

**WISPPA**  
**Women Involved in South Pasadena Political Action**  
**January 7, 2017 Minutes**  
**Cavalry Presbyterian Church**

**Attendance:**

Janet Braun, Tricia Sjogren, Bianca Richards, Dollie Chapman, Gary Pia, Ellen Diagle, Dana Ferrar, Betty Emirhanian, Kelly Rivers, Ron Rosen, Craig Phillips, Camille Levee, Grace Kung, Talin Mangioglu, Waynna Kato, Joe Potts, Ellen Wood, Alan Ehrlich, State Senator Anthony Portantino, Sally Kilby, Lynda Sullivan, Laurie Wheeler, Larry Natsume, Vic Robinette, Lela Bissner, Frank Farrar, Alison Farrar, Gail Maltun, Marina Khubesrian, Katrina Rerez Ferguson, Beverly Bieber, Linda Miller Chief Art Miller, Ed Donnaly, Megan Ernst, Vicky Bartlett, Bart Bartholomew, Mary Ferrero, Diana Mahmud, Joe Primuth, Judith Harris, Kim Hughes

**Mingle Reception**

The plan and schedule of the meeting changed somewhat, in that a welcome and mingle period proceeded the more formal discussions and presentations.

**Welcome**

Dana Ferrar opened the meeting and welcomed everyone at 8:57 a.m. She introduced the Honorable State Senator Anthony Portantino, who was attending the meeting. Dana explained that the business portion of the WISPPA meeting would take place and then our guest speakers or presentations would take place.

**City Council Report**

Ron Rosen presented the report. The City of South Pasadena is starting the process of updating the city's General Plan and Mission Street Plan. These plans have not been updated in decades.

There are opportunities for the public to be part of the planning process. There will be focus groups and an Advisory Group.

The City of South Pasadena's City Clerk's Office will now start to issue passports, which will be a benefit service for the citizens of the city.

The South Pasadena City Council addressed a concern about problem people at the library. People that cause disruptions and problems can be banned for 30 days.

At the December 21<sup>st</sup> City Council meeting it was reported that 82% of the city's registered voters participated in the November 2016 election. The City Council also passed a resolution affirming the city as welcoming and supporting diversity.

There was a theft of tools at the City of South Pasadena's Tournament of Roses float site and tools were stolen. Donations have helped to make up for the loss.

At the December 7<sup>th</sup> City Council meeting there was continued discussion about possible rent control for the city. This discussion will continue.

### **Public Safety Commission Report**

Ellen provided an update. The commission is in transition, as commission member Janet Braun has been termed out and new members will join the commission.

### **Membership Report**

A report will be presented at the next meeting.

### **Budget Report**

Ellen put forth the suggestion of developing an annual budget and putting the budget on-line. She would like to get feedback on the concept. The current organization balance is \$7,400.

### **Development Committee Report**

Gale Maltun also commented that the city is developing an update for the General Plan and the Mission Street plan. The city would like resident involvement and WISPPA members should join the various focus groups and planning groups. The web site to find out more information is **[www.plansouthpasadena.org](http://www.plansouthpasadena.org)**.

There is some movement in regards to downtown development in that Citizen's Bank is considering developing their property.

The owners of Panda Express are interested in developing the property they own on Mission Road that currently houses the vacant bakery and Fiesta Grande restaurant. There was a public meeting where the developers presented the design concept for the new development, which would be residential and commercial. There would be approximately 30 residential units as part of the development.

A key issue for the city is the Landscape Maintenance and Lighting District election. The fees that support the upkeep for the city's trees, parks and lighting have not been adjusted in about 20 years. Ballots were mailed to all property owners and they can vote in the election to modify the fees. The concern is that many of the property owners do not live in the city and will not support adjusting the minimal fee adjustments. Residents need to support the fee adjustment, as the city needs to support the urban forest.

There is no new information on the Rialto Theater.

There will be a joint City Council and Planning Commission meeting on January 25, 2017 to discuss the updating of the General Plan.

### **Review of Minutes**

A motion for the approval of the minutes was made by Betty Emirhanian and seconded by Camille Levee. The minutes were approved by membership oral vote.

### **League of Women Voters**

WISPPA will be supporting an upcoming women's health league event as part of women's month. The motion to support the event was made by Ellen Wood and seconded by Lela Bissner. Motion was passed by oral vote.

### **Promotional Products**

Bianca shared the idea of developing items such as a WISPPA logo coffee mug. State Senator Portatino offered to contribute \$720.00 in support of the mugs.

### **Introductions**

Attendees were recognized and those included Linda Hess from Urban Harvesters, Laurie Wheeler from the South Pasadena Chamber of Commerce. It was also mentioned that Linda Klausen broke her hip and is recuperating.

