

WISPPA
Women Involved in South Pasadena Political Action
Nov. 5, 2016 Minutes
Cavalry Presbyterian Church

Attendance: Camille Levee, Barbara Sinclair, Mary Urquhart, Ellen Daigle, Dollie Chapman, Suzie Abajian, Dana Farrar, Sally Kilby, Betty Emirhanian, Gary Pia, Marianne Reyes, Mireya Chafee, Lela Bissner, Lynda Sullivan, Diana Mahmud, Bianca Richards, Dick Helgeson, Linda Wah, Pamela Marcelto, Howard Spector, Marina Khubesrian, Judith Harris, Mary Ferrero, Becky Thompson

Welcome

Members were encouraged to vote as they walked in and ballots were counted during the meeting. Betty Emirhanian opened the meeting at 9:00 a.m. and introduced new members and guests. Everyone is encouraged to invite new members to join the organization.

Mayor's Presentation

An account of the presentation, as published in the South Pasadena Review on Thursday, Nov. 9, 2016:

Mayor Gives "State of the City" Address at WISPPA

Mayor Diana Mahmud, our city's fifth woman to serve in that position, spoke at Women Involved in South Pasadena Political Action about her three primary themes while in office: sustainability, economic development and the proposed 710 freeway tunnel.

On the 710, Mahmud said several positive developments mean that it is "extremely unlikely that the tunnel will be built." First, the staff of the Southern California Assn. of Governments (SCAG) found in its analysis of transportation projects for the next 20 years that the tunnel would result in the worst air quality of the five alternatives. "To have SCAG find staff find that the tunnel would result in poor air quality is really significant," she added.

The other positive step is that Measure M funding cannot be used for any of the Route 710 alternatives, meaning that the only way the tunnel can be built is with private financing in the \$5 billion to \$10 billion range. Federal funds would only be available if trucks are allowed in the tunnel. The next step is Metro's recommendation on the tunnel project, which is expected in early 2017, she said.

Mahmud, who noted that she spent most of professional career working on water and energy law, then turned to sustainability and infrastructure. The city is in the process of hiring a consultant to look at electric vehicle charging stations and installing solar panels. In the future, the city may take advantage of a state community aggregation program that allows wholesale energy purchases at a cost savings, she said. The city is also

looking at taking over ownership of its light poles from Southern California Edison in order to install energy-saving LED lighting, she added.

The mayor also discussed the recently passed polystyrene ban that has been approved but must be implemented by within one year. And she noted that the city's commitment to maintaining city parks and medians with electric-powered vehicles and equipment is saving 41 tons of pollutants per year and making South Pasadena the first American Green Zone Alliance city. "We have every reason to be very very proud of this," she said.

In looking ahead, Mahmud mentioned two neighborhood pocket parks that are in the works after the city acquires Caltrans surplus properties and the new community center, for which a conceptual plan has been approved.

Cost savings have been realized during her term in the form of consolidating copier contracts and refinancing construction bonds, she said. And transparency has been increased because more information is available through an online portal. The city is also updating its General Plan for the first time in 18 years and attempting to take a comprehensive look at traffic and parking, Mahmud added.

The former WiSPPA president thanked the group for providing the impetus for her to run for office: "I wouldn't be here except for WISPPA," she noted. And, of her time on the council, she added: "We are all trying to achieve things for the benefit of our residents."

WISPPA Elections

The final slate as presented in October was unanimously approved by membership, according to results announced by Lela Bissner. Mary Urquhart was a write-in candidate for the position of Publicity Chair. The Executive Board for 2017 is as follows:

President:	Dana Farrar
Vice President:	Bianca Richards
Secretary:	Kim Hughes
Treasurer:	Ellen Wood
Founding Advisor:	Barbara Sinclair
City Council Chair:	Ron Rosen
Media Chair:	Betty Emirhanian
Events Chair:	Ellen Daigle
Membership Chair:	Dollie Chapman
Political Liaison Chair:	Linda Wah
Member-at-Large:	Judy Harris
Past President:	Janet Braun
Publicity:	Mary Urquhart

Membership Report

Dollie Chapman reported that a number of members have been lost due to lack of renewal, but that one new member joined during the meeting. She is Mireya Chaffey, a New York Life agent who is a Rotary board member and co-chair of Taste of South Pasadena.

October Minutes

Motion for approval was made by Bianca Richards and seconded by Lela Bissner. The vote was for approval of the minutes as submitted.

City Council Report

Membership agreed that the mayor's update was sufficient to cover recent South Pasadena City Council activity, as usually outlined by Ron Rosen.

Public Safety Commission Report

Ellen Daigle decided to forgo her report to shorten the meeting and because many of the issues had also been touched on during the mayor's speech and subsequent comments.

Old/New Business

Mixer--Dana Farrar discusses possible membership mixer/social event on Jan. 22. Membership decides that January is too busy and it is better to wait on this until March or so.

Holiday banners--New holiday banners for Mission Street and Fair Oaks Avenue are available to help promote WISPPA while celebrating the arts and supporting the local business community. The cost is \$200 for Mission and \$250 for Fair Oaks, plus the cost of production. Bianca Richards comments that WISPPA stands for all of the things the banners represent and recommends that we participate. Camille Levee makes a motion that WISPPA purchase three banners and it is seconded by Bianca and approved by the membership.

Utility boxes—There is a preview party/fundraiser coming up on Sunday, Nov. 13. Checks may be made out to SPARC and donating \$50 or more includes free admission to the party. Our utility box would be sponsored by individual members of WISPPA and would cost \$750. (Funds are raised for utility box through the generosity of individual WISPPA members, and it is later completed near the intersection of Huntington Drive and Marengo Avenue.)

Trees and lighting—South Pasadena Beautiful has undertaken a low-cost tree planting program. There are still concerns about the drought and individual

property owners must assume the responsibility of keeping the trees watered. Membership is reminded to return tree/lighting district ballots in a timely fashion if they wish to support the city's effort to get permission to raise fees.

Proposed development—The Oroweat property at Mission Street and Fairview Avenue owned by the Cherng family of Panda Express fame may be developed as condominium/mixed use development. Becky Thompson gave a history of the project and its architects thus far. Historical portions of the property would remain, with housing and underground parking added.

Meeting was adjourned at 11:00 a.m.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Dana Farrar.