**WISPPA**

**Women Involved in South Pasadena Political Action**

**January 9, 2016 Minutes**

**Cavalry Presbyterian Church**

**Attendance:**

Dollie Chapman, Scott Moe, Ron Rosen, John Vandercook, Gary Pia, Barbara Sinclair, Camille Levee, Gretchen Robinette, Diane Crum, Nancy Peregrine, Chiquita Sipos, Stephanie Payne Campbell, Gina Atkinson, Dave Melford, Lela Bissner, Betty Emirhanian, Laurie Wheeler, Lisa Boyd, Carrie Adrian, Linda Hess, Clair Pulid, Monica Eittong, Deborah Fox, Marianne Reyes, Becky Thompson, Suzie Abajian, Gail Malk, Ellen Wood, Waynna Kato, Dana Farrar, Bianca Richards, Florence Nelson, Nancy Wilms, Judith Barhydt, Linda Krausen, Connie Wardlow, Judith Harris, Mary Ferrero, Vic Robinette, Marty Wetzel, Beverly Bieber, Gail Maltun, Debra Archuleta, Ellen Daigle, Janet Braun, Jonathan Primuth and Kim Hughes

**Call to Order:**

Janet Braun called the meeting to order to 9:04 a.m. Janet welcomed everyone and wished all attendees a very Happy New Year. She also especially welcomed everyone to the 2nd Annual WISPPA supported Community Connections Roundtable.

**Passing of Alice Harris**

It was shared that Ms. Alice Harris had passed away and Waynna Kato provided a wonderful reflection about Ms. Harris’ history of fighting the 710 Freeway, as well as her dedication to the community. A memorial will be held for her on January 22, 2016 in Newport Beach.

**Draft EIR on the School District Development Planned for Mission St.**

Gail Maltun shared that the first draft of an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) was just issued by the South Pasadena Unified School District in conjunction with the developer. The report can be found on the school district’s web site. The development would be on the current location of the school district’s parking lot on Mission Street. The plan is for the development to be 7,000 sq. ft. of retail space and 91 apartment units. There will be mostly 1-bedroom units. There will also be a three-level underground parking structure.

The public has 45 days to submit comments on the project. Right now there is only one meeting planned for public comment and that is on the upcoming January 12, 2016 regular school board meeting.

Members are encouraged to read the report and at least the summary, and to make comments within the comment period.

**Community Groups Presentations**

**Rotary Club of South Pasadena-David Melford**

Mr. Melford shared that the organization is 78 years old and the local chapter meets every Tuesday afternoon. The South Pasadena Chapter of Rotary has 35 members and is very active in partnering with other groups. They assisted recently in helping to prepare gift bags for the homeless. In 2015, they hosted their 5th Annual Taste of South Pasadena. They focus on educational and international water projects. They have built homes in Mexico. They have provided programs for high schoolers. They will be hosting a World Peace Conference in the spring.

Recently, they assisted an El Sereno school in arranging a visit to the Long Beach Aquarium.

The first Rotary Club was formed in Chicago in 1905.

**South Pasadena Beautiful-Stephanie Payne Campbell**

Ms. Payne Campbell shared that she is also a member of the Rotary Club. The South Pasadena Beautiful organization takes pride in the community and working to keep it beautiful. It is entirely a volunteer organization. It is 50 years old and was formed to assist in cleaning up areas and preserving the quality of life. The organization is known for its very popular garden tours. The most recent tour drew 500-700 visitors. A key focus of the tours is to educate attendees about sustainable gardening.

The organization is also known for its “Golden Arrow Awards” that recognizes distinct homes and gardens that display natural and beautiful gardens and landscaping.

The organization has a history of some very noted projects in South Pasadena, including the recent updating of the Fair Oaks landscape median and the “Welcome to South Pasadena” signing, the pavers and landscaping on Pasadena Avenue near the Nature Park, funding to plant trees on Mission Street and patio furniture near the library.

South Pasadena Beautiful encourages young people to be involved in their community and to appreciate gardens and landscaping. They have worked with the Boy and Girl Scouts and offers grants. They have also been a strong advocate for the Nature Park. They also were a strong supporter of the development of a South Pasadena Community Garden.

