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BEFORE THE CITY OF LOS ANGELES
THE BOARD OF NEIGHBORHOOD COMMISSIONERS
BILL CHRISTOPHER, PRESIDENT

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In the matter of:)
CITY OF LOS ANGELES)
DEPARTMENT OF NEIGHBORHOOD)
EMPOWERMENT)

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TRANSCRIPT OF PROCEEDINGS
Sunland, California
Tuesday, May 27, 2003

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Reported by:
Lynn E. Valenti
CSR No. 8061
Job Number:
DNE7655

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TRANSCRIPT OF PROCEEDINGS, taken at
Mount Gleason Middle School, 10965 Mount
Gleason Avenue, Sunland, California, commencing
at 7:30 p.m., on Tuesday, May 27, 2003,
heard before THE BOARD OF NEIGHBORHOOD
COMMISSIONERS, CITY OF LOS ANGELES, reported
by LYNN E. VALENTI, CSR No. 8061, a Certified
Shorthand Reporter for the State of California.

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- 01 APPEARANCES:
- 01
- 02 BILL CHRISTOPHER - PRESIDENT
- 02 PAT HERRERA-DURAN - VICE-PRESIDENT
- 03 RONALD STONE - COMMISSIONER
- 03 TONY LUCENTE - COMMISSIONER
- 04 SHANNON HOPPES - COMMISSION EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT

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0004

01 Sunland, California, Tuesday, May 27, 2003
02 7: 30 p. m.

03
04 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: Good evening,
05 ladies and gentlemen. If I can ask you all to take
06 your seats, we actually do have four commissioners
07 in the house, so I'd like to call to order the
08 meeting of the Board of Neighborhood Commissioners
09 for Tuesday, May 27th, 2003.

10 We're at the Mount Gleason Middle School
11 in Sunland, California. I'm joined this evening by
12 Commissioner Tony Lucente, Commissioner Pat
13 Herrera-Duran, and Commissioner Ron Stone. I'm
14 Commissioner Bill Christopher.

15 And with that, we'll move into Item Number
16 2 on the agenda, which is the public forum or public
17 comment period. And amazingly, tonight I have no
18 cards in the public comment sector, so we will close
19 Item Number 2 and move directly to Item Number 3,
20 which is a combined public hearing regarding the
21 application for neighborhood council certification
22 submitted by the Sunland-Tujunga Council and the
23 Sunland-Tujunga Neighborhood Council.

24 Now, the way we're going to work this
25 tonight is that I'm going to ask the staff to

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01 present first one of the neighborhood councils with
02 the staff report, then I'll ask the applicants to
03 come forward and make their presentation for that
04 neighborhood council. Then we'll repeat the
05 procedure for the second application, so then once
06 that's completed, the board will have a chance to
07 ask questions of the applicants and the staff, and
08 then we'll open the public hearing.

09 During the public hearing everybody will
10 get one chance to speak, and you can use your time
11 either to support one or the other of the
12 neighborhood councils or to make comments about one
13 or the other.

14 So we'll begin with Rita Moreno, who will
15 provide the staff report on the -- starting, I

16 guess, with the Sunland-Tujunga Council.
17 RITA MORENO: Good evening, Commissioners and
18 members of the public. Rita Moreno with the
19 Department of Neighborhood Empowerment.
20 The Department received an application for
21 certification from the Sunland-Tujunga Council on
22 January 28th. Staff did review the application and
23 found the application to be complete. The
24 boundaries and --

25 You know, we moved the map so you could
0006 see the presentation, but Amalia, can we bring the
01 map a little forward so the commissioners can see it
02 for the Sunland-Tujunga Council?
03

04 The boundaries extend -- on the south they
05 follow the 210 Freeway, from the eastern boundary of
06 the city of Los Angeles to Wentworth. On Wentworth
07 we travel east to Foothill Boulevard and then north
08 on Foothill Boulevard to Conover Road, at which
09 point you travel eastward to meet the Conover Fire
10 Road and then up Ebey Canyon northward to the city
11 limit. You then follow the city limit all through
12 the northern city limit to the eastern boundary and
13 then down again on the east, following the city
14 limit there again.

15 The boundaries are a bit of an irregular
16 footprint but, as you can see, they follow the city
17 limit. And they also follow the boundaries of the
18 Foothill Trails Neighborhood Council on the south.

19 On the north, however, there's an overlap
20 with the Foothill Trails District Neighborhood
21 Council, and you should have in your packet a map
22 that I believe -- I'm not sure if it's the first
23 map, but it shows you the overlap with the Foothill
24 Trails Neighborhood Council. And I believe that's
25 the second map that you have in your packet, the

0007 01 second colored map, and it should look like this.

02 You will see Sunland-Tujunga is shown in
03 blue, with the blue outline. Foothill Trails
04 District is shown in yellow, with the yellow
05 outline. And you'll see where the yellow and the
06 blue outline meet.

07 Now, most of this area up on the northern
08 part here -- and I'm sorry, I don't have a pointer
09 to show you on that map. This is the Los Angeles --
10 the Angeles National Forest, and that would be
11 permissible, but in terms of where they connect,
12 this area that you'll see yellow surrounded by -- or
13 bounded by the blue line, that is private property.
14 It's a -- I guess programmed to be a golf course.
15 And so that is not an allowable overlap.

16 Similarly, this other yellow kind of
17 island, it looks like -- with the blue to the south
18 and then the national forest on the north, that is
19 also private property that they would not be able to
20 share.

21 If the applicant wanted to amend its
22 boundaries to allow to be included the national
23 forest, they would be able to do that. However,
24 this is the map of the boundaries that the applicant
25 is requesting be certified.

0008 01 And again, as they are drawn, they do not
02 meet requirements under the plan that no two

03 neighborhood councils will overlap unless it's
04 public use land.

05 In terms of the -- well, in terms of the
06 particular boundaries, there's also an almost
07 complete boundary overlap with the Sunland-Tujunga
08 Neighborhood Council, and it involves almost the
09 entire area, with the exception of the area that is
10 included in the Foothill Trails Neighborhood
11 Council.

12 Now, staff did meet with both groups. We
13 did hold a mediation on one account, although back
14 in November staff met with the group -- I'm not sure
15 if it was three or four times -- to try to reconcile
16 the differences.

17 The Sunland-Tujunga Council had actually
18 applied for certification once before but was
19 missing the signatures, and so the application was
20 returned as incomplete. At that time staff started
21 meeting with both groups to see if we could come to
22 a unified application.

23 And the difference really had to do with
24 the bylaws that the groups were presenting, where
25 there was a difference of opinion about the board

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01 make-up and how decisions would be made in terms of
02 the original bylaws that the Sunland -- that the
03 applicant with the same boundaries, the
04 Sunland-Tujunga Neighborhood Council, had submitted
05 originally or had -- it had originally involved the
06 town hall style of governance, which, as you know,
07 is a system that is not allowable.

08 We did, like I said, meet with both groups
09 and we tried to work out the differences in the
10 bylaws. We went through several different types of
11 bylaws and we weren't able to reach consensus.
12 Consequently, the Sunland-Tujunga Council did apply
13 for certification and then the other group applied
14 for certification on its own.

15 So in terms of boundaries, all but the
16 overlap with the competing applicant and with the
17 Foothill Trails Neighborhood Council, they do meet
18 the requirements under the plan.

19 In terms of population, the total
20 population is 42,319, so there is sufficient
21 resident stakeholder population that it would
22 support one or two neighborhood councils in this
23 area.

24 In terms of the outreach, we found that
25 the applicant had done their public meetings. The

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01 group was involved with the formation of the
02 Sunland-Tujunga Neighborhood Council at the onset,
03 so they had done a lot of outreach at that time.

04 However, when the group decided to split
05 off and form a separate neighborhood council and
06 apply, at that point they really hadn't had big
07 public meetings. It wasn't until after they applied
08 that they actually started holding public meetings
09 to share the bylaws and talk to stakeholders about
10 what it was that they were proposing.

11 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: Rita, if I could
12 interrupt for one second.

13 Shannon, you have an announcement you need
14 to make?

15 SHANNON HOPPES: Looks like they have a couple

16 cars blocking the loading zone. One is a red
17 Explorer, the other is a blue Mercedes. For the red
18 Explorer, it's 4BTD056, and for the blue Mercedes
19 it's 2CMG817. If you could move your cars, it would
20 be appreciated. Thanks.

21 RITA MORENO: The other aspect of the
22 application is the organizational structure, and you
23 do have a breakdown of that structure on Page 9 and
24 10 of 17. They are proposing a board that is
25 composed of the -- some officers, the chair,

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01 vice-chair and treasurer, and then 24 stakeholder
02 representatives representing different entities or
03 interests such as public schools, libraries,
04 homeless, commercial, retail, and so on.

05 All these seats would be elected at large,
06 and terms are -- the initial term is a year, and I
07 believe thereafter they are two-year terms.

08 There's a whole list of items that the
09 applicant -- we are requesting that the applicant
10 amend. We did receive a set of amended bylaws
11 today, and you should have those with you.

12 We didn't have sufficient time to go
13 through all of the items on the new bylaws, but we
14 found that some of the items that we had requested
15 that the applicant amend have been addressed and, if
16 you'd like, I can go through the list and go through
17 which ones we're talking about.

18 If you could go -- I don't know which
19 document is easier for you as commissioners, the
20 legal findings or the B0NC recommendations on the
21 staff report.

22 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: Let's hold the
23 individual item-by-item discussion until later when
24 we get to the end and we need to make findings.

25 RITA MORENO: That would be it.

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01 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: All right. Thank
02 you.

03 I'd like to ask the representatives of the
04 Sunland-Tujunga Council to come forward and make
05 their presentation.

06 GENE SMITH: Good evening. Welcome to the
07 Sunland-Tujunga community. We're glad to have you
08 here this evening.

09 My name is Gene Smith. I'm a contact
10 person for the Sunland-Tujunga formation committee,
11 and we have a number of people from the group who
12 are present who I'll introduce to you now. There's
13 Lloyd Hitt -- if you'll stand up, Lloyd -- Charlotte
14 Lou, Teri Haig Church, Elaine Brown, Kathy Anthony,
15 and Cheryl Smith, who is back there, and myself.

16 We not only want to present our
17 application for certification as a neighborhood
18 council for the Sunland-Tujunga community, we also
19 want to take this opportunity to make note of a
20 formal reservation with regard to the certification
21 of the common boundaries between Foothill Trails and
22 the Sunland-Tujunga community on the basis there was
23 inadequate notice of that situation that was given.

24 Based upon that information that was
25 provided in your May 12th meeting, one of the

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01 provisions concerned review of contested boundaries
02 between neighborhood councils, and I understand that

03 there is a form petition that was in that
 04 documentation. I do not know if you are formally --
 05 or have formally adopted the use of that petition to
 06 institute those proceedings. But we'll wait for
 07 that for the moment.

08 In the interim, we want each one of the
 09 individuals who are members of the core group to
 10 come forth afterwards. We have prepared a short
 11 video presentation which we hope will fill you in on
 12 the highlights of the group, and then we'll be happy
 13 to answer any questions you might have.

14 If I can move these two boards out of the
 15 way.

16 (Video played)

17 LLOYD HITT: Good evening. My name is Lloyd
 18 Hitt. I've lived up here since 1946. I am the
 19 president of the Little Landers Historical Society.

20 When Huell Houser and I made that video, I
 21 wasn't aware at the time I was selling property that
 22 DONE had given away, without due process, to the
 23 Foothill Trails District. They gave the Big Tujunga
 24 Wash to Foothill Trails while holding applications
 25 from Sunland-Tujunga with overlapping maps. The

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01 STNC was unaware of the fact or notified before
 02 Foothill Trails was certified.

03 What makes the Tujunga Wash part of
 04 Sunland-Tujunga? Historically, the area seen on the
 05 map that you have in front of you shows the Big
 06 Tujunga Wash as part of the Lopez brothers' land
 07 grant, Rancho Tujunga, granted by Don Pio Pico,
 08 governor of California, in 1840.

09 Included on Page 2 you'll see a written
 10 description of the Mexican land grant. You'll
 11 notice it starts, "Beginning at the mouth of the
 12 Arroyo Tujunga," in other words, where the canyon
 13 comes out just above Riverwood Ranch.

14 One of the most significant factors in
 15 what Big Tujunga Wash is today is due to the
 16 leadership of a Tujunga woman, Cora Corrigan, and
 17 the grassroots organization she formed, the Public
 18 Relations Council of Sunland and Tujunga.

19 Cora and her group fought expansion of
 20 gravel mining for 10 long years. As a friend of the
 21 court, she took the issue to the State Supreme
 22 Court, where she won with a decision five to two,
 23 which maintained that L. A. had a right to deny a
 24 rezoning.

25 Contested mining areas from that case were

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01 Eventually turned into parklands. Supporters
 02 listed

03 In local newspapers and L. A. newspapers of this
 04 defense of the wash included such groups as
 05 Sunland-Tujunga Lions Club, Sunland-Tujunga Junior
 06 Chamber of Commerce, Sunland-Tujunga Democratic
 07 Club, Riverwood Ranch Improvement Association, Our
 08 Lady of Lourdes Church, Tujunga Hebrew Center,
 09 Sunland-Tujunga Chamber of Commerce, Sunland Women's
 10 Club, Sun Air Home for Asthmatic Children, Community
 11 Methodist Church, and the Sun Hill Property Owners,
 12 just to mention a few. You will note that all of
 13 the organizations that I just read are
 14 Sunland-Tujunga organizations, not Lakeview Terrace,
 15 not Shadow Hills, not La Tuna.

16 Growing up as a youngster -- and I came
17 here in my early teens -- the Big Tujunga Wash was
18 our wilderness in our own backyard. We fished,
19 hiked, biked, panned for gold, camped, rode our
20 horses and swam in our favorite swimming holes
21 through our childhood.

22 Sunland-Tujunga was promoted as the
23 gateway for Angeles Forest for years by the Chamber
24 of Commerce. The Sunland-Tujunga Council do not ask
25 for Lakeview Terrace, Shadow Hills, Hansen Dam or La

0016
01 Tuna wash area. We ask for the area north of
02 Foothill at the point that crosses the Big Tujunga
03 Wash, which was always considered a part of
04 Sunland-Tujunga.

05 When I was talking to Huell Houser,
06 actually, I was repeating -- it doesn't show here --
07 a story by some land developers in Rainbow Meadows,
08 which was right where Foothill crosses the wash.
09 And that was always -- this was a Sunland real
10 estate deal. He wasn't exactly honest. He told his
11 people that there was a channel being dug from San
12 Pedro up here and they would be seeing steamships
13 going by the front of their house.

