attorneys being over 110 of those who were lost. The City is currently recommending that their staff be reduced by another 50 positions. The biggest impact is on the criminal side because that is discretionary. 70% of the LAPD arrests go to the City Attorney for prosecution. Loss of criminal prosecutors means that the city cannot be as aggressive in criminal prosecution. The civil branch defends the city against lawsuits. This consumes over 50% of their total City Attorney's budget. As required by State Law, they draft ordinances. The City Attorney's office actually makes money for the City.

To help handle the workload in light of the reductions, Nuch created a volunteer core. There are 50 lawyers who are trained by the City who serve pro bono with a commitment to try at least one case a month for two and a half years.

Overall Bill feels that the City's fiscal situation is improving and revenues are starting to increase. He is still concerned about the pension liabilities.

Veronica de la Cruz-Robles
Deputy City Attorney
Neighborhood Prosecutor Program
Safe Neighborhoods and Gang Division
312 South Hill Street, Second Floor
Los Angeles, California 90013
direct [213.485-0745](tel:213.485-0745)* general [213.978.4093](tel:213.978.4093)
Verionia.DeLaCruz-Robles@lacity.org

William Carter
Chief Deputy City Attorney
200 N. Main Street, Room 800
Los Angeles CA 90012
213-978-8347
William.Carter@lacity.org

DONE/BONC Update:

Joe Hari encouraged everyone to go online and register for BUDGET DAY NOV 17. If enough people register they will need to move the event from the Public Works Board Room to the Council Chambers.

Doug and Joe discussed the two motions brought by Councilman Huizar. One would develop a process for boundary adjustments and the other deals with the factual basis stakeholder. The factual basis stakeholder motion grew out of an attempted “takeover” of the Eagle Rock Neighborhood Council by marijuana dispensary advocates. Bill Carter indicated that the City Attorney’s office issued a letter to Councilmember Garcetti in Oct 2010 that raised issues related to the factual basis stakeholder definition, a copy of which was in the latest DONE e-blast.

Doug indicated that the BONC is undertaking a review of the Plan for Neighborhood Councils. He is chairing that committee and wants the factual basis stakeholder to be considered as a part of that discussion. He asked to meet with HANC members soon to initiate the discussion. Doug also pointed out that BONC previously recommended that Neighborhood Councils limit the number of seats for which factual basis stakeholders could run and vote.

Mayoral Election Event

There was little enthusiasm for planning a Mayoral Election Event. It was suggested that perhaps we could work with Harbor College and ask them to be lead again.

Next Meeting: Wed January 2, 2013

Northwest San Pedro will Chair

Agenda items:

1. Proposed Mayoral Forum
2. Tori Osborne, Deputy Mayor
3. Factual Basis Stakeholder