### **Announcements**

The WISPPA sponsored electrical box art project has been completed and can be viewed on Huntington Drive. The overall project is sponsored by SPARC and the organization was recently recognized with the "Image Award" at the 2016 "Crunch Party."

### **Guest Speaker City of South Pasadena Police Chief Art Miller**

Janet Braun introduced Chief Miller wife Linda Miller.

Mrs. Miller shared that she and Chief Miller have been married for 34 years and have known each other for 38 years. She was there when we started on the City of Los Angeles Police Department. He started on probation. It was interesting as one of his first jobs was to go undercover in a high school to break-up drug activity.

The job required long hours for Art Miller, because not only did he have long shift hours, but also had to attend court sessions. They kept their communication and support going by leaving each other notes and recordings.

Mrs. Miller shared how Chief Miller was surprised when he came to the City of South Pasadena's Police Department, as the morale was very low and there were no outreach and community programs. There was also not a lot of outreach to other police departments, nor the county or the state.

#### Chief Miller-The Softer Side of Police Work

Chief Miller shared that when he arrived at the City of South Pasadena we was surprised about the condition of the department, The first week he arrived at South Pasadena, he reached out and met with the officers and the union. What he heard was "Just lead us." In order to lead, Chief Miller needed to find out the "needs" of the department.

At the first Public Safety Commission meeting the commission asked for a copy of the police department's budget, Chief Miller was surprised that the budget had not been traditionally shared with the commission.

Chief Miller sees the department as a "Can Do Police Department." He added that "the department might be small, but they do big things."

Chief Miller said that police work can include, crime suppression, parking, but it also includes open houses for the public, supporting Neighborhood Watches, and engaging the community.

Efforts to reach out the community include hosting "Coffee with a Cop," hosting open houses, supporting programs such as the Women's Self Defense Classes.

It was shared that over 240 women and have taken part in the defense classes. A similar class for teens is in development.

One of the issues that come up is the issue of the homeless. It is not illegal to be homeless. The City of South Pasadena has been working with the cities of Arcadia, Monrovia and Irwindale with a Mental Evaluation Response Team to

assist in dealing with homeless and other people that could be demonstrating mental issues.

As part of the strategy of interacting with the homeless, the police team works with the "Operation Chill" program. The program is promoted at the Farmer's Market and thru other outreach. Those in need can receive a bag that includes socks, hygiene items and such. The bags are developed in conjunction with Holy Family.

As part of engaging with the community, the South Pasadena Police Department attends Thanksgiving and Holiday events, as well as participates in the national "Pink Patch" program that raises funds for women's breast cancer research. The force has raised \$325,000 for the City of Hope. The force also supports the South Pasadena's Women's Club "Operation Cookie" efforts.

Again, one of the issues facing the city is homelessness, though not as large a program as other cities, the City of South Pasadena has around 15 identified homeless residents. We know them by name and have photos of them. During the day, we can add another 20-25 that come into the city.

Chief Miller shared and passed around a note from a homeless person named "Cowboy" who wanted to thank one of our officers for providing some peanut butter for food. Peanut butter was selected, as it provides nutrition and does not need refrigeration.

Chief Miller said that his department is made up a team that are public servants who build bridges and creates possibilities. He always wants to have the department move forward.

Chief Miller responded to questions.

One question was about the convalescent hospital. When the chief arrived he found the facility was being run by an owner who has making around \$9 million a year at the facility. It took a while and working with the state and other agencies, but the facility has been turned around.

A question came up about the crossing guards. Chief Miller shared how the department has now partnered with an outside company to provide the crossing guard services for the schools, as the outside company can provide a high level of service and our officers can focus on other needs.

A question came up about technology. The department is moving to add more interactive activity into the department, such as on-line reporting and parking passes will be available with credit card payments. The dispatch area is being re-vamped. Also, body cameras for officers are also being explored.

Chief Miller commented that Proposition 47 and 89 has had consequences, as there has been an uptick in crimes. Bad guys are getting back on the streets. People are stealing just under the \$900 mark, as they know that they will not be prosecuted.

He also said that the department recently arrested a person who had been committing mail theft.

Overall crimes is down 5 ½ %, but property crimes are increasing. Again, the chief said that the “department might be small, but they do big things.”

### **Final Comments**

Dana thanked Chief Miller and his wife and presented them a small gift as thanks for their presentation and service to the city.

Dana presented past WISPPA President Janet Braun with flowers and a gift on behalf of the entire WISPPA organization in recognition for her service and leadership over the last year.

There are openings on some of the city’s commissions. Interested parties can find information on the city’s web site. The February meeting will be the “Community Forum” meeting.

Meeting was adjourned at 10:57 a.m.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Kim Hughes.