



Northridge East Neighborhood Council

Making Northridge a Better Place to Live, Work, Play and Learn

BYLAWS of the Northridge East Neighborhood Council

Last Amended March 19, 2008

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Article I

Council Name

Upon certification, the name of this neighborhood council shall be the Northridge East Neighborhood Council (NENC), a part of the Los Angeles citywide system of neighborhood councils.

Article II

Purpose

The purpose of the Northridge East Neighborhood Council is:

- To improve the quality of life and the business climate for Stakeholders within the Northridge East community.
- To facilitate and improve communication between the Stakeholders, other neighborhood councils and the City of Los Angeles in order to improve the quality of life.
- To provide a forum for public discussion of issues and to advise the City of Los Angeles on issues concerning City governance, the needs of this neighborhood council, the delivery of City services, and matters of citywide interest.
- To prohibit discrimination against any individual or group in our operations on the basis of race, religion, color, creed, national origin, ancestry, sex, sexual orientation, age, disability, marital status, income or political affiliation.
- To establish procedures for communicating with all neighborhood council community Stakeholders on a regular basis in a manner ensuring that information is disseminated evenly and in a timely manner.

Article III

Definitions

1. BOARD OF DIRECTORS or BOARD means the elected governing body within the meaning of that term as set forth in the Plan for a Citywide System of Neighborhood Councils (approved on May 30, 2001), Department of Neighborhood Empowerment (DONE).
2. BROWN ACT means the Ralph M. Brown Act, (Cal. Govt. Code section 54950.5 et.seq.).
3. COUNCIL shall mean the Northridge East Neighborhood Council.
4. MEETING shall mean any meeting of the neighborhood council.
5. OFFICIAL ACTION shall be any agendized action at a public meeting, which results in Board approval or disapproval of any resolution, position, or decision.
6. STAKEHOLDER shall mean any individual who lives, owns property, works, attends school or engages in voluntary service with community and/or non-profit organizations within the geographic area of this Council, and also to those who declare a stake in the neighborhood and affirm the factual basis for it.
7. QUORUM shall mean a majority number of the Board and is required for any Council Meeting to take place.
8. AT LARGE shall mean any Northridge East Neighborhood Council stakeholder.

Article IV

Membership / Stakeholder

1. Membership in this Council shall be open to any and all Stakeholders within the council boundaries.

Article V

Neighborhood Council Boundary Area Lines

The Northridge East Neighborhood Council includes a geographic area with boundaries as follows:

- North: 118 Freeway from Reseda Boulevard east to Aliso Wash.
- East: 118 Freeway south on Aliso Wash to Devonshire Street, east on Devonshire Street to Balboa Boulevard, south on Balboa Boulevard to Lassen Street, east on Lassen Street to Bull Creek and Bull Creek to Nordhoff Street.
- South: Nordhoff Street east from Bull Creek to Reseda Boulevard.
- West: Reseda Boulevard north from Nordhoff Street to the 118 Freeway.

Article VI

Interim Board of Directors

1. The Interim Board shall have ten (10) members, and decisions will be made by majority vote of those present.
2. The Interim Board consists of the following volunteers: Andy Anderson, Dorothy Boberg, Frank McGinnis, Eva Schwarz, Judie Levin-Sanchez, Pat LoPresti, Judith Nutter, Diana R. Streit, Steven Wheatley and Win Wheatley.
3. The presence of six (6) Board Members shall constitute a quorum of the Interim Board. Official action shall be taken by a majority vote of those members present.
4. The authority of the Interim Board will be limited to considering administrative or operational issues, and decisions regarding the conduct of the initial election, between certification and the initial election, including the following duties:
 - a. To appoint an Elections Committee to plan the first election.
 - i. Candidates shall submit their names to the Ad Hoc Elections Committee
 - ii. A nominations meeting shall be held prior to the election
 - iii. Nominations from the floor shall be permitted with the consent of the nominee
 - b. A neutral third party shall conduct the initial election and a separate neutral third party shall resolve any election challenges

