

**Minutes of a Meeting of
Women Involved in South Pasadena Political Action (WISPPA)
November 7, 2015 at 9:00 am
Calvary Presbyterian Church, South Pasadena, CA**

Location: Calvary Presbyterian Church, 1050 Fremont Avenue, South Pasadena, California
Date: November 7, 2015
Attendance: Barbara Sinclair, Dollie Chapman, Gloria Kilian, Suzie Abajian, Ellen Daigle, Lela Bissner, Janet Braun, Gary Pia, Ellen Wood, Judi Barhydt, Marianne Reyes, Jon Primuth, Clarice Knapp, Diana Mahmud, Nancy Wilms, Florence Nelson, Becky Thompson, Dana Farrar, Gail Maltun, Judy Harris, Lisa Boyd, Lisa Pendleton, Linda Krausen

1. Call to Order. The meeting was called to order at 9:05 by Janet Braun, President. Janet congratulated WISPPA members Suzie Abajian and Jon Primuth on their elections to the South Pasadena Unified School District Board of Education and WISPPA member Marina Khubesrian on her election to a second term on the South Pasadena City Council. In addition, Janet reported the passage of the South Pasadena library tax extension. Voter turnout was only 18% (but second highest in the County) which may be an area of future focus for WISPPA.

2. Speakers: Captain Kris Saxon, SPFD and Sue Kaplan, CERT Committee Chair. South Pasadena Fire Department Captain Kris Saxon gave a presentation on emergency preparedness and the importance of understanding what you can do in an emergency. Captain Saxon also demonstrated how to turn off your gas, but only if you smell a gas leak and how to operate a fire extinguisher. Sue Kaplan, Chair of the CERT (Community Emergency Response Team) Committee, also spoke on the City's emergency preparedness efforts, particularly training residents on preparation and readiness. Ms. Kaplan reported on the City's CERT training efforts and brought a sign-up sheet for WISPPA members to sign-up for free CERT training during the City's February 2016 class. The classes are held over 3 Saturdays, four hours each day.

Janet thanked both Captain Saxon and Ms. Kaplan and presented them tokens of WISPPA's appreciation for their presentations.

Thank you presentation to Lela Bissner and Betty Emirhanian. Janet next thanked past Presidents Lela Bissner and Betty Emirhanian for their monumental efforts as co-Presidents on behalf of WISPPA for the previous year and presented them a token of WISPPA's appreciation.

3. Approval of October 3, 2015 and Revised September 12, 2015 Minutes. The minutes of WISPPA's meeting held on October 3, 2015 were approved by vote of the members. In addition, Janet explained that there was an error in the minutes of the September 12, 2015 minutes regarding a proposed development project, and that she was seeking approval of revised minutes to correct the error. The revised minutes of the September 12, 2015 meeting were approved.

4. Treasurer's Report and Membership Report. Treasurer Ellen Wood presented a financial report and October 2015 financial activity for WISPPA, and noted that balance in WISPPA's bank account is \$6,990. She also reviewed a budget for the upcoming year. Membership Chair Dollie Chapman reported that we currently have 81 paid members.

5. WISPPA Committees. Janet explained that we have formed/are forming committees and task forces for the coming year to stay informed about various issues in the City. The committees and task forces will report at the monthly WISPPA meetings on issues of interest. She indicated that membership was open and sign-up sheets were on the front table.

a) South Pasadena Development Task Force. Gail Maltun is chairing WISPPA's Development Task Force. Gail reported that the task force is working on a mission statement, but that the function would be to keep WISPPA informed about various issues concerning development matters, including status of the General Plan, specific plans or other major projects being proposed. Gail noted that at the Task Force's first meeting, it was clear that there is a diversity of opinion on various matters, and that WISPPA would not take any positions on any issues, but rather act to gather accurate information to keep members apprised. She reiterated that they will be working on developing the proper scope of the task force. Current projects for which the task force will be gathering information include the Rialto, School District Mission Street project and the Downtown Development project.

