

CITY OF LOS ANGELES  
CALIFORNIA

PUBLIC SAFETY  
COMMITTEE

CHAIR                      VICE CHAIR  
JJ Popowich              Marilyn Robinson  
  
MEMBERS  
  
Dwight Burgess  
Herbert Schwartz  
James Valdez



WINNETKA  
NEIGHBORHOOD  
COUNCIL

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**WINNETKA NEIGHBORHOOD COUNCIL  
PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES**

**To:** Council Members, Public  
**From:** J.J. Popowich, Secretary  
**Date:** March 21, 2005  
**Subject:** Public Safety Meeting Minutes 03/21/05

1. Call to Order and Committee Members Roll Call.

JJ Popowich	Marilyn Robinson	Dwight Burgess	Herbie Schwartz
	James Valdez – Absent		

2. Approval of minutes.

2.1. Minutes approved with no changes.

3. State and local government representatives' updates: LAPD, Fire, and any other local, state, or federal officials that wish to attend to discuss items of importance to the Public Safety Committee.

3.1. Senior Lead Officer Karen Rodriguez was not in attendance.

4. **Discussion and possible action on reports that the "Wet Spot" a Canoga Park Adult Entertainment club has been passing out sexually explicit advertising on cards on doors of Winnetka.**

4.1. Mr. Popowich introduced the issue and read the letter from Linda Wakefield-Wynne.

4.2. Mr. Schwartz said they had a similar problem with the Candy Cat the LAPD Vice cracked down and fixed it.

4.3. Ms. Robinson said she did send a letter to the Captain Sherman's and his office about the "Wet Spot" said they would review the issue.

4.4. Mr. Popowich said he would like to make a motion that we request they not do it in our neighborhood.

4.4.1. Mr. Schwartz said that a letter wouldn't work. He suggested that we work this through the vice squad.

4.4.2. Ms. Robinson said we should send it to both the Devonshire and Winnetka LAPD stations.

4.5. Mr. Cubillas, a stakeholder asked if it was legal to drop it off at a home.

4.5.1. It was clarified that you can't place anything in the mailbox.

4.6. Mr. Popowich said that he felt that we should still send them a letter to this business and ask them not to do this.

4.6.1. Ms. Robinson agreed and suggested it would be good and that we should cc: the LAPD.

4.6.2. There was a brief discussion on similar issues.

4.7. Mr. Cubillas, said that several years ago there was an adult video store on Sherman Way, just off of Topanga Blvd., and the neighbors worked very hard to shut the business down, but it was never accomplished.

4.7.1. Mr. Popowich said he remembered it because they forced the business to change hours, hire security and even raided the business.

4.8. Mr. Popowich proposed the following motion:

*“WNC-PS-032105: The WNC will send a letter to the Wet Spot requesting they cease advertising sexually explicit material in residential areas in Winnetka. Furthermore, the WNC will request the LAPD West Valley to look into this issue as well and provide a response to us on any action taken. Copies of this letter will be distributed to SLO Rodriguez and Councilmember Zine.”*

4.8.1. Ms. Robinson seconded the motion.

4.8.2. Mr. Popowich asked if there were any objections to the motion. No objections were made. The motion passed 4 – 0.

**5. Discussion and possible action to form an ad hoc committee to look into current laws and regulations governing group houses. This committee would report to the Public Safety Committee on its findings and recommendations on any actions the WNC should take regarding this committee's recommendations. The Committee would report to the WNC PS Committee at our next meeting.**

5.1. Mr. Popowich introduced this issue.

5.2. Mr. Schwartz said this came up in his CPAB [Community Policing Advisory Board] meeting and there was a representative from the L.A. Department of Housing who confirmed there were no laws to regulate this.

5.3. Mr. Popowich said that he hopes this ad hoc committee would put together some suggestions for restrictions and then we can go to the local representatives to push a law forward.

5.4. Mr. Essavi, a stakeholder, asked who supports the group houses.

5.4.1. It was explained that these are private houses. Anyone can do this.

5.5. Mr. Popowich asked if anyone wants to be on this committee. No one indicated any interest, mostly due to a lack of time available to serve on the community. It was generally agreed that this is a problem.

5.6. Mr. Schwartz suggested we wait and see if CPAB takes any actions.

5.6.1. Mr. Popowich stated he agrees with him on the hope that CPAB takes an action, but he feels that the WNC or NCs in general should be taking the lead. There is nothing stopping us from coming up with well thought out suggestions for an ordinance and then work through our local council members or state reps.

5.7. Ms. Robinson asked if the Department of Housing representative will come back to the CPAB meeting.

5.7.1. Mr. Schwartz indicated that the representative would only return if CPAB invited him back.

5.8. Ms. Robinson said we should take this on ourselves.

5.9. Mr. Essavi, a stakeholder, said he would be interested but he could not do it alone.

5.10. Ms. Robinson suggested we invite this representative to come to our meeting before we take any actions.

5.10.1. Mr. Popowich agreed that we should invite a member of the Dept of Housing to speak at one of our meetings and we will progress from there. He said his intention is to continue with this and create an ad hoc committee in the near future.

