

# Sunland Tujunga Neighborhood Council Special General Board Meeting Minutes

May 14, 2025, 7pm

*This meeting is being held by the Sunland-Tujunga Neighborhood Council using teleconferencing pursuant to Government Code Section 54953.8(a)(2)(B).*

1. Call to Order, Welcome - Lydia Grant, President, 7:04pm
  - a. MyLA311 submissions & Report Non Functioning Street Lights; Lydia shared updates about changes to My 311 app. Street light repair timeframe extended to 375 days due to budget cutbacks; the link for reporting non-functioning street lights is <https://forms.gle/yGjnKBXDVoFDDYdEA>
  - b. The STNC will be forming an Emergency Preparedness Committee as we move into the new cycle; participation from the community is encouraged.
  - c. Elections are Saturday, May 19<sup>th</sup>, from 12-4pm at the Elks Lodge. Residents need proof of residence or stakeholder status to vote. Voting is in-person only.
2. Pledge of Allegiance, Leny
3. Roll Call, Voting Eligibility - Karen Moran, Recording Secretary & Completion of City / DONE.  
Required trainings status for the STNC board & committees

Board Member	Roll Call	Funding Voting Eligibility	Board Appointment
Lydia Grant	Present	Yes	President
Armen Mardirousi	Absent	Yes	1st VP
Ross Herman	Present	Yes	2nd VP
Carol Hutchinson	Present	Yes	Treasurer
Cindy Cleghorn	Present	Yes	Correspondence Sec
Karen Moran	Present	Yes	Recording Sec
Leny Freeman	Present	Yes	Region 1 Rep

Board Member	Roll Call	Funding Voting Eligibility	Board Appointment
KT Travers	Present	Yes	Region 1 Rep
Sherry McCoy	Present	Yes	Region 2 Rep.
Vacant			Region 2 Rep
Mike Goglia	Absent	Yes	Region 3 Rep
Peter Darakjian	Present	Yes	Region 3 Rep
Jon von Gunten	Present	Yes	Region 3 Rep.
Belinda Woodruff	Absent	No	Region 4 Rep
Trevor Schmidt	Absent	Yes	Region 4 Rep
Mark Seigel	Present	Yes	Region 4 Rep
Deborah Ramirez	Absent	Yes	Education Rep
Cheryl Schmidt	Absent	Yes	Public Safety Rep
Nina Royal	Absent	Yes	Senior Rep
Vartan Keshish	Absent**	Yes	Community Interest Rep
Quorum: 11 present at roll call, 7 absent (19 total). **Note that Vartan Keshish arrived at 8:07pm.			

**4. Announce any Board member recusals or paid lobbyists in attendance – none.**

**5. Discussion/Q&A with LAPD, LAFD, Elected Officials/Representatives, DONE, NC Budget Advocates, City Departments**

- a. Officer Caloca provided a status report on crimes with overall decreases in crime from burglaries to stolen cars. The LAPD can facilitate getting a wheel lock if needed. Pat Kramer, chair of STAT, asked for traffic stats; Pat is looking for bodily injury and accidents and locations of where the accident occurred. Pat is currently keeping track of fatalities. Pat said that stakeholders are always asking about details and she needs the facts to be able to answer and to correct any mis-information in media sites such as Facebook.
- b. Ricardo Flores, CD7, discussed AAPI community cleanup day of service planned with tree watering on Foothill, Lopez Canyon Green space grand opening scheduled for June 7<sup>th</sup>, the first-ever dog park in Northeast San Fernando Valley opening, the Drone show and beach party scheduled for June 29<sup>th</sup>. Ricardo noted that the Verdugo Hills pool is 90-95% complete and Parks has an assessment meeting scheduled for first week of June.