Article VII

Board of Directors

1. Membership

- a. There shall be fifteen (15) members of the Board of Directors.
- b. No single community stakeholder group shall comprise a majority of the governing body unless extenuating circumstances are warranted and approved by DONE.
- c. One member of the Board shall be reserved for a representative of youth.
 - i. The youth member shall be between the ages of 16 and 18 at the time the stakeholder is appointed to this seat each June.
 - ii. The youth member shall be appointed by a majority vote of the Board on a written application made to the Board on a Form to be designated.
 - iii. Board members under the age of 18 are precluded from voting on matters regarding:
 1. the expenditure of public funds;
 2. the entering into contracts or contractual matters of the neighborhood council;
 3. advising the City on entering any third-party contracts, including the entry, renewal, or contract terms; and
 4. the hiring of staff.
- d. All Stakeholders age 18 or greater are eligible for candidacy to the Board except for the youth seat.
- e. Two members shall be "at-large" members.
- f. Two members shall be representatives from California State University Northridge (CSUN).
 - i. One member shall be a representative of the Student Body of CSUN, and shall serve at the pleasure of the President of the Associated Students.
 - ii. One member shall be a representative of the Faculty, Administration and Staff of CSUN, and shall serve at the pleasure of the President of CSUN.
- g. Two members shall be elected from Stakeholders who are Business Owners or Employees within the boundaries of the Council. For purposes of this section only, Employees shall not include students. Business owners or Employees need not live within the boundaries of the council.
- h. Three members shall be elected from Stakeholders who are Property Owners within the boundaries of the Council. Property Owners must live within the boundaries of the council.
- i. Three members shall be elected from Stakeholders who are Property Owners, Renters, Business Owners, or Employees within the boundaries of the Council, who are also residents within the boundaries the council. For the purposes of this section only, Employees shall not include students. The mere fact that a stakeholder is a student shall not preclude that person from qualifying for the board, so long as they also qualify as a "Property Owner", "Business Owner", "Renter" or "Employee". The term "Renter" shall mean that the individual is listed on the residential rental agreement as a party to that residential real estate rental agreement and is not simply an occupant of a rental unit.
- j. Two members shall be elected from Stakeholders who are Property Owners, Business Owners, or Employees within the boundaries of the Council, who need not live within the boundaries the council. For purposes of this section only, Employees shall not include

students. The mere fact that a stakeholder is a student shall not preclude that person from qualifying for the board, so long as they also qualify as a "Property Owner", "Business Owner", or "Employee".

2. Duties

- a. The primary duties of the Board of Directors are to govern the Council and carry out its objectives.

3. Term of Office

- a. Terms shall commence on the first meeting following the election, after the new members have been administered their oath of office.
- b. All members shall serve a 2-year term except for the Youth member and the member representing the CSUN Associated Students who will serve a 1-year term.
- c. No member shall run for the board for more than four (4) consecutive terms. In no way does this limit a former board member from being appointed to an open seat.

4. Executive Board

- a. The Executive Board shall have five (5) members; the President, 1st Vice President, 2['] Vice President, Secretary and Treasurer.
 - i. The President shall preside at all meetings and direct all activities of the Board.
 - ii. The 1st Vice President shall serve as president in the absence of the President. The 1st Vice President shall serve as Membership Chairperson.
 - iii. The 2['] Vice President shall serve as president in the absence of the President and the 1st Vice President. The 2['] Vice President shall serve as Outreach Chairperson.
 - iv. The Secretary shall keep minutes of all Board and Council meetings.
 1. In the absence of the Secretary, the President shall choose an alternate secretary from the members of the Board to take the minutes of the meeting.
 - v. The Treasurer of the NENC shall oversee and be charged with the full custody and control of all Council funds and assets. Further duties are defined under Article XII of these bylaws.
- b. The Executive Board positions shall be filled by a majority vote of the Board present at the first meeting following the elections and annually thereafter.
- c. The Executive Board shall be selected annually, and shall serve at the pleasure of the Board and until a successor is elected.

5. Committees

- a. The President shall appoint the Chairs of all Committees except the Membership and Outreach Chairs. It shall be the responsibility of all Committee Chairs to appoint their committee members subject to the approval of the Board. The Board shall determine the size of the Committees and the length of service.
- b. The quorum shall be a majority number of members. Official action will be made by the majority of those present.
- c. All Committees established, or disbanded, shall be noted in the Council's Policies and Procedures document.

6. Removal of Board Members

- a. A Board Member may be removed from office for failure to attend three (3) consecutive unexcused meetings in a calendar year as defined by the Council's Policies and Procedures document.
- b. A Board Member may be removed from office for failure to abide by the Council's Code of Conduct as defined in the Council's Policies and Procedures document.
- c. A Board Member may be removed from office by the submission of a written petition signed by 3 Board Members that:
 - i. Identifies the Board Member to be removed
 - ii. Describes the objective reason(s) for removal
 - iii. Upon verification of signatures on the Petition for Removal, the Secretary shall place the matter on the agenda of the next Board meeting.
 - iv. This action shall require a majority vote of the Board to remove the identified Board Member.
 - v. The member who is the subject of the removal action will be allowed to speak to the Board, at the meeting and prior to the vote, but shall not take part in the vote.