In looking forward, they hope to upgrade the landscaping around the South Pasadena Post Office.

The organization is open to all and funds are raised by membership dues and donations. The group meets the 2nd Tuesday of every month in the evening.

**South Pasadena Education Foundation-Scott Moe**

South Pasadena Education Foundation is a fundraising group that raises funds to help and support all of the South Pasadena schools. The organization works in concert with the school district to see where there are needs for the schools. The organization is totally independent from the school district and can direct funds to special projects and efforts.

The group supports enrichments classes, summer school and music and arts activities. South Pasadena parents seeing a need at the schools; formed the SPEF organization in 1979-1980. The organization is known for its annual fall fundraising drive and the recognition of donors by placing lawn signs throughout the city. The group is also known for its yearly Parti Gras event. The 2016 event is planned for May 21, 2016 and has a western theme “Bonanza.”

The group has a board of approximately 40 members that serve 6-year terms. The organization has a staff of 2 full-timers and 2 part-timers. The group raises approximately $850,000 to $1 million annually to assist the schools.

The group is going to host a “Color Run” in March. Mr. Moe wanted to emphasize that the group is not exclusive and is always looking for volunteers. SPEF provides grants to teachers, supports summer school programs, the 5th Grade Musical and recently supported the “Train Your Brain” program that focuses on mental health. SPEF is also looking at infrastructure needs at the schools.

**Kiwanis Club-John Vandercook**

The organization began in 1915 in Michigan as an organization to support youth. The group is now in 83 countries and has 660,000 members. The headquarters is now in Indianapolis and raises $100 million a year. The South Pasadena chapter was formed in 1923 and focuses on youth and those with disabilities. They have been on the cutting edge to bring awareness to Autism. They have associated groups in schools, such as the “Key Club” in South Pasadena High School and the “Circle K Club” in Pasadena City College. The organization encourages young people to be involved in their communities and reaching out to others. The group has the “Builders Club” and is developing the “K Kids” groups at the elementary level.

A key area of focus of Kiwanis has been supporting tetanus vaccinations in third world countries. Locally, they are known for their annual 4th of July Pancake Breakfast fundraiser and their “Shred It” event near tax day, to help get rid of sensitive documents in an environmental manner. Funds raised go back to youth efforts, such as Ronald McDonald House and other programs.

The South Pasadena chapter has 35 members and is always looking for new members.

**Urban Harvesters-Linda Hess**

Linda shared that the creation of Urban Harvesters was by accident. In 2009 after an event, where there were sandwiches left over and Linda was assisting in getting the food to seniors. She accompanied the group when they went to drop off the food. At one of the homes, the woman only has cans of cat food in her cupboard. This was a shock to Ms. Hess, who felt that there was a disconnect. She reasoned that there had to be a better way to connect excess food to those that need the food.

There were a lot events, businesses or organizations where their excess food was not being directed to where it could be used. There were either problems of knowing what is needed to move excess food, such as transportation issues or food temperature issues. One benefit, is that in some cases, groups or organizations that were spending funds on food, can now receive food and funds can be directed to programs and not food.

Estimates are that in the United States that there are 5.2 million people who are food insecure. Urban Harvesters builds relationships and connections. There are often issues with timing. An event can end and the food is ready to go to a food pantry, but if it is late, the pantry might not be open.

Urban Harvesters works to create the information so those with food can connect to those that need it. Urban Harvesters works 7 days a week and right now, they do not touch the food, but again provides the connections. They want to make sure that everyone knows that you do not have to throw food away.

The La Puente Unified School District is participating in a food program, so that extra food does not get thrown away. Santa Clara University is assisting Urban Harvesters to develop the software, so that the Urban Harvester model can be cloned and brought to other communities.

Since 2012, 81 tons of food has been re-directed from being in the trash to being directed to those in need. $130,000 of meals has been forwarded and over $500,000 in retail. Ms. Hess shared that the group is just getting started.

**2015 Community Group Re-Visit**

**Las Vincennes**

Suzi Abajian shared that the group is an advocacy and education organization that showcases Latino culture. Its focus area is students of color and they get involved in education. They hosted a Dia de Los Muertos event this past fall.