14 Regarding outreach, I've been involved in
15 outreach since the first ad hoc committee was formed
16 for the STNC. I collected signatures and promoted
17 ad hoc for the STNC through Little Landers -- you'll
18 notice the page where it's in my calendar -- and I'd
19 write an article every month.

20 The ad hoc committees were dependent on
21 raising their own funds for mailings and general
22 expenses. With outside L. A. funds we have now been
23 able to increase our outreach with the number of
24 mailings and languages available.

25 Regarding certification, today I believe

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01 you have only two options before you. I believe the
02 STC offers the best opportunity to represent the
03 stakeholders in general. However, the important
04 decision here is to certify one of these two
05 options, the STC or STNC. Sending the two groups
06 back to negotiate will not solve the problems and
07 would only delay the community representation in
08 L. A. After working at this for almost four years,
09 it's time to move on.

10 And thank you for your time.

11 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: Okay. Thank you.

12 ELAINE BROWN: Good evening. Thank you for
13 being here. I'm so glad they turned the lights on.
14 Let's see if I can read this.

15 My name is Elaine Brown, and I am one of
16 the contact people for the STC. I live in the
17 Riverwood Ranch, which you've just heard mentioned
18 by Lloyd Hitt, which is a small farm area located in
19 Sunland on the north side of the Tujunga Wash.

20 For the last 18 years I have been an
21 activist in the Sunland-Tujunga area and began my
22 community involvement by working with Joel Wach's
23 office to clean up the massive quantities of junk
24 that had been dumped into the Tujunga Wash east of
25 Oro Vista Avenue.

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01 I subsequently became involved in numerous
02 land use issues and was active regarding the many

03 proposals to develop the wash to the east of the
04 Foothill Boulevard and eventually worked to support
05 the Canyon Trails Golf Course.

06 In August 1999 I was both vice-president
07 of the Sunland-Tujunga Chamber of Commerce and the
08 chamber's delegate to the United Chambers of
09 Commerce for the San Fernando Valley. It was
10 because of the UCC's suggestion to us delegates to
11 go forth and start neighborhood councils that I
12 began to organize a formation committee.

13 With the help of the chamber and using the
14 chamber's business focus meetings, which were held
15 once a month and open to the public, we were able to
16 outreach to a number of stakeholders.

17 In November 1999, the ad hoc committee to
18 form a certified neighborhood council for
19 Sunland-Tujunga held its first meeting, attended by
20 45 stakeholders who represented a vast array of
21 diversified interests.

22 At the third meeting of the ad hoc
23 committee in January 2000, we succeeded in bringing
24 the attendance up to 75 stakeholders, but because of
25 a powerful difference of opinion which had become

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01 evident in November of 1999 between most of the ad
02 hoc founders and the organizational subcommittee, I
03 resigned as chairman of the ad hoc committee in
04 January of 2000.

05 The ad hoc moved forward to create a
06 geographically-based organization and eventually
07 adopted the town hall format. I, as an observer and
08 often acting as both mentor and monitor, continued
09 to attend the meetings of the ad hoc, which began
10 calling itself the Sunland-Tujunga Neighborhood
11 Council.

12 By the fall of 2002, it had become
13 apparent to many of the founders and other member
14 stakeholders that the STNC was not dispersing any
15 DONE information, was doing almost no outreach, and
16 was not making any progress toward becoming
17 certified.

18 Because the future of the Valley's
19 neighborhood councils depended on the outcome of the
20 Valley secession movement in the November 2002
21 election, we waited for the election results before
22 taking any action. At the November STNC meeting
23 following the election, Charlotte Lou asked for a
24 show of hands of all those who wished to become
25 certified. After 30 minutes of struggle to obtain

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01 that show of hands, the result was unanimous for
02 certification, with one dissension and abstention by
03 the STNC leaders.

04 We held the first meeting of the STC
05 formation committee the next day and filed our
06 initial application for certification a few days
07 later, but it was rejected for lack of signatures.
08 We attended the STNC certification meetings, which
09 were monitored by DONE, and attempted to come
10 together with the STNC but weren't able to do so.

11 Meanwhile, we expanded our outreach and
12 began collecting signatures. We reapplied and held
13 the first public meeting of the Sunland-Tujunga
14 Council in February. By the fourth meeting in May,
15 our attendance had risen to 75 stakeholders.

16 Because so many of the founding members of
17 the Sunland-Tujunga Council are active in the
18 community, together we attend many meetings and
19 events and we know and communicate with many
20 stakeholders. I personally passed out fliers at
21 numerous meetings, placed them for distribution at
22 several businesses, and spoke personally, one on
23 one, to a large number of Sunland-Tujunga
24 stakeholders.

25 If the Sunland-Tujunga Council is
0021 certified, I will continue to work to extend our
01 outreach and to successfully complete our
02 elections.
03

04 Thank you.

05 TERI HAIG CHURCH: Thank you for being here.
06 My name is Teri Haig Church, and I'm going to talk
07 about outreach because I'm really good at it.

08 I grew up in New England and I learned
09 outreach at 11 years old. I worked on the election
10 campaign of John Kennedy, and I walked door to door
11 passing out pamphlets and buttons and encouraging
12 people to go vote and save my future.

13 In the seventies I went door to door again
14 to protect the rights of the Vietnam MIAs, and that
15 was a long, hard campaign. I was pregnant, but I
16 kept walking.

17 In 1982 I became involved in my first
18 Sunland-Tujunga land use battle over a convent
19 retreat proposed for land in the Verdugo Mountains.
20 That led to the slope density ordinance, the
21 hillside ordinance and, finally, the scenic
22 corridor.

23 Every time I set out to build community
24 involvement in an issue, I take to the streets. I
25 walk Sunland-Tujunga commercial strip from one end

0022
01 to the other dispersing information. I've walked my
02 neighborhood and the next one and next one, and over
03 the years I have built a network of people in the
04 neighborhoods to pass out information for me and get
05 petition signatures.

06 I did this on enough issues in Tujunga
07 that in late 2000, after some members of the STNC
08 attended a DONE workshop, their outreach captain
09 asked me to become a block captain and come to a
10 meeting and tell their committee how to outreach to
11 neighborhoods. I said, "It's really quite simple.
12 You get out of your cars, you walk up to the door,
13 you knock on the door and you start a dialogue."

14 Over and over again their outreach captain
15 told me he wanted to walk my route. And in the two
16 years I was supposedly a block captain, not once did
17 I ever receive papers from the outreach committee or
18 have Jim come and walk my blocks.

19 But outreach never stops, because people
20 in this town know me and my involvement in the
21 community. Every time I have a conversation with
22 somebody, I am doing outreach.

23 Thank you.

24 CHARLOTTE LOU: Hi. Thank you for being here,
25 and I will give you my little report here. My name

0023
01 is Charlotte Lou. I'm president of the merchants
02 association.

03 As a member of the STNC, I raised my
04 concern about the certification process on November
05 -- in November of 2000. Our committee seemed
06 reluctant to move forward in the certification
07 process.

08 At that meeting I requested a show of
09 hands for certification. All members were in favor,
10 with one dissenting member. I did not understand
11 why the certification was not being finalized.

12 Meanwhile, the merchant association,
13 which, by the way, is a very small group of people,
14 was organizing events to help revitalize our Old
15 Town Tujunga. We received three neighborhood
16 matching grants, organized the Old Town street fair,
17 Old Town Rocks to honor our LAPD, fought against
18 Arco to preserve 7200 Foothill Boulevard for a more
19 appropriate land use, and 1-800-AUTOPSY to prevent
20 inappropriate use in our commercial district. We
21 also collected over 4,000 signatures with the help
22 of local citizens in the hopes of attracting a
23 Trader Joe's to our community.

24 The merchants association has reached out
25 to our community for volunteers. We've stood in
0024 front of supermarkets talking to people. We've
01 knocked on doors of homes and businesses and we have
02 partnered with our community organizations.

03 We have also used the same techniques to
04 reach out for STC. All of the above have been
05 accomplished in a short period of time. Again, my
06 question is why, after three and a half years, were
07 we not a certified neighborhood council? The
08 primary goal should have been certification.

09 We have many issues in our community that
10 need to be addressed. We are a community of many
11 diverse interests and needs. However, the lack of
12 certification has arrested the growth and
13 development of this neighborhood council. It is my
14 hope that certification can be resolved in order
15 that our community can move forward.

16 KATHY ANTHONY: Hi. Thank you for coming. I'm
17 here tonight for one reason and one reason only, and
18 that's I love my community. I've live here for over
19 45 years.

20 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: I need your name for
21 the record.

22 KATHY ANTHONY: Kathy Anthony.

23 I've lived in Sunland for 45 years and I
24 have had a local business for 31 years. I've been
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01 very active in the community from the state level
02 down to our local level. I've been involved with
03 the local Chamber of Commerce for approximately 18
04 years. Five of those years I was the president and
05 for the last 13 years I have been an executive
06 director.

07 We're a very strong community. And we've
08 also been kind of up in the hills and we've had to
09 fight for our share. The ad hoc was started -- the
10 ad hoc neighborhood council was started through the
11 Chamber of Commerce. We paid for mailers, supplies,
12 gave names and addresses for the petitions. We made
13 our office available for space and phones. We were
14 very, very excited to think that we were going to
15 finally have a voice at city hall.

16 I was very involved for the first few
 17 months. Then new leaders took over at the time with
 18 young, new blood. It was kind of a relief. I
 19 thought they would continue with the goals of the ad
 20 hoc council and I could put my attention towards
 21 other needs of the community. However, this did not
 22 happen.

23 After us trying to direct them, it failed
 24 after three years. At that point it was time to get
 25 involved again, and that's when we started the

0026

01 Sunland-Tujunga Council.

02 My involvement over the years has been --
 03 and I'll make this very brief -- but it was help to
 04 get the boulevard paved, getting a \$460,000 grant
 05 for the landscaping of the on- and off-ramps. We
 06 planted over 100 trees on the boulevard, with
 07 another 25 going this year. We put flower pots in.
 08 I chaired the Easter carnival for 13 years and
 09 brought back the fireworks for the Fourth of July,
 10 worked diligently towards the golf course.

11 We took and brought our elected officials
 12 up to our town. We made them drive through our
 13 town. We gave them tours. We gave them dinner.
 14 They got to meet our community. So therefore, when
 15 we had a need in this community, we were able to
 16 address our elected officials and they knew where
 17 Sunland-Tujunga was.

18 Our goals are to improve the community. I
 19 feel that we need a council with leaders of the
 20 community that have experience, and the
 21 Sunland-Tujunga Council would be an asset to
 22 Sunland-Tujunga and to the city of L. A.

23 Thank you.

24 CHERYL SMITH: Good evening, Commissioners, and
 25 welcome to Sunland-Tujunga. My name is Cheryl

0027

01 Smith, and I am part of the STC, Sunland-Tujunga
 02 Council formation committee. I am going to talk to
 03 you a little bit about some of the specific things
 04 we've done and places we've gone to do some
 05 outreach.

06 In addition to the physical meeting notice
 07 posting places which I believe you have in your
 08 application, we have visited and placed fliers
 09 explaining the purpose of the neighborhood council
 10 and meeting dates at a number of churches. I
 11 personally visited about 10 churches and, whenever
 12 possible, talked to the pastors or assistant
 13 pastors. When not, I talked to the secretary and
 14 left meeting notice fliers and explanation fliers to
 15 be passed out to the staff.

16 I visited about a dozen schools, did the
 17 same thing, although in each one of the school cases
 18 I was able to leave -- either place fliers in the
 19 teachers' mail boxes or leave fliers in sufficient
 20 numbers that the staff would place them in the mail
 21 boxes.

22 Other business and service locations that
 23 I visited and placed our meeting and explanation
 24 fliers include Deja Vu Photo, Hoselay Restaurant,
 25 the library, YMCA, Municipal Building, Commerce

0028

01 Avenue, a Latino church, the Easter carnival where
 02 approximately 10,000 people travel through on Easter

DNE7655

03 weekend, and I have also talked personally to a
04 number of people who attended the Easter carnival,
05 asked them to attend our next meeting, explained to
06 them what was going on with the neighborhood council
07 and with our attempt to become certified.

08 We've left fliers at the Sunland
09 Recreation Center and have passed them out in
10 several community meetings regarding the promotion
11 of the Magroerty Art Center.

12 Our communications list is a data base of
13 almost 6500 names, including approximately 100
14 e-mail addresses so far. We definitely have plans
15 to add to and refine that list to make certain that
16 we're targeting all the geographical areas and
17 stakeholder groups in the council area.

18 We've taken advantage of DONE's facility;
19 our mailings have been accomplished with the help of
20 DONE for printing and mailing meeting notice fliers.
21 Fliers for hand-out and mailing have listed the
22 purpose and objectives of the neighborhood council
23 as well as announcing time and location of monthly
24 meetings.

25 We participate in the city's early
0029

01 notification e-mail service to receive
02 communications regarding meetings and agendas and,
03 for the last several months, monthly e-mail updates
04 to our e-list regarding items impacting Council
05 District 2 or other items of interest on the city
06 council, or planning commission agendas have been
07 called to the attention of the stakeholders through
08 these e-mails, as well as making announcements of
09 these items at monthly meetings.

10 We are shown regularly, monthly, in the
11 Foothill Sentinel "Calendar" section. Our meetings
12 are listed there. We have published several
13 articles through the Foothill Sentinel of items of
14 interest to the community, including this latest one
15 coming up in June on the Brown Act.

16 Press releases have been forwarded to the
17 Valley editions of the Daily News and the L.A. Times
18 and about five other likely publications, or
19 publications that might be likely to publish for
20 us.

21 Fliers have been translated into Spanish
22 and Armenian. We've contacted a Korean faith-based
23 organization to help us with Korean translation or
24 to refer us to a translator.

25 Our meetings are held the second Tuesday
0030

01 of each month and have been so since February.
02 February was our first meeting -- the public
03 meetings, anyway. And during the public meetings we
04 discuss -- in addition to the regular agenda and
05 speakers, we discuss the purpose of the neighborhood
06 council, explain our proposed structure and proposed
07 bylaws.

08 We've distributed bylaws to attendees at
09 these meetings. We've made announcements and had
10 discussion of city agency agendas and items and
11 meetings of interest, including the mayor's
12 Federation of Neighborhood Councils and occasional
13 announcements of state and federal issues of general
14 interest.