- vi. If the vote for removal is affirmative then the position shall be determined to be vacant.
- d. All Board vacancies shall be filled per Article VIII, Section 4 of these bylaws.
- e. The Neighborhood Council will consult with its legal counsel, the office of the City Attorney throughout this removal process.

Article VIII

Election of the Board of Directors

1. Elections

- a. The initial Board of Directors shall be elected within six months following certification.
- b. Annual elections shall be held on or within 30 days of the anniversary of the initial election.
- c. No Council business shall be conducted during any election.
- d. Except as provided in Article VI Section 4, all elections will be by a secret ballot and shall be conducted as follows:
 - i. An Ad Hoc Elections Committee shall be formed by the Board to oversee the elections
 - ii. Candidates shall submit their names to the Ad Hoc Elections Committee
 - iii. Nominations from the floor shall be permitted with the consent of the nominee
 - iv. A neutral third party shall conduct the elections and a separate neutral third party shall resolve any election challenges.

2. Voting

- a. A Stakeholder who is at least 18 years of age shall be entitled to one (1) vote for each open position except the Youth position.
- b. A Stakeholder, who is between 16 and 18 years of age, shall be entitled to one (1) vote for the Youth position.
- c. Only youth may vote for the Youth member.

3. Seven (7) initial Board members will serve through December of the following year. Eight (8) initial Board members will serve until December of the same year.

4. Any vacancy on the Board shall be filled by the President and subject by the approval of the Board:

- a. The President shall ensure that the stakeholder selected meets the criteria for that seat.
- b. When the process mentioned above fills a vacant seat, the seat shall be filled for the duration of the term.
- c. If the Board is unable to establish a quorum due to the number of vacancies, then at a regularly noticed meeting, the existing Board Members may fill the seats until a quorum exists. No other action may be taken until a quorum is established.

Article IX

Outreach

- 1. An Outreach Committee shall exist to find and obtain interested Stakeholders to participate in Council activities.
- 2. Outreach efforts shall be instituted to find and obtain nominees for election to the Board.

Article X

Meetings

1. All meetings, as defined by the Brown Act, shall comply with the requirements of the Act.
2. Meetings shall be held at least once per calendar quarter.
3. Meetings will be held at a location, date and time defined in the Council's Policies and Procedures document.
4. Notification of all meetings shall include, at a minimum:
 - a. Posting on the Early Notification System (ENS)
 - b. Posting at each location submitted in the NENC Application for Certification
 - c. Other commonly frequented locations throughout the Council area
 - d. In one local publication tailored to reach the largest number of identifiable Stakeholders in the Council area
5. A quorum shall consist of a majority of the total Board Members.
6. A simple majority of those present is required to take official action unless otherwise stated.
7. The Board may reconsider and amend any Official Action on an item listed on the agenda if that reconsideration takes place either at the same Council Meeting as the original Official Action or at the next regular Council Meeting. The Board, on either of these two (2) occasions, shall consider a motion for reconsideration and, if approved, hear the matter and take a new Official Action.
 - a. If the motion to reconsider an Official Action is to be scheduled at the next Council Meeting following the original Official Action, then two (2) items shall be placed on the agenda for the Council Meeting:
 - i. A motion for reconsideration of the described Official Action, and
 - ii. A proposed new Official Action should the motion to reconsider be approved.
 - b. A motion for reconsideration may only be made by a Board member who previously voted on the prevailing side of the original Official Action.
 - c. If a motion for reconsideration is not made on the date the Official Action was taken, then a Board member on the prevailing side of the Official Action who desires reconsideration at the next Council Meeting shall submit a memorandum to the Secretary identifying the Official Action to be reconsidered, a brief description of the reason(s) for requesting reconsideration, and any proposed new or different Official Action should the motion to reconsider be approved at the next regular Council Meeting. The aforesaid shall all be in compliance with the Brown Act.
8. The Council shall comply with these bylaws so long as they are not inconsistent with the Los Angeles City Charter, its ordinances and rules, as well as all applicable federal and state codes and regulations.
9. All meetings will be conducted in accordance with the Brown Act, then the NENC Bylaws, and any rules adopted by the Board and Robert's Rules of Order where there is silence, if not inconsistent with the Brown Act.

Article XI

Amending Bylaws

1. The Board of Directors or a Stakeholder may propose amendments to these bylaws during the public comments period of a Council meeting.