Becky Thompson reported that a meeting had been scheduled for the task force with David Watkins, Planning and Building Director for the City of South Pasadena. Lisa Boyd noted that a meeting with Jonathan Genton, owner of the 625 Fair Oaks building who is trying to complete a downtown development project, is also planned. Diana Mahmud also noted that WISPPA could work with the South Pasadena Chamber of Commerce on any of these matters, if desired. The Chamber has an Economic Development Committee that meets monthly.

b) South Pasadena Fiscal Accountability Committee. Ellen Wood is chairing WISPPA's fiscal accountability committee to keep informed about fiscal and economic issues in the City. The Committee will have a working knowledge of the City's budget and financial results. Diana Mahmud commented that the City may be facing a County-wide financial challenge regarding dirty storm water. Nancy Wilms also commented on this issue. Local cities are even more concerned about the issue given the anticipated El Nino season.

c) Education Committee. Suzie Abajian reported that the establishment of this committee had been advocated during WISPPA's August meeting to keep informed about issues regarding the School District. Given Suzie's recent election to the School Board she would not chair this committee. Judy Harris would chair or co-chair the committee with another member. They will draft a proposed mission statement, which may include attending School Board meetings and staying informed as to issues related to the schools and perhaps understanding better the relationship between the School District and the City.

d) Arts and Cultural Committee. Wayna Kato could not attend the meeting, but prepared a statement about the proposed scope of this committee, to support the arts in South Pasadena. Lisa Boyd, Hope Perello and Wayna Kato will lead the Arts and Cultural Committee's efforts.

e) 710 Panel of Experts. Joanne Nuckols could not attend the meeting as she was attending a 710 meeting, but Janet read a statement from Joanne about the No On 710 efforts to remove the tunnels from any further consideration. Joanne asked members to go to the No 710 Action Committee website (no710.com) for information and to sign their petition. Clarice Knapp also spoke about the Beyond the 710 efforts and the 5 City Alliance. Janet noted that

WISPPA has voted to support both the No on 710 and Beyond the 710 efforts, and suggested that WISPPA continue to support a 710 Panel of Experts to keep WISPPA informed on all matters regarding the 710 issue.

6. City Commission Openings. Ron Rosen, Member at Large, could not attend the meeting, but reported that as of 1/1/16, there will be openings on the following City Commissions (and there may be others if current members do not accept a second term): Cultural Heritage, Design Review, Library Board of Trustees, Natural Resources and Public Safety.

7. City Commission Reports. Betty Emirhanian and Judy Barhydt reported on recent City Council meetings. The City Council was considering valet parking along Mission Street. The Dog Park in the Arroyo had been discussed and hoped to be complete in January 2017. Voter turnout County-wide in the recent election was only 9% (South Pasadena was 18%). An issue regarding parking on Adelaide Street near Trader Joe's was presented to and discussed by City Council. City Offices will be closed on November 25.

Damage to the South Pasadena Library from flooding required fixing drainage issues. Cost estimate is \$450,000 which is not in the current budget. The Council discussed recent residential rent increases. With 50% of all residents as renters, the average rent for a 1-bedroom apartment is \$1477/month and a 2-bedroom apartment is \$2192/month. There is great concern from long-time renters that they are going to be priced out of the market. The City is preparing for El Nino and up to 25 inches of rain between periods of warm weather. The City has reached out to the LA County Office of Emergency management, identifying areas prone to flooding and removing debris from drainage areas. They are planning to increase staff during weather events, encouraging residents to sign-up for Connect South Pasadena and visit the City website for a list of actions to be taken to prepare. Sand bags and sand will be available to residents at the Fire Department.

8. WISPPA Calendar. A calendar of WISPPA meetings and events for the year was distributed to members, and had been previously emailed.

9. Membership Survey. Janet indicated that the WISPPA Board was seeking input from members for meetings, speakers and events. She asked everyone to complete the membership survey.

10. South Pasadena Happenings. Janet thanked Betty Emirhanian for her preparation of the Upcoming Events of Interest for WISPPA members, posted on the website and emailed to members every other week. It is a big job and so appreciated by members of WISPPA.

11. Adjourn. The meeting was adjourned at 11:05 am.