15 I think of particular interest at this

16 point is we in the STC have been pulling new people
 17 to meetings and calling attention of neighborhood
 18 council formation and explaining the neighborhood
 19 council to people who were not previously aware or
 20 participating. Several of these newly aware people
 21 have expressed interest in participating as board
 22 members or other active capacities with the
 23 neighborhood council.

24 The presence of the STNC and the
 25 controversy and curiosity surrounding the two

0031
 01 competing applicants has led to an increase in
 02 awareness, interest, and participation by the
 03 community. So competition has been a good thing.

04 And I thank you.

05 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: Okay. Thank you.
 06 I'm going to ask you to wrap up, if you
 07 can.

08 GENE SMITH: Be brief, is that what you're
 09 saying?

10 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: I think you already
 11 are brief, right?

12 GENE SMITH: I just want to point out that
 13 obviously all of these people have been active in
 14 all aspects of outreach to this community, not just
 15 the STC, but have been actively involved. They're
 16 innately familiar with the diverse interests of the
 17 community by virtue of their involvement.

18 A couple notes for clarification on our
 19 structure. Our board is made up of 27 members,
 20 three of which are mandatory -- president,
 21 vice-president, and treasurer -- and 24 stakeholder
 22 representatives.

23 Stakeholder representatives may be an
 24 unfortunate term for this because they will really
 25 be elected to a particular representative capacity

0032
 01 for a diverse interest. They do not represent all
 02 of the interests of a geographic area or in the
 03 community but they are elected to represent a
 04 specific diverse interest in the community.

05 There are four standing committees which
 06 have been set up to represent basically what we
 07 consider the four primary portholes of communication
 08 to the community: Education, business, residents,
 09 and organizations.

10 These four standing committees act --
 11 which are made up by the members, the stakeholder
 12 representatives, gather information -- are intended
 13 to gather information from the community from the
 14 various diverse interests to provide that
 15 information to an executive committee which is made
 16 up of one representative from each of the four
 17 standing committees and chaired by the
 18 vice-president.

19 This organization then tries to identify
 20 specific issues, how we might resolve them, what
 21 assets we have available in order to address the
 22 situation.

23 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: Remember the brevity
 24 idea.

25 GENE SMITH: I'm getting right there.

0033
 01 So that gives you, I think, basically an
 02 idea with the executive committee essentially

03 reporting to the board, the board as a whole making
04 all decisions with regard to our structure in this
05 neighborhood council.

06 Thank you.

07 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: Okay. Are there
08 questions from the board for this applicant? Seeing
09 none, we'll consider you excused for the moment.

10 Ms. Moreno, would you like to come back
11 and present the second application.

12 RITA MORENO: Once again, Commissioners, Rita
13 Moreno with the Department of Neighborhood
14 Empowerment.

15 The Department received an application
16 from the Sunland-Tujunga Neighborhood Council on
17 February 26. The Department staff reviewed the
18 application and found it to be complete.

19 The boundaries you will see on the yellow
20 map -- I'm not sure if you can see that well, but
21 they -- the boundaries on the east follow the city
22 limit. On the south they follow the 210 Freeway to
23 Wentworth. On Wentworth they travel east to
24 Foothill Boulevard and then from Foothill Boulevard
25 they go -- they travel in a straight diagonal line

0034
01 to where Oro Vista and Sunland-Tujunga meet.

02 Now I'm -- I think they -- I think that
03 the stand is falling apart there.

04 They then travel -- they go around an area
05 called Riverwood Ranch, which follows Ebey Canyon
06 up, I believe, to Doane Canyon, down Oro Vista to
07 where Oro Vista and the Tujunga Road meet again, and
08 then travel up Tujunga Canyon Road to the
09 easternmost -- northeasternmost point of the city
10 limit. And then they follow the city limit from
11 there.

12 This is, again, a bit of an irregular
13 footprint, but they do follow the boundaries of the
14 Foothill Trails Neighborhood Council on that
15 northwestern end and the city limit on the north and
16 then northeast and then the eastern end of their
17 boundaries.

18 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: Just one question.
19 Is the Riverwood Ranch area excluded from Foothill
20 Trails or is it --

21 RITA MORENO: It is excluded. The exclusion
22 was basically when we received application from
23 Foothills Trails and saw that there was an overlap,
24 staff did provide both the Sunland-Tujunga
25 Neighborhood Council and -- well, at the time I

0035
01 think actually it was two groups at the time,
02 Sunland-Tujunga Council and Sunland-Tujunga
03 Neighborhood Council, with a map of the Foothill
04 Trails District Neighborhood Council.

05 And what we had been -- what we knew was
06 that the problem was Riverwood Ranch, so when we
07 were working with Foothill Trails on the boundaries,
08 what they did is exclude Riverwood Ranch, which is
09 why you have that bubble that you see there.

10 There is a boundary overlap almost
11 entirely with the Sunland-Tujunga Council, and it's
12 the same, the -- there's 42,319 resident
13 stakeholders in this area. They do meet the
14 requirements under the plan.

15 In terms of outreach, the group, as you've

16 heard, has been established for a number of years
 17 and started as the ad hoc committee to form the
 18 Sunland-Tujunga Neighborhood Council and has been
 19 meeting regularly for quite some time, I believe on
 20 a monthly basis, as well as several organizing
 21 committee meetings. The required signatures were
 22 submitted and we found that they did have consistent
 23 participation in their meetings as well as the other
 24 group.

25 In terms of the organizational structure,

0036

01 there were a number of issues that we addressed with
 02 the applicant. This board does have 21 members.
 03 The officers are elected by the elected members and
 04 they also have -- I'm sorry. They're elected at
 05 large. They have eight district representatives as
 06 well as eight organizational representatives.

07 In our packet, the last colored map right
 08 before the bylaws, you'll see a district map which
 09 has the districts in different colors, and so they
 10 have -- there's four districts, two representatives
 11 per district.

12 One of the things that -- in terms of the
 13 items that were addressed by the applicants in their
 14 bylaws, there are just a couple of things
 15 outstanding to comply with the requirements. The
 16 one thing that we failed to advise the applicant on
 17 was the population and the districts.

18 You'll notice that there are two districts
 19 with over 10,000 and one district with over 11,000
 20 and the other two districts have about five and a
 21 half and then 6,000, and we would like the applicant
 22 to take a look at those boundaries -- and I think
 23 they were actually looking at those and I may not
 24 have the latest map -- to make sure that those
 25 boundaries were more consistent in terms of their

0037

01 population. But that is what we have.

02 What I did fail to mention in the previous
 03 presentation is that the Department isn't making a
 04 recommendation to support one application over the
 05 other. We feel that the Board of Neighborhood
 06 Commissioners, based on testimony or the
 07 applications provided, can either request that the
 08 applicants both continue their hearing and see if
 09 they could further mediate and reach a unified
 10 application or request -- or divide the area into
 11 two neighborhood councils.

12 You have over 40,000 resident stakeholders
 13 in the area. You could conceivably form two
 14 neighborhood councils, which is probably not what
 15 they want since it's named the Sunland-Tujunga
 16 Neighborhood Council, and the third option would be,
 17 based on what you find here today, certify one group
 18 over the other and/or any other option that the
 19 commissioners find.

20 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: Okay. I'd like then
 21 to invite the Sunland-Tujunga Neighborhood Council
 22 to come forward and make their presentation.

23 MARK SEAL: I'm so nervous. We did read the
 24 plan and we saw the 15-minute limit.

25 Good evening. I'm Mark Seal,

0038

01 certification chairman of the Sunland-Tujunga
 02 Neighborhood Council, STNC. I'm an Elk, a Mason, a

03 Cert responder, ham radio operator, and other
04 stakeholder types.

05 On behalf of the council I'd like to
06 welcome the Board of Neighborhood Commissioners, the
07 DONE representatives, the stakeholders, and the
08 visitors.

09 Every community is unique, as you've heard
10 before, and, of course, so are we. We are a small
11 town on the edge of one of the largest cities in
12 America.

13 We have created a slide show to present
14 the smattering of our council projects, meetings,
15 special events, and the community itself. The
16 committee would like to thank the DONE staff for
17 their assistance helping us craft bylaws and the
18 governing structure that is both embraced by our
19 stakeholders and satisfies compliance with the city
20 attorney's office.

21 I would like to personally thank all the
22 members of the bylaws and certification committees
23 for their selfless dedication and hundreds of hours
24 of work. We'd like to thank Glendale Bakery in
25 Tujunga for providing the baklava and pastries out

0039
01 in the front.

02 We'd like to dedicate this presentation to
03 two recently passed-away special STNC members, Jim
04 Margolyn and Mike Hall. We'll miss them and their
05 vision.

06 The mission of the STNC is to help the
07 stakeholders improve the quality of life in the
08 community of Sunland-Tujunga.

09 Next up we'll have John Waters.

10 JOHN WATERS: Hello. I am John Waters. I'm
11 the chair of the bylaws committee of the STNC. I'm
12 a 45-year resident of Sunland-Tujunga, but the STNC
13 is the first community activity I've ever come out
14 and volunteered for, so please bear with me; I'm not
15 used to public speaking.

16 As you can see from our chart, our council
17 structure has four major groups. They are the
18 executive committee in red, the geographical
19 representatives in green, the stakeholder group
20 representatives in purple, and the stakeholders
21 themselves in blue. I'm going to go through in a
22 minute each one of those.

23 Next slide. The executive committee has
24 six people in it: The chair, the vice-chair,
25 treasurer, two secretaries, and the nonvoting

0040
01 parliamentarian. We found out a couple years ago
02 that one secretary was not enough for the workload
03 that the council was generating, so we have two now
04 in this structure.

05 The executive committee is the primary
06 link to the other neighborhood councils around the
07 city and also the primary link to the city
08 government.

09 Next slide. The geographical
10 representatives are two each, total of eight, for
11 four geographical districts. Rita mentioned five
12 with sort of unbalanced population. We fixed that.
13 These districts here are within about 10 percent of
14 each other in population and, as you can see,
15 they're fairly unified districts. The geographical

16 representatives are for people who live, work, and
17 own property within our boundaries.

18 Next slide. The stakeholder group
19 representatives, there's eight of them. This group
20 of directors represents stakeholders who do not
21 necessarily live, work, or own property in the
22 community but who identify themselves with business,
23 education, youth, faith-based, service, or other
24 special interests who meet regularly in the
25 community.

0041

01 For flexibility, there's no particular
02 number of representatives required for each of these
03 groups, but the total number of representatives was
04 chosen to balance the number of district
05 representatives. The balance of residents and
06 property owners against the other community
07 interests helps ensure that no one stakeholder group
08 will form a majority of the board, while still
09 ensuring diversity, proportionality, and flexibility
10 on our board.

11 Next slide. The fourth part of our
12 council is the stakeholders themselves. For over
13 three years the stakeholders have been an integral
14 and guiding part of our organization, which we hope
15 to continue this within the constraints imposed by
16 DONE and the Board of Neighborhood Commissioners.
17 While not part of our governing board, the
18 stakeholders will be allowed nonbinding advisory
19 votes on measures before the board and will have an
20 initiative process by which to place items on the
21 board agenda.

22 Stakeholders will also be part of many of
23 the council's committees. We have found that
24 stakeholder participation is the key to maintaining
25 the community interest in our organization. In

0042

01 fact, using our present town hall structure, the
02 stakeholders were presented with the new structure
03 that I'm presenting here and voted to approve it
04 overwhelmingly.

05 Our stakeholders will vote for board
06 members by secret ballot. We've found that over the
07 years the stakeholders get to know each other, and
08 we feel that it would be uncomfortable for them if
09 they had to choose between their friends and
10 neighbors for the board and the choice became a
11 matter of public record.

12 I'm also going to talk about boundaries.
13 This is the issue that Lloyd touched upon with the
14 wash, and I second what Lloyd said, basically. The
15 boundaries have been described.

16 But we had originally agreed with Foothill
17 Trails to share the public access land and the
18 Tujunga Wash, part of which is now being developed
19 into a golf course. But after Foothill Trails was
20 certified and as late as May 15th, we were informed
21 even though the land is public access, because it is
22 privately owned, the policy is to only permit it to
23 be in the boundaries of one neighborhood council.
24 Since Foothill Trails has already been certified,
25 that would be them.

0043

01 This is a policy that we have not found to
02 be stated explicitly in the plan, that is the

03 private ownership clause, and which we found out
04 about too late to react to. We've matched the
05 Foothill Trails boundaries as best we can in our
06 application. We would like to ask for a
07 reconsideration or exception to the policy at a
08 later date, given that we're certified.

09 Besides the golf course, a wilderness park
10 has recently been planned at the corner of Oro Vista
11 and Big Tujunga Canyon Road, which would be publicly
12 owned as well as public access. Tujunga Wash is a
13 part of the community for those of us who live here
14 and especially for those of us who grew up here.
15 For us, the wash was our playground.

16 And one more slide. Our organization has
17 sponsored wash clean-up days. This is the slide
18 from one of our clean-up days where we go out and
19 clean trash out of the wash. I think Lloyd
20 mentioned that at times there is quite a bit of
21 trash found in the wash.

22 Next up we have Brenda Mc Alpine to talk
23 about outreach.

24 BRENDA MC ALPINE: Good evening. My name is
25 Brenda Mc Alpine. I grew up here, I went to school

0044
01 here, and I'm raising my kids here. Tonight I'll be
02 talking to you about our past and current outreach.
03 I'll be covering our goals, our methods, and our
04 results.

05 The STNC has three outreach goals: To
06 reach everyone in Sunland-Tujunga, to get new people
07 to come to our meetings and get them to come back,
08 and to create networks of communication to keep our
09 stakeholders informed.

10 To reach everyone, we settled on a
11 two-tiered approach: First, blanket the community
12 by reaching large numbers of people at once and,
13 second, find two more methods to reach people that
14 were not successfully reached.

15 Next slide, please. Now, this is long
16 because we've been doing outreach for three years,
17 so rather than read through the whole thing, I'd
18 like to highlight just three of our outreach
19 methods.

20 The first method is our block captain
21 program. We recruit and train volunteers to spend
22 30 minutes a month taking information to their
23 neighbors and bringing their neighbors' concerns to
24 the neighborhood council.

25 This program is not just for homeowners.

0045
01 We also recruit captains for apartments, condos,
02 trailer parks, businesses, churches, schools, and
03 organizations. To get started, each captain gets a
04 brief training session and a packet of outreach
05 materials. This way someone who is brand new to the
06 neighborhood council can explain it to other
07 people.

