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**VALLEY VOTE REPORT: February 20, 2017 MEETING**

**Minutes accumulated by Denny Schneider, Secretary**

**Galpin Ford - 2nd Fl. Meeting Room, 15505 Roscoe Boulevard, North Hills, CA 91343**

*Valley Vote meetings are held to address critical public policy issues impacting the San Fernando Valley. The next meeting will be March 20, 2017*

## **Robert Green, Deputy Chief of the Valley Bureau, LAPD**

Deputy Chief Green is responsible for policing of the San Fernando Valley. He told us that we're the most underpoliced big city in the USA based on the number of square miles that comprise Los Angeles. Crime is again up in the City although the vast majority of Valley issues are non-violent, property related crimes. He mentioned several CA bills and propositions which have resulted in less punishment and early releases for offenders. AB 109 released some non-violent offenders early and others' sentences were shortened or incarcerated in County Jail instead of State Prisons. He singled out Prop 36 which reduced some 3 strike convictions, Prop. 47 which further reduced many crimes to misdemeanors while concurrently reducing punishments (and failing to fund psychological treatments). Prop.57, while also similar to 47, reduced punishments for possession of drugs. Since passage of Prop 57 the incentives to enter drug rehab programs have been reduced. Because drug habits are expensive there are more property crimes committed to pay for addictions. Home burglaries are considered non-violent and have minimum punishments.

Deputy Green reminded us that service calls continue to increase yet LAPD is operating with the same size staff as in place five years ago. 360-400 new hires are needed per year just to maintain staff. There has been a reduction of 800 civilian staff over the past three years. Efficiency is impacted as jail staff and property room monitors are deduced.

Our Valley officers are experts in de-escalation of situations. They receive about 21 calls/day for mental crisis in San Fernando Valley yet there is seldom deadly force used. Tasers are issued to all officers and bean bag guns are being placed in each vehicle cabin.

Officer shootings are down. All are subjected to bias training. Further, for the past 2-3 years they have a full time risk manager.

The LAPD reaches out to the community. The most recent quarterly multi-faith forum was held at Temple Beth Hillel in Valley Village.

## **Issam Najm, President, Porter Ranch Neighborhood Council**

Mr. Najm discussed the status of the Aliso Canyon gas storage facility which held as much as 86 billion cubic feet of natural gas. A substantial gas release and ensuing evacuation occurred in October 2015 when a well casing blew which created a 25' x 50' crater that spewed over 100,000 tons of contaminants into the air over a four month period.

To reduce the high pressure a substantial amount of gas stored at the facility was removed; only 15 billion cubic feet is now stored in the facility. The major leak was finally sealed in February, but health problems are persisting for residents who were cleared to return to their homes. Minor leaks have continued. Residents are continuing to exhibit nausea and other symptoms.

The precise cause of the casing failure and issues is not determined. The City of LA is hampered to protect its citizens as the canyon is on County land and the city residential areas are adjacent to the canyon. Penalties are not necessarily paid to the victims. Further, different agencies regulate the gas storage overall process; DOGGR (a state agency) regulates the gas storage when underground while the PUC (Public Utilities Commission) regulates during gas transmission, and the AQMD (Air Quality Management District) gets jurisdiction upon gas release.

A recent fine imposition on the gas company resulted in a \$40M general health study, \$1M to study this specific issue, and \$6M to the agency for general operations.

Getting detailed certainty of the cause of the casing failure will be difficult at best. A recent bill introduced to protect this community is SB57 which calls for no reopening of this storage facility unless the actual failure cause and mechanism can be verified. In the mean time, this community lives in an area which can continue to have issues.

**A Valley VOTE press release supporting Measure S was distributed. It can also be found at [www.ValleyVOTE.org](http://www.ValleyVOTE.org).**

## **Valley VOTE Member Reports**

### **Victor N. Viereck - Stagnation Measure**

There is a hotly contested measure on the March 7 ballot. It's Measure S, and it has a lot to do with real estate, particularly housing. A driving force behind it is opposing supposed corruption involved in planning and building some developments. Such practices have probably been around for generations. Although new measures and regulations attempting Neighborhood Integrity would create Stagnation for currently targeted projects, in some (or many) cases corruption would find its way around new restrictions. One detail not disclosed in the Voter Information Pamphlet is when the two-year moratorium starts-upon passage of Measure S, or upon the date of an application for project approval.