5.11. Ms. Robinson asked Mr. Cubillas if he had ever heard of any of his clients opening one of these group homes after purchasing a house.

5.11.1. Mr. Cubillas said that he has not, but he has seen some people, not his clients have multiple families living in rooms.

5.11.2. A discussion ensued on what is legal in regards to multiple families and conversions.

**6. Discussion and possible action on creating a letter to either support or oppose California State Assembly Bill AB35, in regards to Megan's Law: sex offender information. This letter from the Winnetka Council would be forwarded to the Authors of the Bill (AB35) and to the Assembly members on the Assembly Public Safety Committee showing the Neighborhoods support or opposition of this bill. The Secretary would be allowed to forward as such letter to other public figures as he/she sees fit.**

6.1. Mr. Popowich introduced the issue and Mr. Montaine who he said asked for this issue to be placed on the agenda.

6.2. Mr. Montaine said there are two databases that are available on the Internet. One database is maintained by the state of California and one maintained by the City of Los Angeles. The state requires it the database to be maintained so that parents can educate their children that there is someone in the area who has done something bad so they can report the person to an adult if they see the person hanging around school or house.

Mr. Montaine said there are some loopholes that allow either only some information to be posted and or that allow no information be posted. The Assembly bill AB35 would remove the loopholes for sex offenders and rapists. He said to be fair the other side wants to protect the identity of the individual.

He stated he believes part of this Assembly bill is written so that a person in an apartment building has some ability to deal with the problem. He said the residents can pressure the land owner to get the person to move. However, the other sides says that no one has the right to force an not to live somewhere. He believes this bill will allow the land lord to break a lease for a family that wants to leave early because of the sex offender.

He went on to say that the current rules require the offender to give the info, but does not actively collect or acquire the information. It's on an honor system.

6.2.1. Mr. Popowich commented that this would be an interesting constitutional dilemma since according to the law they have served their time and this would be like further punishment. He stressed he wasn't commenting on support or opposition, but he just stating it was interesting from a legal standpoint.

6.2.2. Mr. Montaine said that on one talk show Assemblyman Spitzer was asking the public to write in their feelings, comments, support or opposition.

6.3. Mr. Essavi, a stakeholder, said he had a question about the constitutionality of the law. He said he wondered if the first law had been challenged.

6.3.1. Mr. Montaine said it has not been challenged.

6.3.2. Mr. Essavi, a stakeholder, asked if we this law would just be lowering the tier so that the loop hole is closed.

6.3.3. Mr. Montaine agreed that the idea is to make it public and so that they have to submit the information. He said this would hopefully force the state to keep it up to date as well so that we keep where you are.

6.4. Mr. Popowich commented that he is in support of the law in general. He went on to say that he only raised the issue as a point of discussion. He went on to say this was an interesting problem because these folks have to live some where, but where can they go. Would we create a "lepers colony" so that have some where to live. He concluded that he certainly did not want them living in his neighborhood as he has a daughter and he wouldn't want them in any one's neighborhood for similar reasons, but he also realizes they have a right to live somewhere.

6.5. There was a brief discussion on the legality and who was likely to molest someone as well as other related topics.

6.6. Mr. Popowich suggested that we table the discussion for now and review the law before we vote on it. He said we can vote on it at the next meeting. He advised the Committee members he would send them a copy of the proposed bill for their review.

6.6.1. Mr. Montaine said that would be ok as the bill is currently hung up in the Assembly Public Safety Committee. He did caution that sometimes the Assembly will release the bill under a different name.

6.6.2. The Committee agreed to table any action until the next meeting.

7. **Discussion and possible action on how to improve public participation in local Neighborhood Watch programs. This will include a discussion on whether the WNC wishes to get involved in this process or not.**

7.1. Mr. Popowich opened the discussion by saying the issue was brought up in our last meeting by Mr. Burgess and he thought it was something we should discuss to see if we even want to get involved.

7.2. Mr. Schwartz said that people just don't want to get involved. It's a combination of lack of interest, time, or just don't want to get involved.

7.3. Mr. Burgess said that in the past their Neighborhood Watch (NW) had held meetings, parties, and so on to keep people involved.

7.4. Mr. Schwartz said people just don't want to get involved.

7.5. Ms. Robinson said she has even got a bit disenchanted. She runs her area, but is not really into getting together a group for meetings. Maybe when they get a new SLO.

7.6. Mr. Schwartz commented that his area is a kind of enclosed area, and the younger folks don't even want to get involved.

7.7. Mr. Montaine asked what would keep the WNC from listing the NW meetings in our quarterly newsletter. He went on to say that he doesn't even know where his is. It's like the WNC, no one even knew until we sent out the newsletter.