08 The second method is community events.
09 That's the second arrow up there on the right.
10 We've sponsored our own events, most notably the
11 Jazz in the Park concerts at Sunland Park, but from
12 the beginning it's been a priority for us to support
13 our local service organizations and the work they
14 do.

15 So every year we rent booths at the Easter

16 carnival, the watermelon festival, and the Old Town
 17 commerce street fair. The booths enable us to
 18 collect more outreach contacts and raise money. We
 19 also have an entry in the Fourth of July parade each
 20 year and we hand out thousands of fliers along the
 21 parade route.

22 The third method is a community website
 23 under "Media" over there called Sunland-Tujunga.org.
 24 It has directories for businesses and organizations
 25 and an events calendar. In building the website we

0046
 01 recruited three interns from Verdugo Hills High
 02 School and we taught them basic web design.

03 We've also done some other youth outreach,
 04 including the Kids for Kids community clean-up and
 05 charity fundraiser -- you'll be seeing a few
 06 pictures of that on the visual tour -- and we've
 07 tried the more conventional methods of speaking at
 08 assemblies and campus fairs.

09 Next slide, please. With all of these
 10 activities, what do we have to show for it? This
 11 graph over here shows monthly attendance from our
 12 meeting in November 1999 through last December.
 13 You'll see that there are two shaded areas. The
 14 blue area shows the number of returning attendees
 15 and the red area shows newcomers. The points at the
 16 top of the red area show the total number of people
 17 who attended a given meeting.

18 The main thing to notice about our
 19 attendance is the steady, gradual growth. In 2000,
 20 earlier there in the chart, we started sending out
 21 meeting reminders on postcards. Once that task was
 22 being done consistently, our attendance really
 23 started to take off.

24 Our average attendance through the end of
 25 2001 was 40 to 60 people. During 2002 our

0047
 01 attendance climbed to the 60 to 80 range, and in
 02 2003 our average monthly attendance is closing in on
 03 100 people. Since November 1999 more than 600
 04 people have attended at least one of our meetings.

05 Next slide, please. The blue pin dots on
 06 this map represent the addresses of people who have
 07 asked to be on our postcard mailing list as of last
 08 December.

09 Since we made this map we have continued
 10 to grow. We now have phone numbers, addresses or
 11 e-mail for a thousand people. I'm not talking about
 12 a thousand people who have been contacted -- we have
 13 contacted several thousand -- but I am talking about
 14 the people who have responded. This is a successful
 15 outreach.

16 And now Marty Marshall is going to tell
 17 you how we're going to continue and expand our
 18 successful outreach.

19 MARTY MARSHALL: Hi. I'm Marty Marshall. I'm
 20 the current vice-chair and outreach chair for the
 21 STNC. I'm a homeowner, single mom of two, Cert
 22 trained, volunteer minister for my church, and
 23 assistant cub master for a new pack opening in
 24 July.

25 Regarding future planned outreach
 0048
 01 activities, the STNC realizes that we haven't
 02 reached all parts of the community yet. But we are

03 growing, and we would like to focus on the following
04 areas.

05 Building on the foundation we've already
06 established, we plan to continue the current
07 activities that have been working well, some of
08 which Brenda just went over. Additionally, we plan
09 to create a STNC newsletter, expand our block
10 captain program to get a STNC block captain on every
11 block, including more businesses, renters,
12 neighborhood watches.

13 We plan to take our road show to local
14 schools to encourage youth at becoming active,
15 including a logo contest for the six twelfth
16 grades. We want to continue to have open meetings
17 on outreach efforts.

18 New slide. We have pinpointed these
19 purple areas here to target with our fliers in
20 Spanish. The dark one has eleven percent of the
21 residents that don't speak English or don't speak it
22 well. The lighter one, the lighter purple, is
23 somewhat more multi-lingual. In these areas, we
24 will be working on locating one or two people to
25 head up the outreach in Spanish and create block

0049
01 captains.

02 We plan to blanket the entire community
03 with general fliers that have multi-language notes
04 on them and that tell the readers how to obtain
05 fliers in their preferred language. This has been
06 initiated, and we now include Spanish and Armenian
07 notes on our fliers, thanks to Vic Aghakhanian.

08 We want to focus on locating more
09 locations to post our monthly posters. We feel that
10 if we make a concerted effort to get these points
11 in, we will have increased the quality of life in
12 Sunland and Tujunga.

13 Thank you.

14 KEN MC ALPINE: Good evening. My name is Ken
15 Mc Alpine. I'm the current chairman of the
16 Sunland-Tujunga Neighborhood Council. This is the
17 first civic thing I've been involved in. And I'm a
18 new face. My wife and I are long-time residents in
19 Sunland-Tujunga and we grew up here. We're lifelong
20 residents.

21 Commissioners, what you have seen tonight
22 is the STNC is right to lead the Sunland-Tujunga
23 community. You've seen that STNC has impressive
24 community participation. We have 1,000 reciprocal
25 contacts in our date base. These are people who

0050
01 have responded to our outreach. This is successful
02 contacts. We have average meeting attendance
03 reaching 100 people each meeting. We're building a
04 large communication network of e-mail.

05 You have seen that the STNC has a proven
06 record of improving the community, supporting our
07 local organizations, participating in community
08 events and sponsoring community events. You have
09 seen that the STNC has an inclusive structure that
10 includes representation for both geographic
11 diversity and stakeholder diversity while
12 maintaining proportionality.

13 You have seen the STNC has a structure
14 that keeps the board responsive to its stakeholders
15 through the initiative process and through frequent

16 elections and through other methodology.
 17 You have seen that the STNC has
 18 extensively involved the community in selecting its
 19 structure. Finally, you have seen that the track
 20 record, that we have broad community outreach and
 21 the dedication and plans to continually fine-tune
 22 the targeted outreach to increase participation to
 23 all of the stakeholder groups in Sunland-Tujunga.
 24 You have seen that the community has come
 25 to support the STNC -- who's out here? -- and I

0051

01 think that's important because they have had a say
 02 in what we look like and what we have done. In
 03 short, what you have seen is that STNC is right to
 04 lead the Sunland-Tujunga community.

05 One final note -- and this, I think, the
 06 other council echoes -- is that the community has
 07 worked hard at this and we need a decision tonight.
 08 We need this decision so we can come back together
 09 as one council for one community. And that's very
 10 important to us.

11 And another thing that's very important to
 12 us is the Tujunga Wash. As we said, this was late
 13 notice that this could not be incorporated in both
 14 Foothill Trails District Neighborhood Council and
 15 our own neighborhood council, and we came to an
 16 early agreement with Foothill Trails to share this
 17 back in October of 2001. And both Foothill Trails
 18 and we are amicable to that, and it is public use
 19 land, the golf course and wash.

20 We'd like the Board of Neighborhood
 21 Commissioners to allow both -- whichever council you
 22 certify tonight and the Foothill Trails council to
 23 share this.

0052

24 And with that, that concludes our
 25 presentation for this evening. Thank you for your
 01 time and consideration.

02 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: Thank you.

03 Are there questions for this particular
 04 applicant? I guess not. Okay. Thank you.

05 I'd like to ask Rita to come back. Is she
 06 -- okay. There she is.

07 Before we go to the public hearing, what
 08 I'd like to ask you to do is to give us a rundown,
 09 if you can, on what are the deal-breakers here. Why
 10 are we still -- do we still have two competing
 11 applications which are reasonably similar in
 12 nature?

13 RITA MORENO: Both groups have made changes to
 14 their bylaws. The Sunland-Tujunga Neighborhood
 15 Council did originally want a system that allowed
 16 for a town hall system, but based on the fact that
 17 they need to have a governing board in terms of what
 18 the plan states, they have amended their bylaws to
 19 comply with that. So that's no longer out of
 20 compliance. That's not an issue.

0053

21 It seems that the Sunland-Tujunga
 22 Neighborhood Council, you saw the description of the
 23 eight organizational seats, eight seats for anyone
 24 who lives, works, or owns property, and then the
 25 officers. They don't have a seat allocated by

01 interest group. For example, they don't have two
 02 seats for education or two seats for faith-based or

03 what have you.

04 The Sunland-Tujunga Council has 24
05 representative seats, one each for public schools,
06 libraries, museums, religious institutions, what
07 have you. However, in the Sunland-Tujunga Council's
08 application, although the bylaws don't state this,
09 but in our discussions and, again, in the
10 presentation that was made here today, the
11 Sunland-Tujunga Council believes that anyone who
12 lives, works, owns property or participates with an
13 organization can run, for example, for the seat to
14 represent the seniors, for example, but that person
15 does not need to participate nor be a senior.

16 And that was one of the difficult --
17 that's one of the difficulties that we have with the
18 bylaws, because then you really could end up with a
19 board that is made up of all, for example,
20 stakeholders who live there, and they don't
21 necessarily have to participate with any particular
22 group to represent that group; they simply have to
23 care about that particular group and wish to
24 represent them.

25 And so that's one of the points where we
0054

01 definitely disagree with the Sunland-Tujunga
02 Council, in that we believe those seats should -- if
03 they are going to set seats aside to represent the
04 different interests, that those seats should be held
05 by someone who actually represents the different
06 interests and doesn't simply really care about that
07 particular group. And that's not to say the people
08 shouldn't care, but that's one of the problems.

09 But in essence, you -- really, in terms of
10 compliance, you don't have bylaws that are
11 advocating for a town hall. Sunland-Tujunga
12 Neighborhood Council's allows for, I believe, a
13 system that allows stakeholders to vote on
14 particular issues if it's important enough that they
15 would circulate a petition to have a stakeholder
16 advisory vote happen at a particular meeting, and so
17 that would allow them to come to the meeting and
18 vote on that particular issue before the board votes
19 on that issue.

20 So that's, I guess, some of the main
21 differences in the bylaws. But other than that,
22 there really isn't a significant difference.

23 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: Okay. Thank you.

24 Any other questions for staff?

25 COMMISSIONER HERRERA-DURAN: I have a couple
0055

01 questions.

02 We received up here this evening some
03 bylaws from the Tujunga Council. Are these new?

04 RITA MORENO: Those are new. I'm sorry, I
05 can't recall when the e-mail came in, but I did get
06 them today coming into the office. And there are a
07 number of items that they did change in the report,
08 some of the required things.

09 And I could -- I don't know if you'd like
10 me to go through those or simply provide you with a
11 list with those items that they did comply with
12 crossed out. That would be --

13 COMMISSIONER HERRERA-DURAN: Well, if they've
14 resolved some of the issues we've talked about
15 tonight --

16 RITA MORENO: Some have been resolved. But
17 one of the critical points was the one that I just
18 mentioned in terms of who gets to vote for whom.
19 There's also -- some of the language, I think, is --
20 in terms of how the stakeholders are able to be
21 nominated to run for seats, it seems to be a little
22 bit unclear. And like I said, the city attorney and
23 I weren't able to really -- I wasn't able to work
24 with the city attorney today to work through this
25 and to make sure we understand the same thing.

0056

01 I'm not sure if it allows stakeholders to
02 become nominees or candidates. It seems to indicate
03 that it's only done within a certain period of time,
04 like 90 days before an election, and does not allow
05 them to become nominees further into the process,
06 maybe a week or so before the election or what have
07 you.

08 So some of the language needs to be
09 clarified so that you don't want to have problems
10 later on.

11 COMMISSIONER HERRERA-DURAN: I notice that.
12 And I was a little bit concerned about that because
13 somebody who is a valid stakeholder in the area
14 could come perhaps and just -- they had no write-ins
15 or anybody on the ballot, and that bothered me a
16 little bit because people may not realize what is
17 happening later on, they may be on vacation and
18 different things.

19 So I thought that was a little bit
20 restrictive in inviting people to participate, to
21 run, whether they are elected or not. But you don't
22 know whether or not that's been corrected?

23 RITA MORENO: That particular part has not been
24 corrected. What I have said today, those are two
25 points that have not been corrected.

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01 COMMISSIONER HERRERA-DURAN: One other one that
02 I have on the outreach. I'm concerned with outreach
03 on both of them. As I looked at the maps that we
04 got -- I appreciate those maps -- I notice that one,
05 the Tujunga Council, has been doing as they stated.
06 They stated they have been doing outreach and their
07 fliers were in Spanish and I think Armenian and
08 different languages. The Neighborhood Council said
09 that they were going to -- if I remember correctly,
10 to start that? I'm not sure. Did they?

11 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: We have been doing that.

12 COMMISSIONER HERRERA-DURAN: Excuse me. I'm
13 talking to Ms. Moreno.

14 RITA MORENO: They have distributed some
15 bilingual fliers. If you want, I can ask the
16 project coordinator to step forward. But I'm aware
17 they did do some monthly distributions in other
18 languages.

19 COMMISSIONER HERRERA-DURAN: I'm interested in
20 that and also what the results have been.

21 AMELIA ROBLES: Amelia Robles with the
22 Department of Neighborhood Empowerment, project
23 coordinator.

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24 They have had their general meeting
25 announcements translated into Spanish and they

01 started the system of sending out postcards, and
02 they've added in there also Armenian language so

03 that folk in the community that need any type of
04 translation equipment can call 72 hours and reserve.
05 So they've started the practice of
06 informing the stakeholders about the availability of
07 different languages, but they haven't been doing
08 that.

09 COMMISSIONER HERRERA-DURAN: Do you know what
10 the outcome has been with both of them in terms of
11 -- has there been response to just the fliers? Has
12 there been also door-to-door or people speaking in
13 Spanish and the Armenian language, whatever?

14 AMELIA ROBLES: I have not participated in the
15 specific community meetings, but based on my
16 participation in the general meetings for STNC, at
17 the last meeting last week I believe I did see more
18 folk of color attend the meetings.

19 In the Sunland-Tujunga Council meeting,
20 staff has only attended the last meeting this month,
21 and there was also some diversity present.

22 COMMISSIONER HERRERA-DURAN: Also, on
23 homeowners and renters, is there any way that you
24 can tell by the sign-in sheets or by anything?

25 AMELIA ROBLES: Unfortunately, this
0059
01 neighborhood council has had three project
02 coordinators come through. I have been the last one
03 working with them the last four months, so I don't
04 know specifically the turn-out rate for renters,
05 homeowners, youth, et cetera.

06 COMMISSIONER HERRERA-DURAN: Thank you.

07 AMELIA ROBLES: But we do have -- based on the
08 folk that signed the petition, I think you have
09 percentages there. I don't have them right in front
10 of me. If you look at your report.

