

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

Attendance:

Waynna Kato, Janet Braun Ellen Daigle, Hope Perello, Dana and Ryan –Two Kids, Betty Emirhanian , Ron Rosen, Camille Leve, Shelley Stevens, David Plenn, Ellen Wood, Carrie Adrian, Mary Urquhart, Gloria Kilian, Laurie Wheeler, Judith Harris Sharon Harrah, Gary Pia, Lela Bissner, Scott Brown, Adrian Camp, Diane Crum, Laurie Hendricks, Mindy Krasner, Clarice Knapp, Lissa Reynolds, Bernice Nichols, Suzie Abajian, Dollie Chapman, Diane Mahmud, Bianca Richards, Sally Kilby, Gretchen Robinette, Marina Khubesrian, Mark Dreskin, Max Dreskin, Judi Barhydt, Polly Podewell, Steve Fjeldsted, Linda Wah, Joe Potts, Linda Krausen, Dick Helgesen, Michael Cacciotti, Howard Spector, Nancy Wilms, Kim Hughes

Janet Braun called the meeting to order at 9:05 a.m. She welcomed everyone to the meeting. Ellen Daigle introduced guests Dana and Ryan from a new coffee business-Two Kids that will be behind the Hendrick's Gallery.

Ellen also took a moment to recognize all of the WISPPA members that are strong supporters and involved in the arts in South Pasadena. Those included:

-Lisa Reynolds, Howard Spector, Laurie Wheeler, Shelley Stevens, and Steve Fjeldsted.

These were just some of the examples of South Pasadena residents that make South Pasadena such a strong city in supporting and developing all of the forms of the arts.

Guest Speaker-Craig Watson, Director, California Arts Council

Janet provided a brief background on Mr. Watson's experience and welcomed him to the meeting.

Mr. Watson is a South Pasadena resident who lives in his family's historic home. He shared that the home was in the past the home to a leader of the local suffragette movement, so it was quite fitting to be speaking at a WISPPA meeting.

He shared some of his background and then provided details regarding the California Arts Council. He shared how a great part of his job is to remind elected officials that our tax dollars also need to match our values. .He shared that in a

study in the past, the state of California was dead last in spending on the arts in relationship to our population. We have improved and are now 46th.

Our funding for the arts has gone from \$7.2 million to now \$15 million.

He shared how there is evidence that support of the arts can address many of the social issues we face. He shared how there have been successful projects reaching out to “at risk” youth and those in prisons.

One interesting fact he shared, was that 1 in 10 jobs is related some way to the arts. We need to remember we are leaders in entertainment, fashion and publishing industries, as well as the creative side of the tech industry.

He said that there is a grant program that could be of interest to the City of South Pasadena and that is the “Community Builders Program.” The program provides grants to cities. We would need to apply for the grants. We also can look at having an area in the city recognized as a “Cultural District.” Funds could be available for special district signing and other area support.

Mr. Watson stressed that to apply for any of the funds that applications should always be submitted as quickly as possible, as funds are allocated and connected to the state budget. It is also important to have a specific plan and strategy for each application. The city of Nevada City was used as a good example of a city that applied for grants and had a well thought out strategy for the funding request and then execution.

Mr. Watson concluded his presentation and then answered a number of attendee questions with most questions focusing on developing an arts district and applying for grants. He shared that he thought the City of South Pasadena was doing very good things with the arts, such as the painting of the power boxes, and our temporary arts projects.

He shared some information about some pending legislation that needs support. SB916 will change the requirement so that in order to be a theater and dance teacher one had to have a degree in physical education or English. This change in the law will recognize other degree options for teachers.

He closed the presentation and the question and answer phase sharing that it is often beneficial to come up with a slogan or theme for a city. He also said that there is also a free weekly newsletter available from the council, “Art Beat,” so he suggested that everyone sign-up for the free newsletter/

710 Committee Report

It was shared that Metro is moving forward with having on the November ballot the next phase of “Measure R.” This would extend the existing tax another 20-30

years. The current thought is that Metro will push for a new measure to be placed on the November ballot and this would ask voters to approve extending the ½ cent sales tax to bring in more money. This would allow for more borrowing and development of projects. The thought is that the 710 tunnel would not be included, but there is concern that the tunnel will come up again with the assured funding.

WISPPA members are encouraged to attend the Metro meeting on May 26, 2016 at Union Station.

City Council Liaison Report

Nancy Wilms, in conjunction with the Finance Committee and member Ellen Wood, provided information about the April 27th meeting, which was a City of South Pasadena budget review meeting. She shared some basic details, such as revenues are projected at \$25.6 million and expenditures of \$24.1 million. 69% of the budget is for wages, salaries and basic operations. There was a lot of discussion on designated versus non-designated funds. The undesignated amount was reduced from 37% of the budget to 27%. A new category was added and that is for stormwater. The council spent a good amount of time discussing the priorities list of street repairs and improvements.

There will be additional opportunities for public review of the budget at the May 18, 2016 meeting and the June 1, 2016 meeting.

One key point for the public to note; is that there are projected to be cash flow problems for the years 2017/2018.

At the May 4th council meeting the City Council spent time discussing improvements for El Centro. There was also discussion about not allowing inflatables in city parks. There was also discussion about having sand or rubber as a surface material in the park playgrounds. Park impact fees were also discussed.

Nancy Wilms had shared that she will not be able to attend the June 1, 2016 South Pasadena City Council meeting. Betty Emirhanian has agreed to attend and take notes.

Finance Committee Report

More formal report updated will be provided at the next meeting.

Natural Resources and Environmental Commission Report

Nancy also provided an update on the NREC activities. The NREC is working on a recommendation to eliminate the sale of Styrofoam products and having them

as a container. They are looking at what the cities of Santa Monica and Pasadena have done in eliminating these products.

Arts and Cultural Committee Report

Most of the activities were featured in the earlier introductions and in the presentation by Mr. Watson. The group could use more volunteers.

Development Committee Report

It was shared that the City of South Pasadena is not moving forward with the downtown development plan with the partner developer. The association is being dissolved. The road block was that the project was not able to obtain the Citizen's Bank property. The bank has now said that it is going to develop their own property.

Public Safety Committee Report

The group reported that the CERT Program just celebrated its 2 year anniversary. Trainings have been very popular. There are tools available to map your neighborhood and that this is very helpful to those who want to be part of or start a Neighborhood Watch Group.

WISPPA Goals and Objectives

Betty Emirhanian shared that a "WISPPA Goals and Objectives" survey was distributed at the April meeting, but in order to get as much feedback as possible, the survey is still available. Betty handed out copies and the survey is also available on the WISPPA web site. Members are encouraged to complete the survey.

Events

WISPPA is supporting the Eclectic Music Festival on May 14, 2016 and more volunteers are needed to assist with the event.

Reminder that the Annual Cocktail Party is planned for Monday, June 20, 2016.

There was a brief overview to listing events in the weekly e-blast. The events that would be included need to be in-line with the goals and objectives of the WISPPA organization, such as related to women's issues, efforts that impact the city, such as the 710 Freeway efforts, a South Pasadena resident involved or such. Event announcements should be directed to Betty Emirhanian.

The National Women's Political Caucus Luncheon is planned for May 14, 2016 and the honoree is State Senator Carol Liu.

The next meeting is planned for Saturday, June 4, 2016

Meeting was adjourned at 11:02 a.m.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Kim Hughes.