**South Pasadena Chamber of Commerce**

Laurie Wheeler shared that there is a new web site that showcases South Pasadena it is www.spcalendar.com and people can find out what is going on around town. The site is open so that individuals and organizations can post their own event information.

**Moms on Community**

Lisa Boyd shared that the group came together to take action regarding the growth of massage parlors. Most recently, the group has shifted its focus and was strong in getting support for the 2015 Special Olympics, where South Pasadena hosted teams from two countries. The group assisted in supporting the 2015 South Pasadena Christmas Tree Lighting event. The group also assisted with recycled art and the “Hug Hearts on Trees” in partnership with the Rotary Club. The group also recently had an effort to feed the homeless.

**South Pasadena Women’s Club**

Beverly Bieber shared that the group is the oldest group in South Pasadena and was founded in 1899 and planed trees in 1906. The group is known for its annual “Operation Cookie’ that collects and bakes cookies for veterans. They also raise funds for student scholarships. There is going to be a special event, “For the Love of Chocolate” coming up on February 6, 2016 at the Women’s Clubhouse.

**Chinese American Club**

Sally Kilby presented an update on the club. They are very involved in the exhibit of Leo Politi’s and the character ‘Moy Moy.’ The group supports community service and provides volunteer hours at Union Station. They host the very popular Chinese New Year’s Event and the Moon Festival in the fall. They have an upcoming fundraiser on April 2, 2016.

**Minutes Approval**

Betty Emirhanian made a motion for the approval of the November 2015 minutes and this was seconded by Ellen Daigle. The membership approved.

**South Pasadena Development Task Force Report**

Gail Maltun again mentioned that the EIR report was just issued for the development of the South Pasadena Unified School District’s parking lot. The positive impact of WISPPA is to bring information to the residents and businesses of South Pasadena. The sub-committee was started because of the Rialto Theater and now the scope of the committee has grown. Some of the areas of interest include the school district development and the downtown development.

In regards to the downtown development, the issue right now is that a sale price for the Citizen’s Bank property has not been resolved. The agreement with the developer expires soon and right now, without the Citizen’s Bank property, the current design for the development cannot move forward.

The Development Task Force met with South Pasadena City Planner David Watkins and he explained the entire planning process. The movement for the Rialto is going slow, but it is moving. It is a complicated project.

There is a concern that much of the community is not aware of development projects. There was mention of the possible project on the school district parking lot. Public comments about the project can be made at the school district board meeting on January 12, 2016.

Gretchen Robinette commented that there should be a push for more public meetings regarding the project. Jonathan Primuth shared that the public can make a comment on any subject at the “public comment” item at each school board meeting.

At the next WISPPA meeting the South Pasadena Unified School District Superintendent will be speaking and there will also be in attendance a representative from the developer Legacy Partners.

Bianca Richards commented that there is a concern regarding the required notification to neighbors about the possible development. There is a concern that perhaps notices have not gone to neighbors north and south of the proposed project. WISPPA members commented that notices need to go out, so that everyone is aware of the project.

It was mentioned that when one visited the South Pasadena Unified School District’s web site, one could not locate past minutes and agenda. Susie Abajian shared that she has asked for minutes and agendas to be posted, but there is a problem if residents cannot located past decision information.

Sally shared that since the proposed development is seen as a transit oriented development, that there are some parking exceptions for the property. There was a recent article in the “South Pasadena Review” that spoke to some of the parking concerns.

**Arts and Cultural Committee**

Lisa Boyd shared that they had their first meeting in December and the key focus areas are education about the arts. In March 2016 there will be another “Art Walk.” There was a comment about partnering with SPARC on the event. In May there will be an “Arts Crawl” and there is an idea to have WISPPA assist in developing some event or collaboration.

There is a thought in the community about creating an arts district and having street banners and such. The state is reviewing the definition of an arts district.

The Arts and Cultural Committee would like to explore ways to support the arts. The community has SPARC, Space, the Gallery at the SP Chamber and there are wonderful events at the SP Library.