11 COMMISSIONER HERRERA-DURAN: I'm just curious
12 to know what the outcome of the outreach has been in
13 terms of really getting people to come in and
14 participate, the diversity. That's what I'm talking
15 about.

16 AMELIA ROBLES: Again, the only way I have been
17 able to gauge it is just from attending their
18 general meetings. Like I said, for Sunland-Tujunga
19 Neighborhood Council I have attended consistently,
20 and this last month there seemed to be more of
21 attendance with folk of color.

22 COMMISSIONER HERRERA-DURAN: I think one of the
23 reasons we have become concerned about that is we
24 have demographics, and then we have homeowners,
25 residents listed as part of the sign-in sheets, but

0060
01 then a resident can be a homeowner, a homeowner can
02 be a renter -- or I mean a resident can be a renter,
03 and that really doesn't tell us.

04 AMELIA ROBLES: Unfortunately, the way the
05 petition was created did not allow -- specifically,
06 like for the Sunland-Tujunga Council, it did not
07 allow for other categories. It just had a
08 definition of the stakeholder: Live, work, and own
09 property.

10 The Sunland-Tujunga Neighborhood Council
11 allowed for a little bit more openness. They had if
12 you are a renter, if you worked, if you are a
13 community-based organization, but that was -- I
14 don't really have the petition right in front of me,
15 but they didn't afford the stakeholders all the

16 different categories.

17 COMMISSIONER HERRERA-DURAN: All right. Thank
18 you.

19 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: Any other questions
20 for staff.

21 Okay. Seeing none, thank you.

22 RITA MORENO: I just want to add one thing.

23 If you look at your maps on the population, you were
24 asking about renters, you will see that there's some
25 densely populated areas around -- and they tend to

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01 be kind of north of Foothill and kind of in the
02 center of the area of -- I think there's a lot of
03 dense population there, which seems to indicate
04 renter population.

05 So I would just look at your
06 population-based maps on the renters and you could
07 see where that concentration is and also be able to
08 see the number of plotted signatures that we got
09 from that area.

10 COMMISSIONER HERRERA-DURAN: And it seems that
11 both of them are fairly distributed in terms of
12 that. I was just wondering on the outcome of people
13 coming and participating.

14 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: Commissioner Stone.

15 COMMISSIONER STONE: I have a question for
16 staff. Rita, sorry to bring you back.

17 Could you give a little bit more
18 background on the boundary overlap with Foothill
19 Trails and, in particular, during staff and the
20 board's consideration of the Foothill Trails
21 Neighborhood Council whether there was any
22 discussion of this land being for public use and
23 being the site of a future overlap with a
24 neighborhood council.

25 RITA MORENO: Actually, that was our

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01 understanding at the time and we had -- was that
02 there was an overlap with Riverwood Ranch. Again,
03 it's that area that kind of loops up on the northern
04 end.

05 Due to that, the Foothill Trails, when
06 they submitted their application, they redrew their
07 boundaries to exclude that area. We had been given
08 minutes from one of the groups, I believe the
09 Sunland-Tujunga Council. We were given minutes of a
10 meeting. We didn't have the sign-in sheet, but we
11 had minutes of the meeting where the residents of
12 Riverwood Ranch voted to be excluded from Foothill
13 Trails and included in Sunland-Tujunga. And that
14 was the only indication that we had of an area that
15 wanted to be excluded from Foothill Trails.

16 At that time I'm not sure that we were
17 aware of the exact boundary overlap and, again, if
18 you want more clarification of exactly the
19 conversations that took place, I would have to refer
20 to Amalia since she was the one that was
21 communicating with both groups about the boundary
22 overlap with Foothill Trails.

23 COMMISSIONER STONE: That would be helpful.

24 AMALIA ROBLES: Again, project coordinator for
25 the Sunland-Tujunga Council/Sunland-Tujunga

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01 Neighborhood Council.

02 When the Foothill Trails District

DNE7655

03 Neighborhood Council applied for certification back
04 in December, DONE staff was facilitating meetings
05 with both Sunland-Tujunga Council and Neighborhood
06 Council. At one of the meetings in December I
07 presented a map to the folk of the Sunland-Tujunga
08 Neighborhood Council to show that the folk at
09 Foothill Trails had applied for certification, these
10 were their boundaries.

11 It was my understanding that one of the
12 formation committee members of the Sunland-Tujunga
13 Council was a member of that homeowner association.
14 Subsequent to that, folk of Sunland-Tujunga Council
15 e-mailed minutes of the Riverwood Ranch homeowners
16 association indicating that they wanted to be part
17 of the Sunland-Tujunga Council.

18 Simultaneously, when they attended the
19 office to deliver other material, I also showed them
20 the map again of the Foothill Trails District
21 Neighborhood Council. At that time it appeared that
22 that area would be overlapping. Later on, you know,
23 in meetings, it was the Angeles Forest.

24 However, the other area where we discussed
25 or they had mentioned about the Tujunga Wash, I

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01 clearly did not state it; however, maps were
02 provided. So it was my understanding that if you
03 look at a map you perhaps can follow, you know,
04 north, south, east, west.

05 So -- but staff did provide them maps of
06 the Foothill Trails Neighborhood Council and we were
07 informed that both groups had a very amicable
08 relationship amongst neighboring communities. So
09 those were the conversations that took place with
10 that.

11 COMMISSIONER STONE: Thank you.

12 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: Okay. Now we're
13 going to move to the public hearing portion of the
14 evening. Speakers will be given two minutes to make
15 their comments regarding one or both of the two
16 applications that are before us this evening.

17 I'm not going to call anybody twice, so if
18 you have already had a chance to speak as a part of
19 the presentation of either side, that will
20 constitute your public comment for the evening.

21 I'm going to begin with Rosalind Stewart
22 from Councilwoman Wendy Greuel's office, followed by
23 Shirley Neuenslauder and Sandra Bahia.

24 Ms. Stewart, welcome back.

25 ROSALIND STEWART: Thank you, Mr. President,

0065
01 Commissioners. Good evening. Rosalind Stewart,
02 Councilwoman Wendy Greuel's office.

03 Our comment is really regarding boundaries
04 and overlaps. And in the plan and actually in your
05 report today, you make a statement that boundaries
06 can be included which are designed for public use.
07 And then you give examples of parks or schools or
08 libraries, et cetera.

09 And the question is, or the comment is, is
10 not facilities such as Castle Park, a city-owned
11 facility, privately managed, a property of public
12 use? Is not a regional shopping center designed for
13 public use, or is not a public golf course, either
14 city owned or privately held, designed for public
15 use?

16 And I guess that we would just ask that
17 the commission give thoughtful consideration to the
18 overlap issues and address that for both
19 neighborhood councils.

20 Thank you.

21 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: Okay. Thank you.

22 ROSALIND STEWART: Shirley Neuenslauder had to
23 leave and she asked me to just tell you that.

24 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: Thank you.

25 Sandra Bahia, Johnye Domy, and Jim

0066

01 Mc Quiston.

02 SANDRA BAHIA: Good evening. I want to thank
03 you for taking your time to come here. I am here
04 and I'm a new homeowner. 20 years ago I came to
05 this area in order to take a class, and I said to
06 myself if I ever have children and I wanted a place
07 to live, it will be here.

08 My grandmother used to say when you marry
09 you don't just get a spouse; you marry a family.

10 And when I came over here I found that to be true.

11 I didn't just buy a house, I came into a community.

12 And that's what impressed me. And I was very
13 impressed with my neighbors. I visit them.

14 And there were several things that were
15 dear to my heart. I am here for STC. And the
16 reason for that is that I was impressed with their
17 outreach. I am a person who has done 25 years of
18 advocacy. With the support of Mayor Tom Bradley I
19 have done hot lines and many other things for
20 seniors and youth and many different --

21 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: I'm going to cut you
22 off right now, because one of the things I don't
23 want to have happen tonight is to have people give
24 us too much background that isn't relevant for us to
25 decide what we have to decide.

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01 We have to pick between one or two -- one
02 or the other of the two neighborhood councils, and I
03 would like everybody to focus tonight on why one or
04 the other is better in their view and what the
05 differences might be that might make that choice
06 important to us.

07 So if you could work toward that end, I'd
08 greatly appreciate it, and I'm going to limit
09 everybody to two minutes.

10 SANDRA BAHIA: All right. Then I'll go right
11 into it.

12 As an advocate it is important for me to
13 be well informed, and I felt that if the board of
14 directors of a certain representation is
15 representing us, you know, be it renters, be it
16 business or community, then if they're representing
17 us, then we need to be informed.

18 And that's very important to me. And I
19 was not informed at all of some of the issues that
20 are very important to me like the Trails, like the
21 AUTOPSY. I have worked in this area and I don't
22 think it benefits our community.

23 I bought over here into this community not
24 because of myself but because of my son. I want to
25 give a future to my son. And I think if an

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01 organization -- I am deaf, partially deaf, and I'm
02 very visual, and so I'm very practical and very to

03 the point and sometimes very blunt. It's part of my
04 makeup.

05 Now, if I am being given information
06 roundabout and I'm not informed of what's going on
07 in something that I do want to participate for the
08 future of my son, I feel uncomfortable with that. I
09 would like to be informed so that my son knows how
10 to make informed decisions and also participate in
11 the community as a citizen that contributes.

12 It is part of my upbringing and the
13 upbringing of my son that we bring to our community,
14 to our schools, to the safety of our children,
15 because we're basically leaving an inheritance to
16 our children.

17 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: I'm going to have to
18 ask you to wrap up.

19 SANDRA BAHIA: And it's a character issue, and
20 to me that is important. I don't want to be caught
21 up in the cobwebs of bureaucracy; I want a practical
22 solution for that, and our group is oriented toward
23 that.

24 Thank you so much.

25 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: Thank you. Johnye
0069

01 Domy, Jim Mc Quiston, and Penny Blackwell.

02 JOHNYE DOMY: I'm Johnye Domy. I came up here
03 in 1945 for allergies, got a real estate license in
04 1947. As you can see now, I can't get out to show
05 much land.

06 To your question about renters, we have
07 certain areas that were zoned and have apartments.
08 But I would say for land this side, we probably have
09 more landowners of -- on single houses than this,
10 say.

11 Now, here are some things that
12 Sunland-Tujunga Council are putting out, and they
13 are in Armenian and Spanish, and we all talk about
14 it to everyone that we meet. And when you compare
15 our record to the group originally formed, whatever,
16 I think we've gone quite a way in increasing our
17 number.

18 I thank you for your time. Does that
19 answer your question about that?

20 COMMISSIONER HERRERA-DURAN: Yes.

21 SANDRA BAHIA: And no one's excluded. Our
22 (inaudible) is a lovely lady, and she's a lady of
23 color.

24 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: Okay. Thank you.

25 Okay. One of the other things I'm going
0070

01 to do during the public hearing is let's hold the
02 applause so we can get to the speakers quickly.

03 JIM MC QUISTON: Jim Mc Quiston, East Hollywood
04 Community Association.

05 I didn't have the STC bylaws, but I did
06 look at the analysis. It seems like it's dividing
07 the community into pressure groups rather than
08 looking at an overall basis, so I didn't think that
09 that helped much with that kind of bylaws.

10 But the Sunland-Tujunga Neighborhood
11 Council is full of land mines, too. And so I'm
12 really on the fence about approving either one. The
13 Sunland-Tujunga looks like it's a little bit better,
14 but both these are so large and it probably would be
15 better, in my opinion, if we had a Sunland

16 Neighborhood Council and a Tujunga Neighborhood
17 Council, being an old (inaudible) man.

18 And I think probably if the groups worked
19 a little bit harder, it looks to me like there's
20 less than three-quarters of one percent of the
21 people that are involved here. And this whole idea
22 of neighborhood councils is to get people down
23 working on the budgets, working on whether we have a
24 Coliseum or a Rose Bowl or something like that.

25 It's not a battle over turf. You don't

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01 really have to care whether or not your area
02 includes a golf course or whatever. You could still
03 speak on that golf course and it's very important.
04 You don't necessarily have to confine yourself just
05 to your own area. That's just to get people elected
06 so that we have universal area coverage, but it
07 doesn't mean that you should restrict yourself to
08 just Sunland or Tujunga.

09 But if you have a lot of activists here,
10 you can get more done if you have two separate
11 boards because you have a lot more people involved
12 in activism than if you just stick to your one
13 little narrow set of representing somebody where
14 people don't really know whether or not you
15 represent everyone in the area.

16 So my reservation would be to ask these
17 people to put it off and see if they can't either
18 divide into or to combine into one, but to try to
19 represent everybody in the area and try to include
20 all the activists rather than trying to choose one
21 over the other.

22 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: Okay. Thank you.
23 Penny Blackwell, Sheila Andrews, and Vic
24 Aghakhani an.

25 PENNY BLACKWELL: I'm Penny Blackwell. I'm a

0072

01 member of Sunland-Tujunga Neighborhood Council,
02 Business and Professional Women, Sunland-Tujunga.
03 I'm a resident, which is a property owner.

04 I moved to Sunland-Tujunga about 11 years
05 ago with the idea of fixing up my home and moving
06 because I could not take Foothill Boulevard and all
07 the signs. But you come to Sunland-Tujunga, you
08 fall in love with it. The community works together.
09 Most of the time people are active. And so I stayed
10 and I wanted to clean up Foothill Boulevard.

11 I'm for the Sunland-Tujunga Neighborhood
12 Council because belonging to an organization,
13 organizations are dwindling. And in Sunland-Tujunga
14 what we were seeing was supporting each other. And
15 in supporting each other, we were all surviving and
16 it was always the same people the same place all the
17 time.

18 Since the neighborhood council started, we
19 have got all of the -- it's no longer a bedroom
20 community. The people are coming, they're getting
21 involved. And that's really important. We don't
22 need directors. We need team players and organizers
23 and leaders. And I feel that the basic structure of
24 the Sunland-Tujunga Neighborhood Council gives that
25 teamwork, which you have more people to get more

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01 done.

02 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: Thank you.

03 Sheila Andrews, Vic Aghakhani, and John
04 La Rocca.

05 SHEILA ANDREWS: Good evening. My name is
06 Sheila Andrews, and I'm a property owner and
07 resident in Tujunga since 1985. Tonight I'm
08 speaking in favor of the Sunland-Tujunga
09 Neighborhood Council.

10 The STNC has been working diligently to
11 establish itself through community outreach
12 participation and involvement from a broad spectrum
13 of the community, and we have made a difference.
14 Our floats in the Fourth of July parade, our game
15 booths at various functions at Sunland Park, Jazz in
16 the Park, the commerce street fair are just a few
17 examples of our community outreach.