2. A proposal to amend these bylaws will then be formalized in writing by the party making the proposal, and then submitted to the Secretary or person responsible for preparing the agenda for the next regular meeting of the Council.
3. The proposed amendment will be noticed on the agenda for public discussion and a vote at the next meeting.
4. An amendment or adjustment to these bylaws requires a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the Board present.
5. Thereafter, and within 14 days after a vote recommending amendment or adjustment to the bylaws, a Notice of Proposed Amendment of the Bylaws shall be submitted to DONE along with a copy of the existing bylaws for review and approval by DONE in accordance with Article V (3) of "The Plan". No amendment shall be valid, final, or effective until approved by DONE.

Article XII

Financial Accountability

1. The Treasurer of the NENC shall oversee and be charged with the full custody and control of all Council funds and assets.
2. The Treasurer shall prepare and submit "demand warrants" to DONE to pay bills.
3. Two signatures of Officers are to be on all requests and demand warrants:
 - a. One of the signatures shall be that of the Treasurer, and
 - b. The other signature shall be one of the following:
 - i. President
 - ii. 1st Vice President
 - iii. 2nd Vice President
 - iv. Secretary
4. The Treasurer:
 - a. Shall oversee a system of asset management record keeping and financial reporting as set forth in the Financial Management Plan. This plan is designed to meet the City's requirement for an accounting system that complies with Generally Accepted Accounting Principles and conforms to all applicable local, state or federal laws.
 - b. May request authorization from the Board to retain a financial professional to assist in refining and maintaining the bookkeeping and financial reporting system.
 - c. May also request the assistance of the Department of Neighborhood Empowerment, as needed.
5. The Treasurer however shall be ultimately responsible for the maintenance of the system of bookkeeping and accounting and for the protection of all Council assets.

6. Inspection and Copying of Financial Records

- a. The Council's financial statements, books and accounts shall be open for inspection and copying by any member of the public upon written request to the Board.
 - b. The Board shall establish fair and open procedures to permit inspection within a reasonable time.
 - c. The requesting party shall be responsible for all actual costs incurred in producing the records, which shall be paid for before any copies are released.
7. The Treasurer shall make a report to the Board on the Council's finances at every regular meeting of the Board.
8. The Treasurer shall be responsible for preparing or coordinating the preparation of a financial statement and submit it to DONE no less than once and no more than twice during each fiscal year, the date(s) of which shall be prescribed by DONE and comply with the Public Records Act.
9. The Treasurer shall also coordinate and cooperate with DONE on establishing a process and/or a system by which the Council's finances and book of accounts can be reviewed by DONE pursuant to the Plan for the Citywide System of Neighborhood Councils.

Article XIII

Grievance Procedure

1. The formal grievance process is intended to address matters involving procedural disputes, e.g., the Board's failure to comply with Board Rules or these bylaws, or its failure to comply with the City's Charter, the Plan, local ordinances, and/or state and federal law. This grievance process is not intended to apply to Stakeholders who simply disagree with a position or action taken by the Board at one of its meetings.
2. Any grievance by a Stakeholder must be submitted in writing to the Secretary. The Secretary shall then refer the matter to an ad hoc grievance panel comprised of three (3) Stakeholders who are randomly selected by the Secretary from a list of Stakeholders who have previously expressed an interest in serving as needed on such grievance panel. The complainant has a right to appeal to DONE.
3. The grievance panel shall meet within 20 days of being appointed.
4. After the grievance panel has met, one (1) member chosen by the panel members shall promptly (within 14 days) prepare a written report outlining the panel's recommendations for resolving the grievance. The grievance panel may seek additional time from the Board to complete this task.
5. The written report shall be presented to the Secretary who shall then forward the report to the Board.
6. The Board may receive a copy of the panel's report and recommendations prior to any meeting by the Board. However, pursuant to the Brown Act, the matter shall not be discussed among the Board Members until the matter is heard at the next regular Board meeting.
7. The Board shall discuss and vote on the grievance at the next regular meeting of the Board.
8. In the event that a grievance cannot be resolved through this grievance process, then the matter may be referred to DONE for consideration or dispute resolutions in accordance with the Plan.

Article XIII

Ethics

1. The Council, its representatives, and all Stakeholders will refrain from violating Board Rules and shall be subject to any or all applicable sections of the City of Los Angeles Governmental Ethics Ordinance (L.A.M.C. Section 49.5.1), and will abide by all applicable federal, state, and local laws. Attendance at a DONE or City Ethics Commission financial disclosures/ethics training is recommended for all Board Members.
2. The Council is committed to developing a system where pertinent information transmitted through the City's Early Notification System will be disseminated or made available to every Stakeholder of this Council in a timely manner.