- Lionel Mares expressed concern about City services being curtailed due to budget cuts which Ricardo said he would get information back on. Ricardo said it was important for residents to get involved with the City budget.
- Soil testing discussion. Jon asked about the status of the dumping of potentially toxic soil. STNC requested city testing of soil in multiple locations and at different depths. Ricardo Flores (CD7) explained that city can't test on county property without permission. Council Member Monica Rodriguez sent letters to county expressing concerns. Community members have expressed a lack of confidence in county testing results. The Community has received conflicting information about soil removal from site. The County is looking into actual routes being used by the trucks. Operations have been put on hold until the next rainy season. Jon emphasized that there is remediation that needs to be done on the roads also after the truck traffic. Ricardo said it is the County's responsibility and Jon said it seems that CD7 should be able to help us. Ricardo said they can test soil outside of the debris area but aren't allowed to go into the dumping area and suggested that he and Jon talk off-line. Lydia said that STNC requested testing in different locations and at different depths and the sampling the County did wasn't taken from the potentially toxic soil area and additional testing is needed. Lydia restated that we aren't requesting road soil be tested, but wants the council member to do the appropriate testing that has been requested. Ricardo said he will bring it up in his office.

c. County Supervisor Barger's Office Update

- Diana Oganessian reported Board approval of motion to support AB476 (copper wire theft), County approved \$47.9 billion budget (1.3 billion less than last year), Tribute to Veterans event scheduled for May 24<sup>th</sup>
- Natalie Vartanian addressed soil testing concerns and confirmed county has hired a toxicologist. There is a Community meeting about soil testing scheduled for June 3<sup>rd</sup> at the Elks Lodge. The LA Fair is on-going. The County is committed to repairing streets damaged by trucks.
  - Lydia said she hasn't been able to have a meeting with Supervisor Barger and one of the big issues is that they won't tell us what the normal range is for the toxic materials sampling results. The County's numbers are lower than ours and won't commit to what constitutes safe levels. Lydia said the County said they could give a presentation but would not address questions which was unacceptable to the STNC. Lydia said she plans to attend the June 3<sup>rd</sup> meeting. Natalie was that the test results were reviewed by a third party toxicologist who found that the levels of arsenic and other hazardous materials were below the State's thresholds and sent the report to Lydia. As of today, city hasn't requested any testing but they can arrange it with the County. The Community meeting June 3<sup>rd</sup> can address many of these concerns; it will be from 7-9pm at the Elks Lodge. The Dept of Public Health and toxicologist will explain the results and what they mean from the 2 separate samplings tested. Lydia said STNC has a flier that will be distributed for the June 3<sup>rd</sup> meeting.

- Mark Cuchillo expressed a concern about road damage and noted it may take some time to determine the extent of the underlaying road damage which may only become obvious after rains. This site will be used in the future, depending on weather and rain conditions and the extent of debris in the Altadena basin that needs to be cleared.
- Lionel Mares, Member of the Public, said that there was an LA Times article saying that they did their own testing and found toxic levels in materials tested, and that dumping was moving way too fast resulting potentially in ground water contamination. Lionel said that the County and City should work together to do clean up; environmental consequences can be expected in the future. Lionel provided links to the articles in CHAT.
- Karen von G asked how the County could restore the roads to their former condition. Natalie said the Dept of Public Works would determine this; they are responsible only for repairs. Natalie suggested bringing this question to the June 3<sup>rd</sup> meeting. Karen asked about sampling and getting another sample from the community. Lydia said the results from the County are not trusted; we get different and inconsistent answers. Lydia noted that she followed a truck into the middle of the burned houses right in the burn area. Natalie agreed that mis-information has been provided. Lydia said that one neighbor took photos of the soil dumped and it was a 'black mess'. STNC has been given data from legitimate laboratories that is discrepant from County results and that we need the soil tested again and at the level the first dirt came in and where it was dumped; there is a lack of confidence in the way the County sampled.

- d. Alex Avanesyan, Assembly Member Schultz Office. Alex highlighted three bills: AB321, AB793, and AB379. There is a car seat safety installation event on May 17th in Glendale. Lydia asked that Alex invite Assembly Member Schultz to the STNC June or July meeting for the community to be able to meet him. Alex will see if this can be arranged. Alex plans to attend the June 3<sup>rd</sup> meeting.

#### 6. STNC Board Selections – MEET THE CANDIDATES RUNNING FOR 2025-27 BOARD

- a. Mark Dutton presented the candidates present at the meeting who introduced themselves and their qualifications for various positions. Candidates included Lenny Freeman (Region 1), Brenna Redpath (Region 1 Rep), Sherry McCoy (Region 2 Rep), Jon von Gunten (Region 3 Rep), Dillon Dorothy (Region 3 Rep), Mark Siegel (Region 4 Rep), Dante Calvo (Region 4 Rep), Lydia Grant (President), Ross Herman (Second Vice President), Cindy Cleghorn (Corresponding Secretary).
- b. Vote in person at Elks Lodge on May 17 - 12noon to 4pm. Votes will be counted after 4pm.