18 But most importantly to me is that the
19 Sunland-Tujunga Neighborhood Council has made
20 available to all a forum to discuss our problems,
21 hopes, and dreams for our very unique community. An
22 organization that has worked so long and so hard to
23 make a difference deserves to be certified.

24 Thank you.

25 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: Thank you.
0074

01 Vic Aghakhani, John La Rocca, and Tomi
02 Lyn Bowling.

03 VIC AGHAKHANI: Thank you. Good evening. My
04 name is Vic Aghakhani, by the way, "Aghakhani"
05 like Laurel Canyon. I'm a resident of
06 Sunland-Tujunga for the past 20 years and I'm a very
07 proud resident, and I have raised two kids here,
08 college bound, out of the home, and I have been
09 living in this community not knowing what I'm living
10 in.

11 It's a beautiful community and I encourage
12 everybody to get involved in different shapes,
13 forms, and aspects of the community. And my vote
14 goes for STNC because of their outreach program.

15 One example is that they have been sending
16 fliers to English-speaking people, but if you take a
17 look at the left-hand side, there's a phrase in
18 Armenian saying that if anybody has any questions,
19 they are to contact me, Vic.

20 So my vote goes for STNC. And on a final
21 note, I am president-elect for Kiwanis Club for 2004
22 and 2005 years, and I'm opening the doors for good
23 men and women of the community and encourage
24 everybody to participate in any kind of club there
25 is. And we are meeting on Tuesday night, 6:45 p.m.,
0075

01 at Mario's Restaurant. Please come and meet with
02 us.

03 Thank you. Good night.

04 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: Okay. Thank you.

05 John La Rocca, Tomi Lyn Bowling, and Bob
06 Pace.

07 JOHN LA ROCCA: Good evening. I am talking
08 tonight in favor of the Sunland-Tujunga Neighborhood
09 Council, and mainly because this group really does
10 open the door for anyone to come in and have a say
11 in what's going on in the neighborhood. I've seen
12 that since I put my business here several years
13 ago.

14 And it's interesting. When I first came
15 here I had a lot of opposition to my business being

16 located in a place where we wanted to be and they
 17 didn't want us to be. We just worked with them and
 18 worked it out, and we just moved up here to a
 19 different part of town and it worked out very good.
 20 We're very happy it worked out that way. This group
 21 has really supported us along the way, and I came
 22 back then to support this group and work with them.
 23 One of the things that was said earlier by
 24 Elaine Brown was that this group, that they were
 25 unable to work out their differences. The fact is

0076
 01 that the Sunland-Tujunga Council was unwilling to
 02 work out the differences. The differences were able
 03 to be worked out if they were willing to do that,
 04 and they were not willing to do that.

05 The Sunland-Tujunga Neighborhood Council
 06 is very willing to work things out, and that's not
 07 the way the other group has operated, and that's my
 08 particular problem with that.

09 So that's all I have to say. Thank you
 10 very much.

11 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: Thank you.

12 Tomi Lyn Bowling, Bob Pace, and Lydia
 13 Grant.

14 TOMI LYN BOWLING: I'm a terrible public
 15 speaker so you are going to have to bear with me.
 16 I'm a resident and realtor in Sunland-Tujunga since
 17 1993/'92 respectively and a Cert member.

18 I just wanted to say that throughout the
 19 ages there have been poems written and songs to echo
 20 an age-old saying: Money changes everybody.
 21 Nowhere have I seen that to be more evident than in
 22 the arena of the certification of the
 23 Sunland-Tujunga Neighborhood Council.

24 What used to be an angry few sitting in
 25 the back of the room took a major turn last fall

0077
 01 when the news began publicizing that the city of
 02 L. A. was now giving funds and computers to
 03 neighborhood councils that had achieved
 04 certification.

05 It is very sad to me that since the
 06 publication announcing the involvement of money,
 07 this group of fine, honest, devoted volunteer
 08 individuals that I would entrust with my own
 09 children has been subjected to public attack by
 10 those same unhappy few so severely that good people
 11 that deserve to be warmly thanked for their many
 12 hours of volunteer work have resigned.

13 The involvement of money has taken what
 14 was once simply the dreams and hopes and hard work
 15 of many and has turned this into a threat to destroy
 16 a group of hard-working volunteers because of the
 17 greed of the few that were unsuccessful at
 18 controlling the votes of the many.

19 I want to tell you, the Board of
 20 Neighborhood Commissioners, that I have a message
 21 for the STNC members, stakeholders, and community
 22 heroes like John Van Bleet, who recently resigned,
 23 Jim Margolyn, who recently passed away, and Nina
 24 Royal, and my message is that I will always be there
 25 for you guys and will always be willing to help

0078
 01 those individuals that have worked so tirelessly and
 02 so selflessly for so long.

03 Whether STNC gets certified or not, I hope
04 you, the BONC, certify the group that has worked
05 tirelessly to allow all people to have a vote.
06 Certify the Sunland-Tujunga Neighborhood Council.

07 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: Thank you.
08 Bob Pace, Lydia Grant, and Susan Potthoft.
09 BOB PACE: Thank you. My name is Bob Pace, and
10 I'm here in support of the Sunland-Tujunga
11 Neighborhood Council.

12 I've been through a few of their meetings.
13 I found them to be extremely spirited, vocal,
14 continued to communicate, and continued to reach
15 out.

16 One of the things that I found very
17 important that was brought up earlier was the
18 statistics of the group. There's opinions, there's
19 a lot of different things, but statistics actually
20 show, the statistics show that it's continued to
21 grow; there's been more participation with the group
22 as time has gone on. And I would like to see that
23 continue.

24 I've been a resident here for the last
25 eight years, I've worked in the community for the
0079 last 20, and I'd like to see you support the
01 neighborhood council.

02 Thank you.
03 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: Thank you.
04 Lydia Grant, Susan Potthoft, and Don
05 Appleby.

06 LYDIA GRANT: Hi. My name is Lydia Grant, and
07 I live here in Sunland, opened a business, and have
08 three students at local schools. This is my son
09 Ryan Grant, and we are speaking in favor of
10 Sunland-Tujunga Neighborhood Council.

11 Several months ago I attended a meeting.
12 I was invited to discuss an issue related to safety
13 issues at one of the local schools. I was extremely
14 pleased by the reception and the response that I
15 received from this great group of volunteers. There
16 was a lot of support for the issue.

17 My son is 13 years old and, as a
18 stakeholder, was also invited to join the
19 Sunland-Tujunga Neighborhood Council meetings. I
20 appreciated that they felt he also was a part of the
21 community. To me, this showed that the
22 Sunland-Tujunga Neighborhood Council wants the input
23 and support of the whole community and not to make
24 the decisions for them.

0080 My family has lived in Sunland-Tujunga for
01 almost 70 years. I was born here, but this is the
02 first time I feel like a part of the community and
03 that I have input in making this neighborhood a
04 better place.

05 With the support of the Sunland-Tujunga
06 Neighborhood Council, I hope that this organization
07 will finally get recognition that it deserves. The
08 members of this group worked very hard, and I hope
09 that the right decision is made in support of
10 Sunland-Tujunga Neighborhood Council as the town's
11 council.

12 Thank you.
13 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: Thank you.
14 Susan Potthoft, Don Appleby, and Elsa
15

16 Waters.

17 SUSAN POTTHOFT: My name is Susan Potthoft, and
18 I've been a homeowner here since 1985. I'm here
19 speaking in support of the Sunland-Tujunga
20 Neighborhood Council. I have been attending the
21 meetings ever since I first saw the announcement in
22 the fall of '99, I believe, in the Glendale News
23 Press.

24 The main difference I see in it is that
25 the Sunland-Tujunga Neighborhood Council has more of
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01 an emphasis from the bottom up. And from the bylaws
02 -- I don't know if I've seen the latest one -- from
03 what I've seen on there, it goes from the top down
04 and that there isn't really that much room for
05 involvement, unless you count the involvement of the
06 stakeholders coming in once every two years and
07 voting. And then there is no opportunities to
08 participate in any functions, perform in any of the
09 committees or anything else, because it is a very
10 closed group.

11 Sunland-Tujunga Neighborhood Council has
12 the outreach opportunities, it has the committee
13 opportunities, and it has the opportunities for the
14 committee as a group to be involved and participate
15 in it. And that's what I'm looking for, because I
16 am not looking for someone to take care of me; I am
17 looking for someone or a group that allows us all to
18 work together and try to find a common goal in the
19 community, set our goals, work towards them, and go
20 from that angle.

21 Thank you.

22 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: Okay. Thank you.
23 Don Appleby, Elsa Waters, and Barbara

24 Hughes.

25 DON APPLEBY: Good evening. Don Appleby.
0082

01 I'm here to speak in behalf of the
02 Neighborhood Council. And I have been a member of
03 them for now two and a half years, and their
04 outreach is what brought me into the fold. And I
05 just want to say that I want to support them and
06 they have been very helpful in the neighborhood.

07 Thank you.

08 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: Thank you.

09 Elsa Waters, Barbara Hughes, and Steve
10 Bednarczyk, and I probably pronounced that wrong.

11 ELSA WATERS: Hi. My name is Elsa Waters, and
12 I am a homeowner. I'm a teacher, a past business
13 owner, a little bit of everything. Anyway, thank
14 you very much for coming here and listening to us
15 today.

16 I have been involved with the STNC since
17 the first public meeting, November 1999. I want to
18 thank the Chamber for having brought that to us. It
19 was really important. And I have stayed involved
20 because -- mostly because I've had a chance to
21 listen to other people and discuss, debate, argue --
22 sometimes heatedly -- and then walk away feeling
23 like the community reached an agreement.

24 And that's the most important thing I want
25 to tell you about the STNC. It isn't just, "Okay."
0083

01 Here, this is what you're going to do and this is
02 how it's going to be done." This is a group of

03 people, and the stakeholders have to take a little
04 bit of responsibility here.

05 The notices are out there; they can come
06 to both meetings. They come to the meetings and
07 they have to take the responsibility to voice their
08 opinion and to make it hold. And that's what we
09 do. If we didn't want to do that, if we want to sit
10 in our houses and not pay attention, so be it.

11 But in the STNC people show up, they keep
12 coming back. And I'm an opinionated person. I
13 don't always win, but I like the idea that my voice
14 is heard and the majority rules.

15 So thank you for hearing me.

16 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: Thank you.

17 Barbara Hughes, Steve Bednarczyk, and
18 Laurel Fest.

19 BARBARA HUGHES: Hi, and thank you. My name is
20 Barbara Hughes, and I did send a letter. I hope
21 that you all have an opportunity to review the
22 letter that I sent through the e-mail.

23 I was president of the Chamber of Commerce
24 when we began the -- in 1999 to form the ad hoc
25 committee and, to me, it was one of the most

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01 exciting things that I was involved with, along with
02 a lot of other people.

03 And as it went along -- and I mainly
04 watched it grow; I was not actively involved -- but
05 standing on the sidelines attending the meetings, I
06 could -- it was like the best thing that I ever saw
07 happen to the community. All these people,
08 constantly new people all the time. The passion and
09 the excitement and the love for community was just
10 totally amazing.

11 So obviously, I'm for this group. I hope
12 that they get it because I think they will be -- I
13 think there will be a lot of demoralized people
14 after all the effort that's been put in if they
15 aren't allowed to go ahead and move on from here.

16 Thank you very much.

17 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: Okay. Thank you.

18 Steve Bednarczyk, Laurel Fest, and Steven
19 Crouch.

20 STEVE BEDNARCZYK: Good evening. My name is
21 Steve Bednarczyk. I've been a resident of the
22 Foothill community since 1968, most recently a
23 resident in Sunland-Tujunga for the past two and a
24 half years.

25 Practically from the time I arrived here,
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01 I was contacted by one of the members of the
02 Sunland-Tujunga Neighborhood Council and have since
03 taken Community Emergency Response Training and
04 participated in that.

05 I have tried religiously to go to each of
06 the council meetings, and I think what I have really
07 liked about the Sunland-Tujunga Neighborhood Council
08 was the open forum that they had. We tried a town
09 council, which I think delayed the certification,
10 but in delaying that certification, I think we
11 reached those people who thought they didn't have a
12 voice in the community and gave them the opportunity
13 to speak.

14 So I would like to have, no matter what,
15 some decision made, because this community is filled

16 with good people, actually, from both organizations.
 17 And we will come back together. But please give us
 18 a decision.

19 Thank you.

20 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: Okay. Thank you.

21 Laurel Fest, Steven Crouch, and Marynance
 22 Schellenbach.

23 LAUREL FEST: Hello. I'm Laurel Fest. I have
 24 lived here since 1996. I'm a homeowner. I'm a
 25 member of the Sunland-Tujunga Neighborhood Council.

0086

01 I'm also treasurer of the Sunland-Tujunga Branch
 02 Library friends' group.

03 True democracy takes time. Making an
 04 informed decision takes time. A lot of time was
 05 spent by the neighborhood council on its bylaws, the
 06 original town hall format bylaws, because every
 07 single plank, every single part of it, was brought
 08 to everybody and discussed and debated at great
 09 length and then, of course, the same process had to
 10 be gone through a second time when it came out that,
 11 no, we really couldn't have a town hall. We did
 12 fight for it.

13 What I like about the organization and
 14 what I'm hearing from other people is the fact that
 15 it is a truly grassroots organization. The town
 16 hall format shows that, and the fact that we tried
 17 to hold onto it shows we care about giving this
 18 community what the people in the community want, not
 19 imposing on them some great plan that 20 people on a
 20 board or any number of people on the board decide
 21 would be a good thing.

22 And there's some evidence of that in the
 23 new bylaws in which there's an official initiative
 24 process for the stakeholders, who even though they
 25 can't vote, are being still eagerly solicited for

0087

01 their opinions and what they want.

02 So for that reason alone -- and there are
 03 lots of others. I have been going to meetings for
 04 almost three years and I have attended the agenda
 05 meetings, which are smaller meetings that occur
 06 before the main monthly meeting, which the public is
 07 invited to come to and put items on the agenda,
 08 bring them up in advance so they can be considered
 09 and printed up in the agenda.

10 And I have seen efforts at how do we get
 11 more people to come, how can we do better? I mean,
 12 this is in private. This is not for public
 13 consumption, not private but in a smaller group, not
 14 on a podium.

