

WISPPA  
Women Involved in South Pasadena Political Action  
August 1, 2015 Minutes

Date: August 16, 2015

Location: Calvary Presbyterian Church

Present: Betty Emirhanian, Lela Bissner, Bianca Richards, Ron Rosen Ellen Daigle, Dollie Chapman, Barbara Sinclair, Ellen Wood, Katherine Aguilar Perez- Estolano, Gary Pia, Gail Maltun, Justus Zimmerman, Liz Brown, Lynda Sullivan, Kay Mouradian, Florence Nelson, Nancy Wilms, Judi Barhydt, Debby Fox, Chiquita A. Sipas, Mary Urquhart, Kim Hughes, Gretchen Robinette, Linda Wah, Tiona Wieman, Marty Wetzal, Judith Harris.

I. The Minutes were approved with the addition of members who had attended but were not included in the original minutes. (see website for final minutes)

II. DISCUSSION OF GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The group discussed our accomplishments this past year as viewed through our stated goals to update and establish priorities for the coming year.

Push for Accountability, Integrity, and Transparency in our City Government

We will continue to have at least one member attend every city council meeting and encourage all city commissions to have posted agendas and minutes. Most are in compliance but Gary Pia agreed to encourage the Finance Committee to post when he meets with them in October.

The group appreciated the regular reports at WISPPA meetings and will continue with an eye to scheduling extended discussions at upcoming meetings as necessary to keep to our two-hour format. We also will continue to post updated member lists on various commissions and boards on our website.

Actively Encourage Strong, Well-qualified Candidates, and Especially Women, to run for City Council and to serve on City Commissions

While the group was pleased that the City Council now has two women members and several of our men and women members are currently serving on Council and a variety of commissions, the group agreed that we should continue to push for the City to list all openings, and report via emails and meetings as positions become available, encouraging members to apply. The group was reminded that it is our job to be the eyes and ears of the community so we need to stay on top of our communications.

We will continue to partner with other key organizations to promote women events and leadership, including the NWPC's training workshop and the League of Women Voters events.

The group noted the high involvement of women-based businesses in the community and suggested that we can make our members available to high school groups to introduce them to local leaders and promote firsthand learning about leadership paths.

## WISPPA Seeks to Offer Opinions and Advocate for Positions Concerning the Well-being of the City of South Pasadena

WISPPA members discussed the difference between political involvement and transparency and action vs. advocacy with the conclusion that we will continue to carefully consider actions we can take on behalf of our city.

The group praised Janet's letter on behalf of our city's position and reiterated the August 5<sup>th</sup> deadline for members to get our individual letters on the 710 in by this date.

We will continue UUT, Monterey Road and Measure L subcommittees and advocate for the No on 710 position with the addition of the Beyond 710 perspective. We will actively work with City Council the League of Cities and other groups to prevent the proliferation of massage parlors in our town and the attendant issues of prostitution and human trafficking.

In addition, we will advocate for the kinds of businesses that we want to see blossom in South Pasadena including restaurants, home décor and sports stores for youth.

We are reaching out to environmental groups and Kim will give a list to Marina which she has culled through her NREC involvement.

We will continue to support Public Safety and Disaster Preparedness through the Public Safety Commission with regular member reports and communications of upcoming trainings and information through our website.

We will continue to support the arts and volunteer organizations in our community by publicizing events on our website, reaching out to SPARC and organizing WISPPA nights out which we publicize to our members. By maintaining a current list of events on the website and highlighting events in member emails we can continue to respond to everything from Woman's Club events to Fremont Theater functions and events like the Special Olympics in our town.

We will continue to advocate for improvements in city infrastructure, utilities, etc., and communicate issues regarding the structure to our community.

## Provide Information to the Electorate Regarding City Council Candidates and City Issues

We will continue to arrange for topical subjects to be presented by speakers at WISPPA meetings and hold candidate forums for South Pasadena City Council, such as this year's October 8<sup>th</sup> Candidate Forum.

The group discussed working more closely with school board to stay abreast of the school's impact on our community.

We will continue to keep WISPPA updated on our activities, major issues, information about events of interest in South Pasadena and general information about the city through our website which has continued to expand including issues pages and more links to city web pages.

The group agreed that we should continue to keep citizens informed on property development in South Pasadena and add subgroups as necessary, such as the subcommittee on the Rialto progress.

Finally, the group was in favor of continuing our annual cocktail party highlighting a speaker of general interest in South Pasadena and was encouraged by the successful fundraising effort in support of our Candidates Forum.

### III. NEW BUSINESS

WISPPA approved the 710 EIR letter written by Janet Braun on behalf of our group for distribution and inclusion in the report to meet the August 5<sup>th</sup> deadline.

Gail Maltun updated us on the Rialto Theater with the addition of a new name considering involvement, Curbed LA Vintage Cinemas and the latest hopes to keep the original floorplan with the addition of 2 or 3 small screening rooms under the balcony.

### IV. REPORTS

The group agreed to dispense with the usual reports in the interest of time and accepted the brief updates of most pressing topics.

Mary Urquhart alerted the group to the needs to consider our South Pas pay scale and the drop in staff which has resulted in many overtime hours and difficulty replacing lost staff. Marina said she will talk to Sergio and report back to us with more information.

Since Suzie Abajian is running for school board Betty has offered to update the website for the next few months..

Kim reported that the turf abatement program in the city has ended and that we are looking to pursue other avenues to reduce water usage including incentives for apartment owners to look at more efficient toilets and washing machines.

SPARCS is sponsoring an art project to paint 10 utility boxes and those interested should check their website for more information.

Dollie reported that we now have 77 members and 45 have paid. She will initiate another round of contacts to get the rest of us up-to-date.

The Meeting was adjourned with the reminder that our next meeting will be September 12<sup>th</sup> when Bob Joe will give a "State of the City" address.

Minutes prepared and presented by Debbie Fox 8/18/15.