



## Meeting Report for March 19, 2012

By Denny Schneider

Valley VOTE Board members, community leaders, and concerned citizens convened on Jan 13, 2012 at Galpin Ford to hear from featured speakers, David Hernandez, "Why am I running for Congress?" and Wayde Hunter, "Current conditions at the Sunshine Canyon Landfill." In addition a number of Valley VOTE Committee reports covering various topics of interest were presented.

### **Wayde Hunter**



Wayde Hunter, presented an update status of Sunshine Canyon Landfill NE of Granada Hills. He is President of the North Valley Coalition of Concerned Citizens and has been involved as part of Sunshine Canyon Landfill Citizens Advisory Committee for many years. He also heads the North Valley Coalition for air.

This was an update to his presentation last June when there were several promises that Sunshine Canyon use would become more limited and operated as a good neighbor to Valley residents. He reported to us that improvements have not materialized as promised and that there are many reasons for increased concern.

Odors permeating the community air remain a major issue of concern. The site is used and controlled by both LA City and LA County. Wayde noted that complaints about the Sunshine Canyon landfill operation are increasing exponentially since the 2008 change in management. The South Coast Air Quality Management Updated Information Summary shows complaints about Sunshine Canyon were greater than ten times that of the sum total of all fifteen other active landfills being monitored. 20% of all AQMD complaints came from Granada Hills.

His report noted a timely news article in Daily News that same day. The promised reduction of refuse storage made in 2009 has not accomplished and options are getting worse. The waste being dumped tends to be even more concentrated with gas generating materials because of the separate recycling efforts. Two years of studies made by Sunshine Canyon, City, and County management have not been useful in reducing use or impacts.

Wayde informed us AQMD appears to have very limited expertise about these kinds of air

quality issues. There is reliance on industry experts. The pipelines needed to burn gas generation are inadequate. There are mitigation plans written but, we were told, the current status of gas burn off is only up to the 2003 planned levels. To meet the promised levels of burn off venting wells need to be added at a rate of 7-10 more per week and a horizontal gas collector system is required. Larger pipe diameter is also needed to handle the volume of gases. Misting system use is now required as well to reduce odors along with better monitoring to ensure that freshly dumped materials are covered daily.

The government and active community leaders are pushing for insurance requirements to cover any contamination cleanup. Waste company people trying to allow self insurance.

Major problems with current PM 2.5 output from burning gas flares that reduce odors. New types of clean up may be required. An April 18 upcoming public meeting is to address this issue.

We also found out about a quirk in the "system" which prevents AQMD from imposing any fines for violations until the causes are resolved! Since this is a progress in work and not resolved there are no fines in the foreseeable future?!!

## **David Hernandez**



David Hernandez is a veteran, businessman, and active San Fernando Valley civic community leader. He is a candidate for Congress representing the 29th district of the San Fernando Valley in the June 6 election. David has been active in the Valley for over twenty years working on issues such as public access, education, environment, animal rights and equestrian trails, homelessness, youth programs, land use issues, and other quality of life issues. He is a board member of numerous local organizations such as the LA Mission College Foundation.

David Hernandez talked about the Census redistricting process that created a new district stretching from Newhall all the way south to the near the Ventura freeway. He told us that the district is 68% Hispanic (half million people) who are all subject to the same issues as rest of middle class. He noted that governmental costs at every level are spiraling out of control: City, State, Fed and that everyone is impacted. People want quality of life improvements and that can only come from strong fiscal controls.

David mentioned that there is a push to close our local post office and that he wants to be there to fight for his community.

His goal is to be the first independent elected in the Valley. Various community leaders have endorsed David from all sides of political spectrum including the NAACP.

David told us that much of his efforts over the last 10 years has been in support of this campaign; he just didn't realize it at the time. He fights for what he feels is the right thing to do. We must ensure resources are properly allocated and maintained. Hansen Dam is an example

of lost opportunities; limited recreation opportunities have been squandered.

David opposes money going to politically connected individuals and instead wants to foster public-private partnership opportunities. He wants much stronger accountability rules. \$700 million of Federal dollars were received by Los Angeles last year for job training and area improvements yet, “the real world is that there has been little improvements.” He used an aviation mechanics program at Van Nuys as an example of where money can be well spent and result in high paying jobs.

He says that we must put community first and use our resources properly. He intends to work with all spectrums of the political spectrum. We all have a stake in what happens here. He encourages all to participate in the upcoming elections and be sure to attend the May 5 candidate forum.

