

MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING
OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS
OF THE BEACHWOOD CANYON
NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION
October 20, 2011

The Board of Directors of The Beachwood Canyon Neighborhood Association held a regularly scheduled quarterly meeting at The Beachwood Café pursuant to statutory notice. In attendance were Fran Reichenbach, Larry Markes, George Abrahams, Jack Fitzgerald, Missy Kelly, Nina van Tassel and Gary Wilmes, constituting a quorum of the elected and serving Directors.

President Fran Reichenbach, acting as Chairperson, called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m.

Officers from the Hollywood Division of the Los Angeles Police Department presented a Crime and Safety Report. Senior Lead Officer Maggie Dillard informed us that there had been a slight reduction in crimes reported for the twelve-week period since our last meeting in July compared to the same period before our summer meeting. As previously reported, the arrests of several people for auto break-ins dramatically reduced burglaries and thefts from motor vehicles. However, severe crimes (aggravated assaults and robberies) are up slightly and for the first time in recent years, there were rapes (2) reported on the borders of our area.

Other than these items, Officer Dillard reported no serious or violent crimes since our last meeting. A copy of the crime report map Officer Dillard presented to the meeting is attached to these minutes.

Officer Dillard informed us about a website (www.NIXLE.com) which provides timely mobile alerts from our police and fire departments. Registering on this website will result in prompt safety notifications, and texting your zip code to 888777 will put you on the list for SMS notifications only. Maggie also noted the problems presented by unoccupied buildings. Newly vacant homes should be reported either to her or to the City Building and Safety Department.

In a question-and-answer period, two residents (Aaron Goodstein and Nick Egan) told us that they have had difficulty in communicating or following up with the Hollywood Division on crimes in their buildings. In one of these events, thieves were caught on video camera stealing copper wiring from a house under remodeling. However, the building manager has not received any follow-up from Hollywood detectives about this investigation. Officer Dillard promised to look into this case. (Later, Captain Girmala met with these individuals after leaving the meeting and discussed these issues at length.)

Captain Bea Girmala, the commander of Hollywood Division, addressed the meeting next. She told us about the Parole Impact Team that her division has been the first to implement. This unit has been so successful – returning from 14 to 28 parolees to jail for committing other crimes – that LAPD Chief Beck has commended the Division and directed that all other Divisions establish such a unit, particularly in light of recent legal developments resulting in the release of a large number of convicted criminals from incarceration.

Captain Girmala then informed us about the homeless outreach efforts each Senior Lead Officer makes each week. LAPD in general and she in particular are aware of the various problems presented by the transient and homeless, not all of whom are committing crimes. She noted that in the current economy, her resources are stretched thin. For example, the current Occupy LA protest encampment has resulted in the transfer of three of her patrol cars to downtown for the duration of that event. As to scavengers, Captain Girmala informed us – many for the first time – that if the license plates of “pickers” are reported to City authorities, the City contacts the registered owners of these vehicles by letter informing them that their observed activities are illegal. This appears to cut down on the amount of Thursday night/Friday morning scavenging.

Captain Girmala and SLO Dillard then reminded us that one popular method for thieves or robbers to gain access to residences is to knock on the door and see what reaction they get. They told us that if you are home, rather than silently ignore the contact, a better policy is to speak through the closed door and tell the intruder(s) to go away or you will call 911. Also, once again, do not leave doors or windows unlocked, no matter how secure you believe your particular building is.

Traffic Officer (Motorcycle) Pete Cordero spoke to us about vehicular issues. He promised that he would have a speed monitor temporarily installed at 1929 Beachwood to reduce speeding. Sharon Shapiro from Councilman LaBonge’s office commented that speed can be deceptive, and that cars we think are exceeding the speed limit may not be. She invited us to go along on a stake-out to learn more about the problem.

George Abrahams then presented a report on the status of our efforts to reduce aviation noise in the Canyon. He informed us that since our summer meeting, he and Fran have started the process of obtaining a Special Federal Aviation Regulation (SFAR) for the Mount Lee area. An SFAR actually requires a Congressional legislative process. Copies of the Petition to the US Department of Transportation was passed out, and a copy is attached to these Minutes. The Petition asks that aircraft maintain a minimum altitude of 2,000 feet above terrain over our designated area, the boundaries of which are shown by the map attached to the Petition. Larry Markes made a motion, seconded by Missy Kelly, to support the SFAR effort. The motion was carried by unanimous vote.

The meeting then turned to approval of the minutes of the Board’s regular summer meeting on July 21. After discussion, a motion was made by George Abrahams to accept the minutes as read, seconded by Nina van Tassel. The motion was carried by unanimous vote.

Brief public discussion on topics not on the agenda followed. Gregory Randall stated that he had recently received approval to repaint the intersection of Beachwood and Scenic, including reflective paint on the street surface itself to warn people about the Stop sign at that point. He also reported that he had been the witness to what turned out to be a crime, although he did not realize it at the time: he saw three men removing plumbing tools and supplies from what was obviously a work van. They turned out not to be the repairmen. Gregory suggested that we warn any workers hired for repairs to lock their vehicles even if they are in our driveways – our neighborhood is not as safe as we imagine.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:30 p.m.

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