15 I've seen such hard work on the part of
 16 these people who have been active in this group, and
 17 I would be really devastated if they weren't
 18 certified.

19 Thank you.

20 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: Thank you.

21 Steven Crouch, Marynance Schellenbach, and
 22 Cindy Cleghorn.

23 STEVEN CROUCH: Hi. I'm Steve Crouch, a
 24 resident with Canyon Area Preservation, a couple
 25 other groups that I belong to.

0088

01 I get the feeling that you folks think
 02 this is like the West Side Story. We have got the

03 Jets and the Sharks and we're going to have a rumble
04 outside and everything. And we even have Rita
05 Moreno on the cast, you know.

06 But really, I think that the whole key to
07 this thing is that you want to have participation.
08 And once --

09 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: As long as the
10 audience doesn't break into song.

11 STEVEN CROUCH: We do that at our meetings.
12 You should come.

13 So I think the whole idea is to get people
14 to participate and what's the structure that's best
15 going to do that. And for that reason I think that
16 the Neighborhood Council structure is better suited;
17 it's more broad and stimulates general participation
18 from everybody, not just representative groups.

19 What I wouldn't want to see is that we
20 slip into like our meetings with 10 or 15 people
21 with the elected representatives coming and sitting
22 in a room, making important decisions for the whole
23 community and no one gets to participate. And that
24 should be wrong.

25 Our groups are big, 80 people. I don't
0089

01 know what the other neighborhood councils are all
02 about, but I don't think they get the same general
03 participation. It's like the board meets and says
04 what's going to happen. It's different up here.

05 We already have representative government
06 with the city council and everything. We want
07 democracy. That's what this is about; it's like
08 democracy.

09 You know, leadership is a very difficult
10 thing. And everybody does so much. I mean, this
11 group, the Sunland-Tujunga Neighborhood Council,
12 they're great. I mean, I loved that slide show,
13 Gene. The video and everything was great. I mean,
14 everybody really participates well, and what we want
15 to do is to have everybody come together.

16 And one of the problems with the
17 Sunland-Tujunga Council structure is, you know, with
18 these representatives, it's like -- believe me, I am
19 into environmental protection. My group is Canyon
20 Area Preservation. But just for fun, if the STC
21 were set up, I would run for the commercial real
22 estate seat, and I would probably win because I'm
23 pretty popular. But I guarantee you, it's different
24 at odds.

25 But anyway, that's all I wanted to say.

0090

01 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: Thank you.

02 Marynance Schellenbach, Cindy Cleghorn,
03 and Paul Dunham.

04 MARYNANCE SCHELLENBACH: Hi. Thank you for
05 coming. I'm Marynance Schellenbach. I have lived
06 up here since 1955. My husband opened his
07 optometric practice here in 1953. We raised our
08 four children here. Two of them raised their four
09 children here. So we're sort of stakeholders from a
10 lot of different angles in this community. We have
11 both been active in all sorts of community -- Lion's
12 Club, Junior Chamber of Commerce, Junior Women's
13 Club, Campfire Girls, church, all that sort of
14 stuff.

15 We love the community. We could have

16 easily moved out of it, up the road towards La
 17 Crescenta, but this is a very special town where
 18 everybody is judged on who they are and not what
 19 they have. And that's, I think, very special.
 20 We've also been an isolated community
 21 because of our geographic condition and we've been
 22 cut off very often from the city of Los Angeles and
 23 kind of forgotten. I would have been happy to have
 24 seen succession succeed for that reason. It
 25 didn't. I think neighborhood councils is the next

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01 best idea.

02 I'm a member of the Sunland-Tujunga
 03 Neighborhood Council. I joined early on. I came in
 04 and out and in and out, and it was really nice to
 05 always see more and more people, people who I had
 06 never seen being active in any other face of the
 07 community. So they are bringing in people who have
 08 not been involved in any other way.

09 I like the open forum format. Everybody
 10 who has spoken on behalf of the Neighborhood
 11 Council, I was sitting there saying, "Yeah, that's
 12 true. Gee, why didn't I think of that?" because I
 13 think they have all brought different facets of the
 14 organization to your attention.

15 I really like the ability to plug in, as
 16 I'm able to, and stay informed by them through
 17 e-mail when I'm not able to attend. One of the
 18 reasons I came to start with was because we did not
 19 have a community newspaper, and I really believed
 20 that we needed one. The Neighborhood Council
 21 provided a forum which facilitated the beginning of
 22 the Foothill Sentinel, which celebrated its first
 23 anniversary this month.

24 They connect various groups that were not
 25 connected; they were not at odds, but somehow

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01 nothing ever brought them together. And I have seen
 02 that happening in the community -- in the
 03 Neighborhood Council.

04 The leadership is open to hearing all
 05 viewpoints, and I very much appreciate that. I
 06 support the certification of the Sunland-Tujunga
 07 Neighborhood Council because I really feel it is the
 08 group which best represents all of us who live in
 09 Sunland-Tujunga.

10 Thank you very much.

11 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: Okay. Thank you.

12 Cindy Cleghorn, Paul Dunham, and Mike
 13 Rubio.

14 CINDY CLEGHORN: Good evening. Thank you for
 15 being here. My name is Cindy Cleghorn, and I'm a
 16 business owner. I am in favor of the
 17 Sunland-Tujunga Neighborhood Council tonight. I am
 18 a member of that as a result of a road show that the
 19 council had done coming to our Masonic lodge here in
 20 Tujunga.

21 As a business owner, which I am, I learned
 22 of STNC in 2001 as being the place to go to get
 23 answers so I could legally open my business on
 24 Commerce. This is a key targeted street for
 25 revitalization in the neighborhood. I am proud to

0093

01 bring my business to the area as well as revitalize
 02 this blighted area.

03 Our council member Wendy Greuel has
 04 visited our meetings often and given us much needed
 05 updates on what's happening downtown, and what she
 06 has done to help us with many needed improvements
 07 that we need here. Speakers from city planning,
 08 developers wanting to build apartments, condos,
 09 shopping malls, gas stations, storage rental
 10 companies, the Goodwill, as well as Rotary, Lions,
 11 Verdugo Hills High School, and many more, so that
 12 they can outreach to our community as well, we would
 13 never have an opportunity to hear from these folks
 14 otherwise.

15 Again, STNC provides a broad-based arena
 16 for communicating a broad base of information.

17 Monthly, our senior lead officer has given
 18 us an update on crime statistics in the community.
 19 You would never get this much detail in a local
 20 newspaper or an opportunity to get the personal
 21 phone number of a police officer who wants to help
 22 make this community a better place.

23 STNC is the place to get answers to your
 24 questions. If the STNC council doesn't have the
 25 answer -- that means the leaders of this council --

0094
 01 the community people will.

02 Thank you very much.

03 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: Thank you.

04 Paul Dunham, Mike Rubio, and Michael
 05 Jones.

06 PAUL DUNHAM: Hi. I'm here in support of
 07 Sunland-Tujunga Neighborhood Council. I'm a
 08 resident, recent resident, and I've been attending
 09 the Neighborhood Council meetings for about a year
 10 now. And what I found there is that there's a lot
 11 of participation from the -- yeah, from the people
 12 in Tujunga.

13 I've never been to a meeting where there
 14 is so much like people off the streets that want to
 15 get involved with what's going on in their
 16 neighborhood, a concern that they have. And I run
 17 into the same people in the stores. And I haven't
 18 been here that long, but I run into people I know
 19 now, and it's through the Neighborhood Council.

20 I want to thank you for taking the time to
 21 come out and hear us.

22 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: Thank you.

23 Mike Rubio, Michael Jones, Tatiana

24 Thornton.

25 MIKE RUBIO: Hello. My name is Mike Rubio. I

0095
 01 am a property owner and resident in Tujunga. Before
 02 that I was in Sunland. I am here in favor of the
 03 Neighborhood Council.

04 The Sunland-Tujunga Council is not
 05 inclusive of the whole community. The
 06 Sunland-Tujunga Council has representatives that are
 07 not truly representative. The Sunland-Tujunga
 08 Council is exclusive and does not include the
 09 community.

10 The Sunland-Tujunga Neighborhood Council
 11 solicits and involves members of the whole
 12 community. Almost every person that's come up here
 13 so far has brought that up as a major point.

14 I actually got Cert trained due to Nina
 15 Royal of the Neighborhood Council, who solicited

16 people of the community to become Cert trained to
17 help safeguard our community in the case of
18 emergency.

19 You can tell that the Neighborhood Council
20 is inclusive of the community because you can tell
21 this by their bylaws, by how their meetings are
22 held.

23 The one other point I wanted to mention is
24 the wash. The wash has always been public land, and
25 when the golf course was first written to us -- I

0096
01 mean first sent us letters about putting the golf
02 course there, it was made very clear that the golf
03 course would be open to the public. So I would
04 consider that public property.

05 Thank you.

06 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: Thank you.

07 Michael Jones, Tatiana Thornton, and Bob
08 Schiele.

09 MICHAEL JONES: Hi. My name is Michael Jones,
10 and this is Tatiana Thornton. She is my
11 stepdaughter and she attends Plainview.

12 And I like the idea of the outreach
13 because I got one of these in the mail, and if I
14 didn't live there, it says "Or Current Occupant."
15 And it's in the other languages and so on.

16 And I like the word "neighborhood."
17 "Neighborhood" is mentioned in there. And we all
18 have our neighborhoods and we like to take care of
19 them and be as one and we, you know, should all get
20 along.

21 And the improvement of the quality of life
22 they mention, and my voice can be heard, because I'm
23 a small percentage. I notice I'm two percent on
24 ethnicity. And I'm a renter also, and that's 40
25 percent. And I also work in Tujunga. So I have a

0097
01 lot of interest in the STNC.

02 Okay. Thank you.

03 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: Okay. Does Tatiana
04 want to say anything?

05 MICHAEL JONES: I don't think so.

06 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: All right.

07 Bob Schiele, Gregory Kekahuna, and Mary
08 Benson.

09 BOB SCHIELE: Hello. Welcome, Board, to
10 Sunland-Tujunga. My name is Bob Schiele. I've been
11 a resident of Sunland for about five years now.

12 Outside of Wendy Greuel's office, I
13 believe the Sunland-Tujunga Neighborhood Council is
14 the heart of the community. This board has extended
15 themselves above and beyond the call of duty.

16 I'm a member of the Rotary Club of
17 Sunland-Tujunga because I met the Rotarians at the
18 Sunland-Tujunga Neighborhood Council. Through that,
19 I've been a mentor at the Interact Club at Verdugo
20 Hills High School. I'm also a block captain; they
21 trained me to spread the word around the block. It
22 also gave me a good excuse to meet my neighbors.

23 The certification issue is splitting the
24 community. It's really a shame because this time
25 could be better spent improving our community.

0098
01 Please vote for the Sunland-Tujunga
02 Neighborhood Council. Thank you very much.

03 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: Thank you.
04 Gregory Kekahuna, Mary Benson, and Deborah

05 Olin.

06 Gregory Kekahuna going once. Okay. Mary
07 Benson. Okay. And Deborah Olin.

08 DEBORAH OLIN: Hi. My name is Deborah Olin,
09 and I'm a resident here in Tujunga-Sunland. I'm
10 also a motorcyclist, and one of the things that both
11 these groups, it's really sad, is that you guys
12 can't come together.

13 And I just started getting a letter about
14 these meetings, so I don't know what the outreach
15 program is about, but I finally got one. And I've
16 been here for eight years. So I think it takes
17 time, like everything else does.

18 And when I went to both meetings, I found
19 that they're both doing the same thing. They're
20 both interested in the same thing, except they're
21 not interested in the bikers. And if they would do
22 their research, the Tujunga-Sunland community is the
23 number one largest registered motorcyclists in the
24 world. So I think they got to put that on their
25 list.

0099

01 But what I did notice, I have to say that
02 one side seemed a little bit more money oriented and
03 it didn't -- it seemed like you had to -- if you
04 didn't have some type of money background you
05 weren't going to get heard, or if you didn't know
06 something, and I think that what I found out just at
07 one meeting at each group was the Neighborhood
08 Council seemed to be more like neighborly, like into
09 you as a person, not really into like who you are, I
10 guess, or what your background is and what you could
11 do, I guess.

12 So that's all I wanted to say.

13 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: Okay. And thank
14 you.

15 And that will conclude the public hearing
16 for this evening. And what I'd like to do is ask
17 each of the applicants to come back for a
18 three-minute rebuttal, so we'll start with the
19 Sunland-Tujunga Council.

20 GENE SMITH: Lots of the expressed impressions
21 here have been interesting, to say the least. The
22 Sunland-Tujunga Neighborhood Council has been at
23 this for three and a half years, and the reason for
24 the split in the faction is after three and a half
25 years of pressing for a town hall format, which they

0100

01 recognized and had been informed time and time again
02 was not an acceptable format for certification, they
03 have finally come around to the realization to get
04 certified they had to change their format. And that
05 was brought about because the STC split off and
06 demonstrated that something had to be done.

07 The fact is that had the STC never split
08 off -- which was the original forming group of the
09 STNC -- and pressed for certification in this
10 community, we would probably still be waiting for
11 certification to this very day.

12 Any questions?

13 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: Yes.

14 GENE SMITH: Okay.

15 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: If we were to

16 certify the Sunland-Tujunga Neighborhood Council,
 17 what would be your concerns as their application is
 18 submitted today? And I'll ask the same question for
 19 them.

20 GENE SMITH: Well, I don't know where the
 21 impression of being a more open forum comes from
 22 other than the fact that they have promoted the town
 23 hall format.

24 The fact is, the reason we have pressed
 25 for specific representatives is to open the doors to
 0101

01 people who were not getting represented in this
 02 community, that is, there is a specific
 03 representative for the homeless, there is a specific
 04 representative for renters, there is a specific
 05 representative for homeowners, businesses, et
 06 cetera. That's the reason for those 24 separate
 07 capacities.

08 The reason for the four separate standing
 09 committees is to try and provide an environment to
 10 encourage discussion, to encourage people who are
 11 within the specific diverse interests of that
 12 standing committee to discuss and bring forth what
 13 their concerns are, where they don't have the
 14 antagonism present where there might be other
 15 factions of the community who would tend to negate
 16 whatever they want to discuss, which has been the
 17 experience of a number of these people who have
 18 participated over the years with the Sunland-Tujunga
 19 Neighborhood Council.

20 So we are trying to encourage in fact
 21 representation of all of the elements of the
 22 community, not just a few, and would encourage
 23 everybody to attend.