#### 7. **Discussion/Action & Updates regarding Truck Traffic** with fires debris dropping in Seven Hills – *This item discussed previously.*

- Resources LA County, others
- L.A. City updates

- County Meeting - June 3 – test results

8. **CONSENT CALENDAR ITEMS (FUNDING) - MOTION: The STNC Board approves the funding consent calendar:**

- A. Discussion/Action: Motion approve April 2025 Monthly Expenditure Report and Balances (MER)
- B. Discussion/Action: Motion to approve \$500 for Budget Day June 21, 2025.
- C. Discussion/Action: Motion to approve \$3,000 for refreshments for STNC Selection Day.
- D. Discussion/Action: Motion to approve up to \$3,000 for expenses related to STNC Selection Day items: Ballots, Flyers, Banners, Signage.
- E. Discussion/Action: That the STNC credit card limit be raised to pay for selection expenses as necessary.
- F. Discussion/Action: Motion to approve ST Rotary 4th of July parade sponsorship \$3,000.
- G. Discussion/Action: Motion to approve Elks fee of \$600 for STNC Selection.

The Board voted unanimously to approve consent calendar funding items A through G with a motion made by Peter and seconded by Ross.

Item 8. Motion to approve the Funding Calendar items A through G.					
Motion: Darakjian, Second: Herman					
Yes	No	Abstain	Ineligible	Recuse	Absent
Grant, Herman, Cleghorn, Hutchinson, Moran, Von Gunten, Freeman, McCoy, Royal, Siegel, Keshish  <i>11 yes, 0 no, 1 abstain, 0 ineligible, 7 absent, 19 total</i>		Travers			Mardirousi, Goglio, Darakjian, Woodruff, T Schmidt, Ramirez, C Schmidt

9. **CONSENT CALENDAR ITEMS (NON-FUNDING) - Note:** Consent calendar items are considered to be non-controversial and will be treated as one agenda item. Any Board member or stakeholder may request that an item be removed. There will be no discussion of these items unless an item is removed from the consent calendar, in which case it will go to the end of New Business and be considered as time allows. All items may be submitted to Council Files as Community Impact Statements. **MOTION: The STNC Board approves the non-funding consent calendar:**

- A. Discussion/Motion: To approve April 2025 board meeting minutes
- B. Discussion/Action: To approve STNC Board Selection event
- Discussion/Action: **Council File 25-0002-S19** Subject: California Senate Bill 79 (SB 79) / Abundant & Affordable Homes Near Transit Act Position: **Oppose** Summary: The Sunland-Tujunga Neighborhood Council (STNC) urges the Los Angeles City Council to oppose California Senate Bill 79 unless amended to exempt single-family residential zones,

historic districts, and light-industrial areas.

SB 79 would allow construction of 65-foot apartment buildings within a half-mile of major transit stops, including areas currently zoned for single-family homes, without affordability requirements. This threatens Sunland-Tujunga's low-scale community character, historic homes (SurveyLA), industrial zones, and lacks infrastructure planning.

Requested Amendments:

- Exempt single-family residential, historic districts, and industrial zones.
- Require mandatory affordability provisions.
- Ensure infrastructure and environmental considerations.

