

WISPPA
Women Involved in South Pasadena Political Action
July 8, 2017 Minutes
Cavalry Presbyterian Church

Attendance:

Betty Emirhanian, Kate Joyce, Ron Rosen, Gary Pia, Camille Levee, Dollie Chapman, Lynn Downey, Gloria Kilian, Paul Kilian, Sara Johnson, Barbara Sinclair, Melisa Wilson, Howard Spector, Yvonne Pine, Sally Kilby, Dick Hegelson, Diane Crum, Bruce Crum, Gretchen Robinette, Bianca Richards, Betsy Roth, Kay Mouradian, Lynda Sullivan, Lela Bissner, Harold Bissner, Becky Thompson, Virginia Robbins, Diana Mahmud, Rose Lizeano, Kelly Koldus, Judith Harris, Mary Ferrero, Michael Cacciotti

Welcome

Bianca Richards welcomed everyone at 9:10 a.m. She recognized visitors.

“American House” Play at Fremont Centre Theatre

Ms. Becky Roth was introduced, as well as another guest from Little Candle Productions. They wanted to let the WISPPA organization know that they will be staging a new play at the Fremont Centre. The play is “American House” and is from a woman playwright and the director will be a woman. The play focuses on the period of the great recession and homeowner’s struggles at that time.

The company is encouraging WISPPA members to plan on seeing the play or to organize a fundraiser around the play, such as buying out an evening just for WISPPA members and guests. The theater holds around 75 guests and the tickets are about \$15.00 each. Ticket costs are less Thursday and Sundays performances.

Sands of Silence Film

Betty Emirhanian shared that the film regarding sex trafficking and abuse, which WISPPA was able to view a preview, has been completed. We have the opportunity to help sponsor a screening in November of the finished film. If anyone knows of any other groups that might be interested in sponsoring a screening, let Betty know. There is a thought to have survivors speak at a screening, though there a cost for the guests .

Yvonne Pine

She shared information about a fundraiser for “The Studio” that helps young girls and teens. The event is planned for July 23, 2017.

June Minutes

A motion was made by Gary Pia and seconded by Michael Cacciotti for the approval of the minutes. Membership voted and approved the minutes.

Guest Speaker-Honorable Mayor Michael Cacciotti “State of the City”

Bianca introduced the guest speaker, the Honorable Mayor Michael Cacciotti.

Mayor Cacciotti opened his PowerPoint presentation talking about new business growth in the city. He shared how later in the day, he would be at the new fitness business “CrossFit”, helping to launch and open the business.

Mayor Cacciotti shared how one of the things that make the City of South Pasadena unique is the involvement of its residents. The city has 12-15 commissions and advisory groups.

The City is looking for a new City Manager and the search is underway, after the departure of City Manager Sergio Gonzalez. The search team has narrowed down the list of potential candidates and interviews will take place in September.

Mayor Cacciotti gave an overview of the City’s budget. The budget is about \$26 million with revenue from predominantly property taxes and the revenue from the UUT tax.

He shared how the City Council has been proactive in addressing long neglected services, such as the Water System and our streets and sidewalks. As an example, it was shared that in the year 2001 and for a number of years, the budget for streets was 0(zero) to \$8,000. Now we are allocating \$3 million a year to fixing the roads.

Most of the City’s budget is directed to public safety. We have been very responsible with the City’s finances and have built up a reserve, but we will be facing large expenditures in the future due to the state requiring increasing contributions to the state’s retirement fund, California Public Employees Retirement Fund (CalPERS.) The estimated return on the fund’s investments have been falling short of the projection, so cities are going to have to contribute more in coming years.

Gary Pia shared how the retirement plans are based on a defined benefit plan and those obligations have to be met.

Mayor Cacciotti shared that the City was in the midst of updating its General Plan and the Mission Street and Fair Oaks Specific Plan. He thanked WISPPA for its assistance in promoting the process.

The capital improvement projects were highlighted and these included the complete re-building of the Wilson Reservoir and the Garfield Reservoir, which opens in August. Next will be the Graves Reservoir. We are allocating funding for street and sidewalk repairs. The first phase of the Monterey Road project has been completed. We are also continuing our work on the sewer improvements.

The City will be working on the Arroyo Trail Project and is reviewing all City facilities. Everyone should be proud that the City is “green” with all-electric maintenance equipment being used in our parks. We are a member of the American Green Zone Alliance. We are also pushing the South Pasadena School District to use electric equipment on their campuses.

Mayor Cacciotti spoke about the Rialto and that there is a sub-committee in contact with Mosaic Church, who is the new lease holder of the property.

Future efforts include, the City moving to be part of Los Angeles County’s new Community Choice Energy Effort. We will be able to be in on the “ground floor,” as the utility is developed and be able to help shape its direction.

In 2018 the UUT will come up for a vote and this tax is critical to the City’s budget.

Another key issue that the City will be facing, will be the issue of storm water and how much the City is going to have to pay to keep storm water from flowing into the LA River and the ocean.

The Mayor and City Council continue their support of “Beyond the 710” and efforts to expand local, mobile opportunities, The Gold Line will expand into Claremont and it is hoped into San Bernardino County. The Mayor spoke about a new concern over safety on the Gold Line, as the new security plan is for LAPD to cover the trains within the City of LA and Los Angeles County Sheriffs to cover everything else. Our issue is that we are right after LAPD leave their jurisdiction, causing a security gap.

The Mayor then took some questions. Someone asked about the area near Pasadena Avenue with the mulch. The suggestion was to put borders around the mulch to prevent branches and stuff mixing in.

City Council Liaison Report

Ron reported that at the June 21st meeting of the City Council, the issue of immigration was discussed. Also, a Historic Preservation Ordinance was also discussed.

Public Safety Commission Report

A new fire truck has been added to the City's fleet. There was also a recent event to recognize the Neighborhood Watch Block Captains.

Membership Report

Dollie Chapman shared that it was time for the annual dues and that she would take payments. We currently have approximately 84 active members.

Future Meeting

Bianca shared that the August meeting will feature a presentation on Climate Change and the Superintendent of the South Pasadena School District will be the featured speaker at the September meeting.

Announcements

The Summer Concerts in the Park are starting for six Sundays.

The "Wine and Song" and the "Wine and Jazz" nights are taking place at the Golf Course. It might be nice to plan a date for WISPPA members to attend together.

Meeting was adjourned at 10:44 a.m.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Kim Hughes