## Valley VOTE Committee Reports

### **Veteran News Update -- Ernie Hilger**

Ernie provided a very positive report about the ACLU lawsuit against the Veterans Administration. Valley Vote supports this effort to ensure that the Westwood VA facility is used for vets. The VA filed several motions to dismiss the lawsuit but was rebuffed by the judge. The lawsuit will continue and discovery will begin for the 78 arguments that the VA attempted to have summarily rejected. The judge’s opinion stated that the VA is required to address the mental issues of veterans and must aid the homeless as per the purpose of the Westwood VA facility.

### **Membership – Richard Leyner**

We invite everyone to our Valley Vote Board Meetings on the third Monday of each month. We encourage everyone to join Valley VOTE and to bring other interested citizens with them to our meetings. We have nominal annual dues that support our efforts; member (\$25), Board member (\$50). Go to [www.ValleyVote.org](http://www.ValleyVote.org) for more information.

### **Occupied by the LA Housing Department -- Vic Viereck**

City of Los Angeles Housing Department policies have become even more oppressive to senior citizen property owners. Besides atrocious penalties for paying required Rent Registration fees just one day late, the LAHD is punishing senior citizens (and other apartment owners) for not renting out all of their apartments that are subjugated under the city’s Rent Stabilization Ordinance.

Apartment owners who let relatives live in some of their apartments are required to file annual exemptions in order to avoid the Registration and SCEP fees. Owners who prefer to keep units vacant are required to file and record a vacancy exemption form at the County Recorder’s office

by the end of January. The recording costs \$18, and there is also a notary fee.

The City Council's and Mayor's talk about providing more affordable housing and attracting more employers to Los Angeles is contradicted by their actions regarding the Rent Stabilization Ordinance. The vacant apartments are somewhat "Occupied" by the LA Housing Department.

### **Airport Report -- Denny Schneider.**

The airport is coming, the airport is coming! Los Angeles World Airports expects to complete their environmental review of LAX expansion alternatives in June. LAWA continues to insist that there is no preferred alternative yet, but it's hard not to notice a smirk on the faces of LAWA representatives as they deny their preference for moving the north runway complex 260' toward Westchester and Playa Del Rey. The amount of time allocated for review of this mammoth document is controversial. Local jurisdictions and community groups have requested 120 days. LAWA wants to allow 45 days.

For anyone feeling that a regional network of airports is critical to ensuring sufficient capacity and convenience, disappointment may be in your future. FAA projections for 2030 identify large growth at LAX and little elsewhere. A major topic of discussion at City Hall this week will be whether or not and how LA will conduct a fair and unbiased evaluation of the options for management of LA/Ontario Airport. The Inland Empire wants local control whereas the folks at LAWA contend they are doing a good job despite the 40% drop in air service over the past several years. I wonder aloud why LAWA is so eager to keep this airport when any money that they generate from operations is restricted to airport uses and can't be used to supplement the ongoing LA City budget deficit.

Two other topics of importance to Valley residents discussed were: 1) The LA Helicopter Noise Relief Act of 2011 (HR 2677/S 2019). Sponsored by Berman, co-authored by Hahn, Schiff, Sherman, & Waxman and 2) So.Cal.Metroplex airspace redesign will start about October of this year. We can expect at least some changes in the flight paths around our airports.

### **Transportation Betterment's to Serve Valley Residents - Bart Reed**

Transit Coalition Executive Director Bart Reed spoke about efforts to improve Metrolink service between the San Fernando Valley and Palmdale. Metro staff recently produced a report (presented to the agency Planning and Programming Committee) that presented a list of improvements Metro could undertake to decrease travel times on the Antelope Valley Line. Part of the corridor may also be shared with statewide high-speed rail under the newly proposed "blended approach." This would allow Metro to tap state funds dedicated to HSR and build improvements on the San Fernando Road segment that would benefit both conventional and HSR services.

Reed also discussed the new CSUN Tiger Team. This group of student interns recently finished an initial survey of bus riders in the Northeast Valley. The Tiger Team also did a field survey that

identified unmet Americans with Disabilities Act requirements at bus stops, span of service, and bus frequencies. The team is working on a larger and more refined survey that will better quantify these needs.

People are encouraged to attend his Transit Coalition meetings the Last Tuesday of each month and review the website [www.thetransitcoalition.us](http://www.thetransitcoalition.us) .

**The next regular monthly meeting of Valley VOTE will be on Monday, April 16, 2012 at Galpin Ford.**

***Valley VOTE Mission Statement***

*Valley VOTE, a diverse coalition of San Fernando Valley residents, businesspeople, educators, community activists, and organizations, is committed to exploring and fostering the implementation of programs that empower the people of the San Fernando Valley and the City of Los Angeles, to improve local governance, education and public participation on policy matters.*

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