- C. Discussion/Action: **Council File 11-1813-S12** Subject: Rancho LPG Facility / Liquefied Petroleum Gas Storage / Independent Hazard Study Position: **Support** Summary:
- D. Discussion/Action: The Sunland-Tujunga Neighborhood Council (STNC) supports **CF 11-1813-S12** requesting a full regulatory review and an independent third-party hazard study for the Rancho LPG Facility to ensure compliance with updated State and Federal codes and community safety.
- E. Discussion/Action: **Council File 11-1813-S13** Subject: Rancho LPG Facility / Regulatory Review / State and Federal Compliance Position: **Support** Summary: The Sunland-Tujunga Neighborhood Council (STNC) supports CF 11-1813-S13 calling for regulatory updates and ensuring the Rancho LPG Facility complies with current State and Federal safety codes.
- F. Discussion/Action: **Council File 11-1813-S14** Subject: Rancho LPG Facility / Railroad Spur Track Fees / Revocable Permit Review Position: **Support** Summary: The Sunland-Tujunga Neighborhood Council (STNC) supports CF 11-1813-S14 to review and update agreements regarding railroad spur track usage and fees associated with the Rancho LPG Facility, ensuring accountability and public safety.
- G. Discussion/Action: **Council File 25-006-S41** Subject: Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) Program Continuation Position: **Support** Summary: The Sunland-Tujunga Neighborhood Council (STNC) supports continued funding and expansion of the Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) program and its training sessions as essential components of neighborhood disaster preparedness.
- H. Discussion/Action: **Opposition to SB 607** (Wiener) / CEQA Rollbacks Position: **Oppose** Summary: The Sunland-Tujunga Neighborhood Council (STNC) opposes Senate Bill 607, which would weaken California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) standards, limit public environmental review, and allow rezoning without proper environmental safeguards, posing significant risks to public health, safety, and the environment.
  - A. **Key Concerns:**
    - Weakens 'fair argument' standard for environmental review.
    - Exempts large developments from CEQA scrutiny.
    - Reduces protections for communities against environmental harms.
- I. Discussion/Action: **Opposition** to Interactive Kiosk Experience (IKE) Program / Public Right-of-Way Advertising Position: **Oppose** Summary: The Sunland-Tujunga Neighborhood Council (STNC) opposes the City's proposed IKE program, which would install digital kiosks in the public right-of-way, causing visual blight, undermining the

City's STAP (Sidewalk Transit Amenities Program), and risking driver distraction and revenue losses for essential public infrastructure programs.

A. **Key Concerns:**

- Conflicts with STAP program revenue model.
- Creates visual and advertising clutter.
- Risks undermining citywide transit shelter expansion commitments.

- J. Discussion/Action: **Approve letter Request for Re-Evaluation and Removal of Daylighting Red Curb Restriction.** Position: request to LADOT to reconsider and remove a 'daylighting' red curb restriction implemented under AB 413 in a low-traffic residential area. The restriction reduced parking with minimal added safety benefit, and local conditions permit flexibility under the law.
- K. Discussion/Action: **Opposition** to removal of trees along Summitrose across from Verdugo Hills High School to put in a sidewalk and remove neighbor's existing landscaping and approve Ross Herman, VP as liaison.
- L. The Sunland-Tujunga Neighborhood Council (STNC) requests that the Mayor and City Council restore the **annual Neighborhood Council allocation** to at least \$50,000. STNC also supports the full rollover of all unspent funds from the current fiscal year into the next. Due to the lack of a permanent meeting location, STNC faces significantly higher expenses for meeting space rental and storage. A Community Impact Statement will be filed for Council File 25-0600, Budget Proposal for Fiscal Year 2025-2026.
- M. The Sunland-Tujunga Neighborhood Council (STNC) **supports the idea of an Advisory Group** to aid the City Council in setting the Los Angeles City budget on a sustainable path. With a projected budget gap of nearly \$1 billion, business as usual will not work. The 99 Neighborhood Councils were formed to advise the City government. The Neighborhood Councils should have a seat at the table. One Advisory Group member from the Neighborhood Council Budget Advocates is an obvious choice. The Budget Advocates include representatives from each of the City's twelve service regions. Within the Neighborhood Council system, the Budget Advocates have the best knowledge of the City budget and they have a track record of recommendations on the City budget dating back 14 years. The Budget Advocates are ready and equipped to serve in this group. We urge you to appoint a Budget Advocate to the Advisory Group to give Neighborhood Councils a strong voice in providing solutions to the City's budget woes.

The Board voted unanimously to approve consent calendar funding items A through G with a motion made by Peter and seconded by Carol.