7.7.1. Ms. Robinson said that we did reach out to the meetings when we had the elections.

7.7.2. Mr. Popowich said that the only thing stopping us from posting it is space their meetings in the newsletter.

7.7.3. Ms. Robinson said that the NW sends out a larger newsletter and we are not listed in there.

7.7.4. Mr. Popowich said we can post them on the web site. The problem with the NW newsletters is that they are printed and distributed through the Block Captains which are only distributing them to their members so no one finds out.

7.8. Mr. Montaine asked how many NW's there are in Winnetka.

7.8.1. Ms. Robinson commented there are many.

7.9. Mr. Popowich said that they were a bit off topic, and asked if we want to get involved.

7.10. Mr. Schwartz asked how we could get involved. He suggested that we table it until something comes up.

7.11. Mr. Popowich said at this time we will just table it.

8. **Discussion and possible action to send a letter to Food 4 Less, Albertson's, the 99 Cent Store, K-Mart, and other large stores to encourage them to retrieve their shopping carts or take greater measures to encourage shoppers to leave the carts on store property.**

8.1. Mr. Popowich introduced the issue.

8.2. Mr. Schwartz said it would be a good idea. This would coincide with the NW efforts that he is aware of to send a letter to businesses.

- 8.3. Mr. Burgess said there is a company that is supposed to pick it up.
- 8.3.1. Mr. Schwartz commented that some are under contract, like Albertson's, to have them picked up, but some don't. He went on to use Jon's as an example of how this should be handled. Jon's he said does not allow them to leave the premises.
- 8.4. Mr. Montaine suggested we list on the web site which companies have a contract and then what number to call.
- 8.4.1. Mr. Popowich asked how we would know.
- 8.4.2. Mr. Schwartz said there is a number on the cart.
- 8.4.3. There was a discussion on how it would be enforced and what can be done. Some ideas were to just call the city, cite them, and others.
- 8.5. Mr. Popowich said he's personally tired of the shopping carts.
- 8.6. Mr. Cubillas, a stakeholder, said that a letter going to the stores has to be strong to encourage them that they have to do something to get them to do something about the issue. He wasn't even aware it had reached into the neighborhoods that were single family homes.
- 8.7. Ms. Robinson asked if we sent letters to the stores here or the corporate offices.
- 8.7.1. Mr. Schwartz said we should send it to the local office, but also copy the corporate office.
- 8.8. Ms. Robinson said that she had called the Value + store and was informed by the manager that he felt the Hispanic people that shop at his location don't have cars and that's why. She went on to say that this manager is no longer here.
- 8.9. Mr. Cubillas, a stakeholder, said that we really should send the letter directly to the store manager by name so that it can carry some weight.
- 8.10. Mr. Popowich asked if we should write the letter in a way that encourages them to let us know if they already have arrangements so that we are focusing on the ones that are problems and not upsetting the ones who are trying to do something.
- 8.11. Mr. Schwartz said this was a major issue at his CPAB meeting and it's just one more letter.
- 8.12. Mr. Montaine, a stakeholder, said that it's tough. We can't even enforce the graffiti. He said we need an alternate method to publicize the way the community can handle it if it is seen. It's unfortunate that they have to use this method.
- 8.13. Mr. Cubillas, a stakeholder, commented this is a big problem. He pointed out that a lot of this is done by renters because they don't care, because it's not their problem.
- 8.14. Mr. Popowich said he is sympathetic to the issue. He commented that at times he has been without a car and had to carry bags, but also had to use a basket that they had bought. So he is aware what they go through, but he still never took the shopping cart.
- 8.15. Mr. Essavi, a stakeholder, said that he remembers in Burbank there was one store that charged the customer's to use the carts.
- 8.15.1. Mr. Popowich said there were stores like that, who charged to get the cart out of holding area to use. Mr. Popowich then introduced the following motion:
- “WNC-PS-032105: The WNC will send a letter to the local managers, and the corporate office requesting that they do their best efforts to limit customers from removing the carts and leaving them in the area. Furthermore the WNC will ask each manager to advise us if they have a pick up contract so that we can educate our stakeholders.
- 8.16. Mr. Burgess seconded the motion
- 8.17. Mr. Popowich asked if there was any objection to the motion as presented. None were raised and the motion passed 4 – 0.

9. Public Comments – Comments from the public on non-agenda items within the Committee’s subject matter jurisdiction.
10. Committee Business –
  - A. Comments on Committee Member’s own activities/ brief announcements.  
  
-Mr. Popowich read the letter that was scheduled to be to the LAPD & Park Rangers regarding the Runnymede Park issue.
  - B. Brief response to statements made or questions posed by persons exercising their general public comment rights.
  - C. Introduction of any new issues for consideration by the Committee at its next meeting/request that the item be placed on the next meeting’s agenda.
  - D. Requests for Committee Members to research issues and report back to the Committee at a future time.
11. Adjournment