Besides the Stagnation S would create, the impact (from reduced construction) on housing, jobs, and tax revenue would be destructive. Advocates of S oppose

developments that include expensive apartments, but claim their program would allow construction of AFFORDABLE HOUSING. Regardless of planned or supposed rental rates, availability of more apartments has a tendency to lower rents. Since the City of Los Angeles has a Rent Stabilization Ordinance (known as rent control), a new Rent Registration requirement, and a new Exclusive Trash Hauling program, less people will be interested in apartment ownership. So called Affordable Housing properties have their own problems. Apartments included in "Affordable Housing" have some less affordable aspects. "Affordable" apartments result in higher rents for other tenants in the same property, and/or less rental income for the owner. When the rental income is lower, so are tax revenues from property tax, income tax, and business license tax. But if the apartment building is owned by a non-profit, it is tax exempt. That certainly is not affordable for the various governmental levels (that we, as taxpayers are required to support).

So, even though some supposedly harmful projects would be prevented, the rental housing industry would be Stagnated even moreso.

*Victor N. Viereck 818-985 9174*

### **Ernie Hilger - Veterans Housing and Health Care**

I AM A LIFE MEMBER OF THE DISABLED AMERICAN VETERANS (DAV). Our organization has assisted over 301,000 veterans with their claims in 2015 and millions of veterans since its founding on September 25, 1920. Topics covered:

- Conditional USE Permit (CUP) LA Council File 17-0020 - WLA VA & Brentwood School Expansion
- PLUM Committee Hearing at Los Angeles City Hall on February 7, 2017
- Veteran Centric Policy West LA VA
- Community Veterans Oversight Engagement Board (CVOEB)

The work product of the CUP Council File 17-0200 is the product of a flawed process which is in violation of the bipartisan/bicameral Federal Law 5936, West Los Angeles Leasing Act of 2016, signed by the President on September 29, 2016.

This legislation codifies the legislative changes, complete with timelines for construction and integrated veterans medical care for the renewal of the rededicated "NATIONAL SOLDIERS HOME" on the West LA VA campus and the implementation of the new 'Veteran Centric Only Policy' for the West LA VA campus stated in the legislation..

The West Los Angeles Leasing Act of 2016 legislation spells out the specific communication processes to be employed to build trust between the Veterans, the Community and the VA to keep all parties on the same page, to prevent "Masters of their own interests from prevailing to the detriment of Veterans and their Families."

The veterans community at large was not informed of the Brentwood School Expansion plans and the proposed hauling routes through the West LA VA Campus.

The Act establishes and empowers the Community Veterans Oversight Engagement Board (CVOEB) to provide advice and recommendations on the implementation of the draft master plan approved by the secretary on January 28, 2016.

The veterans Community is going on record to the City because the VA has sent mixed messages by their words and actions. To this date the CVOEB has not been consulted and has therefore not exercised its statutory function with respect to construction truck access or Brentwood School's expansion.

Ernie Hilger [818 926 6892](tel:8189266892)

## **Ralph Kroy Sunshine Canyon**

Wayde Hunter, as your guest speaker, brought you up to date at the last meeting on the SCAQMD Stipulated Order for Abatement of Odors, and the most significant mitigation condition they approved was to have only the transfer/long-haul trailers from Republic, the City and from third parties banned year-round from entering the landfill until 9 am rather than banning all trash vehicles until 9 am and reducing the trash accepted to 6,000 tons per day.

The reduction in the transfer/long-haul trailers began on December 15, 2016, however, in January 2017 there were 200 calls to the SCAQMD reporting odors (a 100% increase from last year) resulting in 6 Notice of Violation (NOV) being issued.... So, it appears that once again, the approved mitigation to abate the odors is not enough to bring relief to the community.