**Item 9. Motion to approve the Non-Funding Calendar items A through M.**

**Motion: Darakjian, Second: Hutchinson**

**Yes**

**No**

**Abstain**

**Ineligible**

**Recuse**

**Absent**

Grant, Herman, Cleghorn, Hutchinson, Moran, Von Gunten, Freeman, Travers, McCoy, Royal, Siegel, Keshish  12 yes, 0 no, 0 abstain, 0 ineligible, 7 absent, 19 total					Mardirousi, Goglio, Darakjian, Woodruff, T Schmidt, Ramirez, C Schmidt
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#### 10. GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS

- a. Mr. Raju Shah, from Jain Temple, thanked the council for their support in generating the letter for modifications planned to be done to the temple. The Letter was approved by LUC and will be part of the next General Board meeting which Raju will attend. Lydia told Raju to let us know if a hearing comes up in the meantime so we can support it. Raju said that sometimes they get grants that may be used for the community and if there are future needs, to bring them to their attention.
- b. Lionel Mares thanked the Board for the comprehensive agenda and for supporting the community in watching out for our best interests.

#### 11. Committee & Liaison Reports - by committee chairs present

- Land Use Committee - Meeting May 12 @ 7:30pm. Cindy, 3<sup>rd</sup> Monday in June. Another at Elks Lodge in a couple of months in person. Cindy noted that the agenda would include the proposal for six-story building at Leolang and Foothill.
- Beautification: 5/15 @ 6PM - in person @ ST Library
- Outreach Meeting - 5/15 @ 7PM - virtual Zoom - 4th of July volunteers. Ross inviting people to meeting tomorrow night. Lydia said that we are always happy to answer questions for new members.
- STAT - 5/27 - @ 6PM - virtual Zoom
- STARC: 5/27 @ 7:30PM - in person @ McGroarty Art Center. KT – last night with STNC for START and Beautification, need new board members. KT has one more meeting, per Lydia, before new board is seated. KT will stay on both committees she is on? Confusing? Maybe non official?
- Youth & Adult Education: - TBA
- Budget & Finance: 5/28 @ 6pm
- Community Improvement & Government Affairs - TBA
- Executive: 5/28 @7:00pm

#### 12. PRESENTATION & TRAINING on the Neighborhood Council (NC) System – *this item not discussed in the interest of time.*

- A. Bylaws, Standing Rules, BONC Policies, Brown Act (Meeting Agenda Posting, ENS)
- B. NC Meetings: Agenda Items, Presenters, Meeting Agendas, Making Motions, Community Impact Statements



- C. NC Alliances (Valley Alliance of Neighborhood Councils - VANC meets 2nd Thursday on Zoom; LANCC meets 1st Saturday at 10am; PlanCheckNC meets 2nd Saturday at 10am, STNC Community Events/Meetings, Other Training Opportunities

**13. FINAL ANNOUNCEMENTS**

- Lydia reminded that there is one more General Board meeting for this year with voting on budget packet done at this time. The June 11<sup>th</sup> General Board meeting will be at 7pm and in person at the Elks Lodge.
- Cindy noted that the LUC has identified a major concern with a 6 story apartment planned to be built on Foothill Blvd invited people to get involved. It is an ED1 City project for low/very low income people.
- Peter suggested members could make a personal donation to supplement the work that we do in view of the budget cuts. Lydia said that we cannot accept donations.
- Peter raised concerns about truck damage to streets, stressing the need to completely resurface the streets due to heavy truck weight. Peter noted that the average car may be 3K lb but trucks may be 25-35 tons (unloaded), and with a load could be 56-76 tons. Local roads are not made for this kind of weight and that with one good rain, the roads could be deformed. Lydia invited Peter to stay with us even if not running for the Board this time.
- Leny wanted to know what situation is currently in the Seven Hills for debris impact (e.g. smells) because he will be talking to EPA; Leny will be in touch with Lydia and Jon. Lydia said the odors are still present and she will go to other council members to get testing done, if needed.
- KT mentioned she would be leaving the Board. KT noted the need for new board members on STARC and the Beautification committees and confirmed she will remain on committees despite leaving the board
- Lydia addressed budget cuts to neighborhood councils. The Budget is being reduced from \$50k (originally) to \$32k this year and \$25,000 for the forth-coming year. High costs for meeting space (\$204/hour) at the North Valley City Hall on Foothill make in-person meetings difficult. SB411 was a bill that went through that allowed NCs to meet on zoom; STNC attends most of the community events and some in-person Town Halls to meet people in person.
- Lydia reminded that elections will be Saturday 12-4 PM at Elks Lodge with the goal to have 2,000 voters participate (previous election had 1,200). Votes will be counted immediately after polls close.

**14. ADJOURN. 9 pm.**