Lisa Boyd is going to draft a letter to SPARK and the City to thank them for their support of the recently decorated utility boxes that are throughout the city. We should mention the artists in the letter.

**Education Committee**

The committee has not yet met, but one of the key focal areas will be the possible development. The committee will be comprised of:

Judith Harris, Chair

Suzie Abajian

Lisa Boyd

Dana Farrar

Barbara Sinclair

Linda Wah

The group wants to bring out in the open issues regarding the schools and all education. This is not just limited to SPUSD schools. The focus will also include private schools and colleges.

**Special Guest**

Camille Levee introduced her guest, Ms. Debra Archuleta who is running for Superior Court Judge. She is a Deputy District Attorney and has prosecuted gang crimes and child molesters. She has resided in Pasadena for 8 years.

**South Pasadena Parks**

Ron Rosen shared that there will be a special meeting regarding the future direction of parks in the City of South Pasadena that will be held on January 14, 2016.

**Comments**

It was shared that Betty Emirhanian is doing an excellent job in developing and issuing the weekly event calendar. Marina Khubesrian shared that South Pasadena has acquired grant funds for a dog park. The funds can only be used for parks.

**Treasurer’s Report**

Ellen Wood shared that the recent accounting was as follows:

Revenue in November was $116.00 and the expenditures was $116.00

Revenue in December was $40.00 and the expenditures was $236.00

The costs expenditures were related to the development of a business card. The overall membership likes the idea of having business cards to hand out to bring in new members.

Judy made a motion to approve the expenditure over $75.00 and all were in favor with one no vote by Bianca.

**Membership Report**

Dollie needed to leave, so report will be at the next meeting.

**City Council Liaison Report**

Nancy provided a re-cap of the November 18, 2015, the December 2, 2015 and January 6, 2016 meetings. One of the key issues is the medical marijuana growing guidelines. The state has a ruling for the cultivation of medical marijuana. If the city does not develop its own guidelines, then the state’s rules will take effect.

The South Pasadena City Council is moving towards the approval of 32 sq. ft. for compassionate cultivation. The council did not approve the 500 sq. ft. area for a caregiver exemption. There is a possibility that recreation use of marijuana will be a ballot initiative in the future.

The City Council reviewed a report on the capital improvement projects, including the street repairs, and the reservoirs. The Garfield Reservoir should be completed by June 2017.

Regarding the issue of the signatures that have been gathered to put the Utility Users Tax back on a ballot, the City Council has requested a study to outline the impact, should the utility tax be eliminated.

The City Council is looking at the parking situation on Adelaine Street. The neighbors are very concerned about people blocking driveways and parking in an unsafe manner when they visit Trader Joes and other local businesses. The City Council has asked for a parking study for the area. There have been a number of suggestions, such as changing the street to a one-way street or only having parking on one-side of the street. The study will be beneficial, as a decision regarding the street could create a precedent.

**UUT Committee**

Ellen Wood shared that there is a UUT volunteer group in place to study the situation.

**Public Safety Committee**

Janet shared that there is going to be a new tri-city Fire Chief.

**Natural Resources and Environmental Commission Report**

Kim Hughes reported that the key discussion at the NREC meeting was tree planting and the development of a tree planting plan. The plan would include a layout as to where trees could be planted, the type of tree and an associated cost. This will help with budgeting. The city is looking at installing an EV charger for the public. The NREC is also reviewing the West Coast Arborist contract.

**Events**

Betty shared that she is getting out the weekly calendar of events and if someone has event information, they should share the details with Betty. There is going to be a workshop for women interested in running for public office that is planned for January 16, 2016.

There is an event planned for January 24, 2016 so people can get to know Mayor of Glendale Mayor Ara Najarian who is running for Los Angeles County Supervisor.

**New Business**

California State Assemblyman Chris Holden is looking for candidates for his “Woman of Distinction Award,” so if anyone has ideas to share, send them to Janet. Some names mentioned included: Linda Hess and Lisa Pendleton.

**Next Meeting**

Saturday, February 6, 2016.

Gretchen has graciously agreed to bring refreshments.

Meeting adjourned at 11:24 a.m.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Kim Hughes