The SCAQMD eight-year tally for odors reported (January 2009 through January 2017) now stands at 10,173 odor complaints and 200 NOVs.

BFI/Republic is due back in front of the SCAQMD Hearing Board once again on March 1, 2017 at 9 am in Diamond Bar to hear their traffic plan plus if the curbside trash collection trucks can be rescheduled until 9 am. We believe that this rescheduling will not occur as the City was uncooperative in even rescheduling their transfer/long-haul trucks.

BFI/Republic has appealed the NOV issued by County Regional Planning on October 25, 2016 for its failure to comply with requests from County Public Works for information, and a hearing will be held on March 7, 2017 at 9 am at Regional Planning, Room 150, 320 W. Temple, Los Angeles. It is not known at this time, whether or not it will be open to the public.

And finally, the clock is ticking under an Order to Abate from the County Department of Public Health which was issued on November 9, 2016 for not taking adequate measures to sufficiently address complaints under Condition 45 of the CUP, and it further states that the landfill "must abate the conditions at the landfill which have been the cause of the repeated air quality violations and persistent odors which constitute the nuisance by March 30, 2017".

Ralph Kroy [REKroy@aol.com](mailto:REKroy@aol.com)

## **Airport Report – Denny Schneider**

LAX traffic continues to expand. Regional airports are now also expanding as well. Ontario Airport, consistently losing passengers to LAX prior to return of local control in November, increased 0.8% in December and Southwest Airlines started regular service to Dallas in January.

Aircraft noise complaints related to LAX are increasing. Areas as far east as Monterey Park, La Habra Heights, and even Huntington Park are expressing grave concerns—and this is before the NextGen, GPS controlled traffic controls, will concentrate flights over some residents as changes to the So. Cal. Metroplex starts in March. It is difficult to identify ways to work with the FAA to reduce the impacts.

LAX is starting approval of its Landside Access Modernization Program (LAMP). The first approval hearing is on March 2<sup>nd</sup> at the Board of Airport Commission. The Final Environmental Impact Report was released at the end of last week. Significant changes to the LAX Plan and LAX Specific Plan are being sought. LA Planning held a hearing on changes two weeks ago. True to form, edited documents were released to the public on the day of the hearing with comments due within a week. ARSAC discovered several issues whereby LAWA removed control and mitigation requirements. LAWA says that requirements will be added back into a Mitigation and Monitoring Report Requirement. The documents also give more authority to the BOAC and LAWA by reducing requirements for LA Planning and City Council approvals.

The LAMP project implementation is moving forward. Preparatory projects begin later this year. The first target milestones will be completion of the basic project in 2024 before the desired LA Olympic Games. The design of the project is not optimal in the opinion of ARSAC, but we are hoping that it will be functional. Because of the recent MOU with LA ARSAC is allowed to provide comments about any potential improvements but is not allowed to take any legal action to slow or stop the LAMP.

There are about 500 homeless people living in Manchester Square where the LAMP is to begin. There is significant concern about what will happen to these people and how to provide services to them before groundbreaking later this year.

For more information: Denny Schneider, ARSAC  
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*Denny Schneider, President ARSAC [www.RegionalSolution.org](http://www.RegionalSolution.org) [213-675-1817](tel:213-675-1817)*

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**Valley VOTE is a 501c4 nonprofit with NO PAID STAFF. Your ANNUAL dues helps us to continue to meet our goals. Member \$25; Board Member - \$50. Thanks!!! Mail your check to Valley VOTE - 14622 Ventura Blvd. #424 Sherman Oaks CA. 91403 We thank you for your support.**

### **Valley VOTE Mission Statement**

**Valley VOTE is a diverse coalition of San Fernando Valley residents, business people, educators, community activists, and organizations, 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. We meet monthly to address key policy issues and hear reports from our standing committee chairs. For additional information about Valley VOTE, for an upcoming meeting agenda, or for previous meeting reports and press releases, we encourage you to go to our web site - [Valleyvote.org](http://Valleyvote.org). The press and public are**

***invited to attend our meetings. Our next meeting will be Monday evening,  
February 20, 2017***