

WISPPA
Women Involved in South Pasadena Political Action
September 8, 2018 Minutes
South Pasadena Senior Center

Attendance:

Ed Donnelly, Gary Pia, Dollie Chapman, Betty Emirhanian, Ellen Woods, Bianca Richards, Barbara Sinclair, Suzie Abajian, Sean Abajian, Herb Shon, Sally Kilby, Lela Bissner, Kelly Koldus, Shadi Towfighi, Charles Trevino, Carmen Trevino, Lissa Reynolds, Janet Braun, Mary Ferrero, Roxy Ortiz, Kay Findley, Diana Mahmud, Becky Thompson, Cynthia Erland, Kim Hughes

Welcome

Bianca Richards welcomed everyone at 9:30 a.m. This was a new time for the meeting, as the social hour will start at 9:00 a.m. and the business meetings will begin at 9:30 a.m.

Coming Elections

Janet Braun shared that the WISPPA leadership elections are coming up in November and that the nominating committee would be developing a roster. If anyone has a nomination or if there is personal interest in being on the WISPPA board, please contact Janet Braun. There are the positions of President, Vice President, Treasurer, Secretary, etc.

Minutes Approval

A motion was made by Barbara Sinclair for approval of the June 2018 minutes and this was seconded by Lissa Reynolds. The membership approved the minutes.

WISPPA Tour of the Pasadena Playhouse

Barbara Sinclair shared that the members of WISSPA had a unique opportunity to get a "behind the scenes" tour of the playhouse on September 15, 2018 from 10:00 a.m. to 12Noon. If there is interest, guests can also see the play "Native Garden" that same afternoon at a discounted price. If there is interest, contact Barbara Sinclair.

President Comments

Bianca shared that the last meeting, that took place in June was very beneficial. Feedback from that meeting showcased that the membership would like the meeting to start later. The monthly meetings will now start later with social time starting at 9:00 a.m. with the business meeting starting at 9:30 a.m.

There was also interest in what the Executive Board does. The board and WISPPA are supporting street banners on Mission Street. This community beautification effort is in conjunction with the South Pasadena Chamber of Commerce.

WISPPA is also working in concert with the South Pasadena Chamber of Commerce in sponsoring a "Candidates Forum" on October 1, 2018. In the vein of the coming national election, WISPPA will be hosting a speaker from the League of Women Voters, who will speak to the propositions that will be on the November election ballot at the WISPPA October meeting.

The board is seeing the focus of WISPPA in 2019 as being city accountability on local issues. Another item that came out of the June meeting was to make sure that there was time for commission reports at the monthly meetings. It was also mentioned that WISPPA is fortunate to have many members participating on city commissions.

Commission Reports

Animal Commission

Betty Emirhanian shared that a resolution will be going to the South Pasadena City Council soon that will ban the sale of live animals in the city. The goal is to increase adoptions from shelters and to stop "animal mill breeding" of all animals. The Pasadena Humane Society has most animals that people would desire as a pet. Betty has asked that if people are in support, to let the City Council know of your support.

Senior Citizens Commission

Herb Shon who is a commission member, announced that the commission will be hosting a special event "What to Do About Mom and Dad" regarding caregiving for parents and relatives. The event will be held on October 3, 2018 at 6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. in the Community Room at the South Pasadena Public Library. There will be experts on geriatric healthcare, finances and more. The event is free. Excellent information is available at caregiving.org.

Planning Commission

Kelly Koldus let the attendees know that the issues of the conditional use permit for Mosaic were still under review. The Mosaic organization would like it eliminated. There are businesses going in and out. Koi is moving to Pasadena. Mama's Pizza is moving to what was the Koi location. Twohey's is moving into the former Carmine's location across from the War Memorial Building. Carrow's has been sold and a "mixed use" development will be going into that location. There has also been some development up in the hillside areas.

David Watkins, the City Planning Director is retiring from the city. A search for a new director will be underway. Also, the General Plan will also continue to move forward.

Charles Trevino shared with his experience in water that he has a concern over the new development and its impact on water demand, as well as the stress to our water and sewer systems.

Public Safety Commission

Ellen Deagle had sent in information and that information included, that with South Police Chief Art Miller leaving, Captain Brian Solinsky has been named interim Police Chief. The commission has also been discussing the need for more school crossing guards. It should be noted that if the city loses its UUT, all crossing guards will be eliminated. There is the annual Fire and Police Open House coming up on September 16, 2018.

There was the recent officer involved shooting and there are multiple investigations underway and the public is being asked to be patient as the investigations take place.

Diana Mahmud shared that there is a list of seniors being developed who can be notified in emergencies. They might have limitations and thus could need special assistance in emergency situations.

Public Works Commission

Kim Hughes shared that there had been a city motion to combine the Public Works Commission and the Freeway and Transportation Commission, as the Public Works Commission was due to "sunset" in November 2018. Tentatively, the City Council will extend the Public Works Commission for one year so there can more review for a new "combined" commission. The new commission would be a Mobility and Infrastructure Commission. Current members on the Public Works and Freeway and Transportation Commission that were to be termed out this year will have their tenure on the commissions extended, as would not make sense to add new members for possibly just a one year term.

Kim Hughes shared that if the UUT is eliminated, the repair of roads, sidewalks, etc. would be greatly impacted. Tree maintenance would also be severely impacted.

Cultural Heritage Commission

Becky Thompson came in late, but reported that there is a new ordinance, the California Mills Act that provides tax breaks to historical property owners to help with the preservation of a historic property.

Membership Report

Dollie shared that we have added 3 new members and right now, the organization has 85-87 members. Dollie also reminded everyone to turn in their annual dues.

Guest Speaker-South Pasadena City Treasurer Gary Pia “Impacts of the Repeal of the Utility Users Tax”

Gary provided background that the first UUT started after the adoption of state Proposition 13. This caused a decrease in funds to the city. The City of South Pasadena has had a UUT for over 30 years. Cities do not “fundraise,” but need to ask their residents and businesses for tax revenue.

The current City of South Pasadena UUT provides the city with the second largest revenue source at approximately \$3.5 million or about 12% of the city’s total revenue. The funds stay completely in the city, where as with the largest source of city revenue, property taxes, the city only receives about 24% of the total property tax revenue. The UUT is a tax of 7.5% on utility services, such as electricity, phone, etc.

Gary explained that cities provide services to its residents and businesses and it takes people to deliver services. The UUT helps to support those “quality of life” services, such as public safety, programs for seniors and youth. Gary passed out a list of possible items that could be cut should the city lose the UUT. Cuts included cutting all after school activities, such as “Camp Med,” cutting back tree trimming to every 6-7 years and cutting library hours.

Gary shared if the UUT goes away, all of the items on the list would need to be eliminated. Gary encouraged the WISPPA membership and residents learn more and to visit the “No on Measure N” web site and speak to the volunteers who are working to keep the UUT.

Betty Emirhanian made a motion that WISPPA should take a stand to support the continuation of the UUT and support "No on Measure N" because passage would mean drastic cuts to many services in our city. These cuts will radically alter the "quality of life" that residents of South Pasadena cherish. The motion was seconded by Ellen Wood. The motion passed with a vote.

Announcements

Lissa Reynolds shared that there will be a fundraiser "Vital Voices" on September 22, 2018 to promote voting in the upcoming mid-term election.

Barbara Sinclair said that a fundraiser is coming up in support of autism research and children and if you want more details, contact Barbara Sinclair.

Bianca thanked everyone for attending the meeting and the meeting was adjourned at 10 45 a.m.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Kim Hughes