

Contact Information

Neighborhood Council: Empowerment Congress West Area Neighborhood Development Council

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Date of NC Board Action: 02/03/2010

Type of NC Board Action: Against Proposal

Impact Information

Date: 02/17/2010

Update to a Previous Input: No

Directed To: City Council and Committees

Council File Number: 09-0600-S159

Agenda Date: 02/18/2010

Item Number: 1

Brief Summary: We strongly object to the proposed consolidation of the Department of Neighborhood Empowerment (DONE) within another city or outside agency and excessive staff reductions. It is important that the system of volunteer neighborhood councils is provided ready access and support from the city afforded through a dedicated department with adequate staffing.

Additional Information: Consideration must be given to maintaining sufficient staffing to adequately support the more than 80 neighborhood councils.



**Empowerment Congress West Area Neighborhood  
Development Council  
Minutes- February 3, 2010  
Hillcrest Elementary School**

**Board Members in Attendance:** Karen Cesar, Malcolm Carson, Lark Galloway-Gilliam, Rev. Lee Walker, Christine Hall, David Winston, Johnnie Raines, Rev Lee Walker, Kevin Fridlington

Excused Absence: Mark Jones Darks, Damien Goodmon, Jackie Ryan, Lanz Alexander

Unexcused Absence: Tommy Plummer, Chris Shoaf

City Representatives: City Councilmember Bernard Parks, Senior Lead Officer Susijima

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**Call to Order:** Chair Lark Galloway-Gilliam called the meeting to order at approximately 6:45p.m. A quorum was present.

**Public Comments:**

Senior Lead Officer Susijima provided a written and oral report on criminal activity within the area for the preceding month. It was noted that crime was down in the Leimert Park area, however there continues to be concern for automobile break-ins.

**Minutes:**

Minutes of October 7<sup>th</sup> were reviewed and approved as presented by unanimous vote.

**Community Discussion**

Councilmember Bernard Parks present to discuss the \$208million city budget shortfall. The Councilmember noted that revenues were significantly lower than previously projected. Members raised concern for the lack of planning and preparation. The councilmember explained the revenue streams (eg sales tax) for the city are sensitive to consumer spending and the economic downturn. The current proposals call for the layoff of more than 1,000 city employees and the recapturing all savings including the neighborhood council carryover funding. After considerable discussion, the motion was made by David Winston and seconded by Kevin Fridlington authorizing the submission of a letter to the city council and mayor recommending the following:

1. All city departments, including police and fire be subject to budget cuts of equal proportion;
1. Departments with duplicative and/or overlapping functions be consolidated to achieve efficiencies and savings beginning with the consolidation of the Community Redevelopment under the City of Los Angeles Planning Department;
2. All employees accept a 8% salary reduction in an effort to protect vital city services and preserve jobs;
3. All revenue generating centers be preserved and not outsourced, We caution against any effort to privatize or outsource either revenue generating centers or basic city services which require a long term commitment;
4. The city explore additional revenue solutions to offset the decline in sales tax, etc;

2. Critical city services such as libraries, parks, street services, cultural affairs and the City Attorney Neighborhood Prosecutors be preserved as a priority;
5. Following the adoption of the budget - allocation of city services must be based on achieving equity across communities commensurate with the needs of each individual community's infrastructure, resources and capacity. This would include funding for parks, libraries and other city services and resources which are too often the only resources and therefore in greater need in areas such as South LA than other underserved communities within the city;
6. The City Planning Department resources for the updating of the South LA community plans including Baldwin hills/West Adams/Crenshaw area be preserved to allow for the timely completion of the plan updates.
7. We oppose the consolidation or elimination of the DONE and the excess funding cuts to the NC funding program.

The motion passed by unanimous vote.

Lee Walker presented a copy of a letter developed by the West Adams NC objecting to the construction of a transit stop at Farmdale/Dorsey. Due to the hour and absence of the member who asked the item be placed on the agenda – the item was tabled until the next meeting.

**Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at approximately 8:30pm**



**EMPOWERMENT CONGRESS WEST  
AREA NEIGHBORHOOD DEVELOPMENT  
COUNCIL**

A Certified City of LA Neighborhood Council

**Chair**

Lark Galloway-Gilliam

**Co-Chair**

Damien Goodman

**Recording Secretary**

Karen Caesar

**Corresponding Secretary**

Malcolm Carson

**Treasurer**

Lanz Alexander

**Neighborhood Representatives Area 1**

Mary Darks-Jones

Tommy Plummer

**Neighborhood Representatives Area 2**

Chris Shoaf

David Winston

**Neighborhood Representatives Area 3**

Michelle Colbert

Rev Lee Walker

**At-Large Members**

Malcolm Carson

Kevin Fridlington

Christine Hall

Johnnie Raines

Jackie Ryan

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*Serving the Communities of:*  
Baldwin Hills, Baldwin Village,  
Baldwin Vista, Cameo Woods  
Crenshaw Manor, Leimert Park  
Village Green

February 16, 2010

Los Angeles City Council  
200 N. Temple  
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa  
200 N. Temple  
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Dear Mayor and Members of the City Council;

The Empowerment Congress West Area Neighborhood Development wishes to take this opportunity to express our deep concern regarding what can only be viewed as draconian cuts to vital city services in response to the dramatic decline in city revenue. We appreciate and share your deep concern and the urgency of the budget crisis. However – it is unclear to us why the city did not adequately forecast and therefore begin the process of planning for the realignment of revenue and expenses in advance of this current crisis. The proposals are reactionary and show little foresight for their impact on the quality of life in our communities. We believe the safety and well being of the community extends beyond conventional law enforcement and should be broadly defined to include those services and functions which add to the basic quality of life in the community including but not limited to parks, libraries, art and cultural affairs and street services. Los Angeles without clean streets, green and active parks and a rich diversity of cultural events open to the public is tantamount to government failure at its worst. We have all made too great an investment in this city to allow for its systematic decline. We therefore call upon the mayor, city council and our city employees to develop a rational and equitable solution to the current crisis. We recommend the following:

1. All city departments, including police and fire be subject to budget cuts of equal proportion;
2. Departments with duplicative and/or overlapping functions be consolidated to achieve efficiencies and savings beginning with the consolidation of the Community Redevelopment Agency under the auspices of LA City Planning;
3. All employees accept a 8% salary reduction in an effort to protect vital city services and preserve jobs;
4. All revenue generating centers be preserved and not outsourced. We caution against any effort to privatize or outsource either revenue generating centers or basic city services which require a long term commitment;
5. The city fully explore all revenue enhancing strategies to offset the loss in city sales tax and other revenue streams;

6. Critical city services such as libraries, parks, street services, cultural affairs and the City Attorney Neighborhood Prosecutors be preserved as a priority;
7. Following the adoption of the budget - allocation of city services must be based on achieving equity across communities commensurate with the needs of each individual community's infrastructure, resources and capacity. This would include funding for parks, libraries and other city services and resources which are too often the only resources and therefore in greater need in areas such as South LA than other underserved communities within the city.

Furthermore – we respectfully request the City Planning Department resources for the updating of the South LA community plans including Baldwin hills/West Adams/Crenshaw area be preserved to allow for the timely completion of the plan updates.

We also strongly object to the proposed consolidation of the Department of Neighborhood Empowerment (DONE) within another city or outside agency and excessive. It is important that the system of volunteer neighborhood councils be provided ready access and support from the city afforded through a dedicated department with adequate staffing. The issues raised by the city controller's office and other critiques regarding the efficiency of the department are largely due to the lack of adequate staff resources. Consideration must be given to maintaining sufficient staffing to adequately support the more than 80 neighborhood councils.

The CAO has also recommended a 50% reduction in the annual funding for neighborhood councils, the "taking" of all carryover funding and the elimination of the bankcards. We adamantly oppose these proposals, but can support a reduction in annual funding commensurate with the reduction to be taken by all other city agencies.

Thank you for your consideration of this request. Should you have any questions or require any additional information – please advise.

Sincerely,

Lark Galloway-Gilliam

Lark Galloway-Gilliam

Chair