24 So what would be my reservations? My
 25 reservations in terms of certifying the

0102
 01 Sunland-Tujunga Neighborhood Council would be simply
 02 that you are going to have a good faction of the
 03 community that is going to continue to do business
 04 as usual, and that's basically what it's been for
 05 three and a half years.

06 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: Okay.

07 COMMISSIONER HERRERA-DURAN: If the
 08 Neighborhood Council were certified, how would you
 09 and your group attempt to integrate and to be part
 10 of the whole community? I think it's important that
 11 we determine what will happen in terms of unity and
 12 things moving ahead.

13 GENE SMITH: I think so, too, and I think the
 14 one important factor that has been brought forth to
 15 you is that this issue of certification really has
 16 divided the community. But it's only that issue
 17 that's divided the community.

18 This community has worked together on all
 19 types of issues. From the scenic corridor, from
 20 Foothill specific plan, any number of issues that
 21 you can think of, this community has worked
 22 together. And if we can get past this issue of
 23 certification, I'm sure that this community will
 24 come back together and work together as it has in
 25 the past.

0103
 01 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: Okay.

02 GENE SMITH: Am I wrong?

03 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: Commi ssi oner
04 Lucente.

05 COMMISSIONER LUCENTE: Thank you.
06 You mentioned about the deficiencies in
07 those bylaws relative to the town hall format and
08 the realization that that wasn't going to make it in
09 terms of certification.

10 GENE SMITH: Correct.

11 COMMISSIONER LUCENTE: Do the bylaws now
12 address those shortfalls adequately?

13 GENE SMITH: The only thing that I know of
14 revised bylaws provisions from the STNC is that they
15 have now set up some representative groups who will,
16 you know, represent geographical areas. I don't
17 know all the specific details.

18 But I will say this: When you have a
19 representative -- and somebody talked about
20 qualifications for elections. I don't know if any
21 of you read the qualifications for election or to
22 run for President of the United States lately, but
23 they're pretty vague and pretty broad.

24 So from the standpoint of who has the
25 right to determine who is going to represent or be

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01 the representatives of a particular diverse entity,
02 it's these people out here that have the right to
03 make that decision. They are the ones that should
04 have the opportunity to evaluate the credentials of
05 the individual.

06 When you have somebody who is running
07 based upon a geographic basis, we have no way of
08 knowing, without having a candid individual, of what
09 their personal biases and preferences may be. But I
10 will guarantee you that if you have a homeowner who
11 is representing the homeless and they vote in a way
12 that is contrary to the interest of the homeless,
13 you will be able to identify the bias of that
14 individual. That is accountability to the
15 community.

16 COMMISSIONER LUCENTE: Okay. Thank you.

17 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: Okay. Thank you.

18 Okay. The Sunland-Tujunga Neighborhood
19 Council, who would like to be the representative?
20 Ken?

21 KEN MC ALPINE: Thank you, Bill. Again, my
22 name is Ken Mc Alpine. I'm here with the
23 Sunland-Tujunga Neighborhood Council.

24 I think you have heard a lot of public
25 testimony tonight that there is a lot of people here

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01 who have never been involved in the community except
02 for the Sunland-Tujunga Neighborhood Council. You
03 see openness, you see involvement, you see people
04 who are old -- not old in age, but old in
05 experience, who have been community leaders for some
06 time in support of it, you see people who are brand
07 new, like myself, and you just listen to what you
08 heard out here.

09 During mediation, something that the STC
10 said over and over again was, "We want BONC to
11 decide. We want BONC to decide." And you know, you
12 guys are good volunteers and you have been working
13 hard at what you do, too, but with all due respect,
14 I think the community should decide. And I think
15 the community has spoken tonight.

16 These are the people who live here, who
17 work here. These are the people who go to school
18 here. I think you have heard from them tonight.

19 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: Okay. Any
20 questions?

21 I'll ask the same question I asked. If
22 the Sunland-Tujunga Council were to be certified,
23 what would be your concerns with regard to that
24 situation?

25 KEN MC ALPINE: I have got a couple concerns.
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01 Number one, we've mentioned in our presentation
02 secret ballots. I think people should be free to
03 elect people and not have the person you voted for
04 or against know about that. It's a close-knit
05 community. You can start to tear apart friendships
06 if you don't have secret ballots. Secret ballots
07 are part of democracy. It's what people have grown
08 to expect, to be able to say their piece and be able
09 to vote for those people who they like without
10 having that open to breaking friendships.

11 The whole idea of participation, I think,
12 is something we really worked hard to include when
13 we moved from town hall to our new set of bylaws.
14 Obviously we wanted a town hall originally because,
15 with town hall, you turn nobody away. Everybody
16 that comes gets a voice.

17 So what have we done since then to make
18 that good is we have an initiative process that
19 allows stakeholders to put stuff on the agenda and
20 force neighborhood council representatives to
21 consider something. That's a very important way to
22 keep stakeholders involved. We have proportionality
23 of representatives so that if your interests aren't
24 covered in one way, you can always go to a
25 geographic representative and get it covered that

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01 way.

02 Any time you start enumerating a list of
03 the groups, you are always going to leave someone
04 out. In the STC, if there's one organizational
05 representative and someone from the Chamber gets
06 elected to that position, then someone from the
07 Lions can't be.

08 And so this is why we've tried to have
09 multiple ways of representing the community, cutting
10 the cube in different ways so that you can always
11 find a representative to represent you.

12 The frequency of elections, basically we
13 have two one-year terms; each person can serve one
14 office, which basically -- so far anyone who has run
15 for office in our town hall format who's run again
16 gets re-elected, so what it turns out to be is a
17 two-year term with a referendum in the middle that
18 if you don't live up to what the community wants,
19 they can toss you out.

20 And I think one of the criticisms of the
21 STC is that it's a closed group. And if we are a
22 closed group, you can throw us out, too. I mean,
23 the community and the stakeholders can speak,
24 frequently, once every year.

25 There's also the recall in our bylaws that
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01 allows anyone to be thrown out by the stakeholders
02 getting together, and I understand we have to work

03 with the city attorney if we ever do that. But it's
04 in there, and we would work with the city attorney
05 if for any reason someone is not representing the
06 community. And I think it's very important to hold
07 board members accountable.

08 And I guess it goes under this as well.
09 They mentioned whether or not we want to be
10 certified and why were we delaying. It takes time
11 for participation of the entire community to come to
12 consensus. If you get five people in a room
13 deciding on a set of bylaws and then present them to
14 the community, that's not the same as having the
15 community involved in structuring it and having a
16 say in what it is that you do.

17 We came up with the town hall three years
18 ago. We've been working toward it. We understood
19 there's difficulties. We were working with Gwen.
20 We were working with Wendy Greuel, who put a motion
21 on our behalf for town hall.

22 And why were we doing that? I didn't even
23 propose the town hall. When I first got there, I
24 kind of liked some other structure. But once the
25 voters voted for that, I went and advocated for

0109 01 that. That's taken time. That's the only reason we
02 have taken time. And it's because of stakeholder
03 participation.

04 And that's what I'm concerned about if the
05 STC gets certified.

06 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: Okay. Commissioner
07 Lucente.

08 COMMISSIONER LUCENTE: What safeguards are in
09 your bylaws? You know, it's -- I have spoken and
10 this commission has discussed the town hall format,
11 you know, numerous times, and so I'm on record as
12 saying that the town hall format can be, in its
13 purest form, you know, democracy at its best. At
14 its worst form it can be mob rule.

15 So what safeguards are in your bylaws?
16 Because we're not certifying you, we're not
17 certifying your formation committee. We are
18 certifying a structure and a set of bylaws that will
19 exist, hopefully, for a long time. And so that's
20 really the core issue.

21 KEN MC ALPINE: That's a great question, Tony.
22 First of all, we are no longer a town hall. When it
23 became evident to us --

24 COMMISSIONER LUCENTE: I understand that. I'm
25 talking about your current bylaws.

0110 01 KEN MC ALPINE: Yeah. Our current bylaws have
02 a lot of safeguards in it. It's structured very
03 similar in that we have representatives, they're
04 geographic, so therefore it's not going to be town
05 hall. The town hall has become just advisory votes
06 and you have to --

07 COMMISSIONER LUCENTE: I understand that. I'm
08 talking about your current bylaws.

09 So okay, they have geographic, but you
10 have representation, you know, that's kind of a
11 pool, if you will, of people that can represent a
12 specific interest. So how are these people held
13 accountable? What accountability is built into
14 these bylaws that guarantees that they will
15 represent those interests?

16 KEN MC ALPINE: Okay. I understand your
17 question better.

18 The pool -- people have to state what
19 their interest is that they're representing when
20 they run. So you have to declare, okay, I represent
21 education.

22 COMMISSIONER LUCENTE: I understand that.

23 KEN MC ALPINE: Okay. When -- what holds
24 people accountable is, number one, if someone says
25 they're going to represent education and you see

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01 them voting against education, you remove them. You
02 recall them, you vote them out next year. You can
03 recall someone the month after they get elected if
04 you see them not representing the interests that
05 they say that they're representing.

06 And I think that's a very important part.
07 And I agree with you, this is a country where
08 democracy means majority rules, but the minority
09 opinions are respected and are heard. And I think
10 that's an important protection that having the
11 interest group representatives in our council
12 provides.

13 Does that answer your question?

14 COMMISSIONER LUCENTE: Yes.

15 KEN MC ALPINE: Okay.

16 COMMISSIONER HERRERA-DURAN: It doesn't answer
17 it for me, though.

18 KEN MC ALPINE: Oh, okay.

19 COMMISSIONER HERRERA-DURAN: When you say that
20 you would have somebody removed if they weren't
21 representing education, who's to say in terms of the
22 vote? They may have a difference of opinion.

23 I can do -- I can say something that I
24 have differences of opinions with the Board of
25 Education that's there now, but that doesn't mean

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01 I'm not interested in education.

02 KEN MC ALPINE: The way someone would be
03 removed is the stakeholders would circulate a
04 petition and say, "You know what? We've heard this
05 guy make so many decisions that we think are
06 contrary."

07 COMMISSIONER HERRERA-DURAN: Contrary to what?

08 KEN MC ALPINE: Contrary to their opinion of
09 what that interest should be represented as, the
10 stakeholders who represent an interest.

11 They collect signatures, and then if they
12 get enough, then you hold an election basically and
13 you put it before the stakeholders again and they
14 decide as a group whether or not that representative
15 is representing the interest. And so it's the
16 community, the stakeholders, who decide eventually.

17 I think that's what democracy is about.
18 Do I expect the recall to be used frequently? No, I
19 think one year is short enough. But I think if
20 someone is not supporting those interests, I think
21 we need the right to recall folks.

22 COMMISSIONER HERRERA-DURAN: I'd like to
23 address on Page 7 of 12 a statement here that --
24 from the staff. You have been in business for three
25 years, and it says, "Staff has attended several

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01 general meetings, and while attendance averages 30
02 to 60, there is minimum participation from people of

03 color or youth. "

04 And I think in terms of outreach, that
05 kind of concerns me a little bit, how for three
06 years it would seem to me that you would have quite
07 some time to make some inroads.

08 KEN MC ALPINE: Yeah. That's an excellent
09 question, Pat. We've been at this three years. And
10 when you heard our presentation from our outreach
11 speakers, our approach has been, number one, a broad
12 approach: Let's get as many people as quickly as we
13 can. And that, we're done.

14 We've gone and -- if you saw the plot on
15 the map, the first plot showed all the pinpricks,
16 how uniform we have covered our community. The
17 uniformity has covered Latino areas equally as well
18 as it's covered nonLatino areas. It's covered
19 Armenian areas in our community equally as well as
20 it's covered nonArmenian.

21 What we've seen is our outreach has gone
22 to everyone. Not everyone equally responds and
23 shows up. So over time we have been honing our
24 outreach to try to better reach people who don't
25 respond as readily.

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01 At the time a year ago when we collected
02 our signatures, for instance, at the time we
03 collected our signatures, we had four percent on our
04 signature list. When we did the same surname count
05 on our overall data base for Latino surnames, we
06 have 10 percent. The community is 25 percent. So
07 you do see a progression in this area as we continue
08 to hone and refine our methods.

09 And it's a learning experience for us. It
10 really is. We are trying to see how this works.

11 Same with youth outreach. We have gone to
12 Verdugo. We've participated in their fairs. We've
13 had interns.

14 And youth is a hard age for us. When we
15 get people to come, they have got other interests.
16 They are getting ready for college and doing other
17 things, and it's hard to keep youths involved in our
18 meetings. And I admit that and think it would be
19 hard for other councils and it's probably been hard
20 for councils around the city of Los Angeles in that
21 very area. And we accept the challenge and we'll
22 continue to improve at it.

23 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: Commi ssi oner
24 Lucente.

25 COMMISSIONER LUCENTE: I have one more

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01 question, please. I don't believe -- and perhaps
02 the city attorney can weigh in here, but I don't
03 believe there's a provision in your bylaws that
04 would prevent someone from running in multiple
05 categories.

06 KEN MC ALPINE: I believe that you cannot run
07 in multiple categories.

08 Don, am I correct?

09 Yes, there is a provision that prevents
10 you from running in multiple categories. If you
11 want -- Don, could you find a copy of the bylaws and
12 point that out?

13 I'll find that for you. But --

14 COMMISSIONER LUCENTE: Okay.

15 KEN MC ALPINE: We'll work on that and I'll get

16 you an answer back.

17 COMMISSIONER LUCENTE: Thank you.

18 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: Thank you.

19 KEN MC ALPINE: Is that it?

20 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: Yep. Thank you very
21 much.

22 That formally closes the public hearing
23 and brings us to the commission discussion. Who
24 would like to begin the --

25 Commissioner Lucente?

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01 COMMISSIONER LUCENTE: Sure, I'll go.

02 Okay. First of all, thank you to everyone
03 for attending tonight, because for me personally,
04 because (a), we've had -- you know, we went to many,
05 many meetings throughout this very large city. I
06 can tell you that because we've met in each
07 community. So that provides people an opportunity
08 to really come and, you know, not have to travel
09 great distances, hopefully, to participate in this
10 process.

11 And the participation has varied
12 tremendously, but obviously tonight there's a strong
13 interest, and all of you are to be commended for
14 turning out to say whatever it is you wanted to say
15 or just observe, if that was your desire.

16 I have spoken out, as I indicated
17 previously, very strongly against this,
18 quote/unquote, town hall format just the way it had
19 been previously presented to this commission. I
20 have spoken to Councilmember Wendy Greuel about this
21 issue and expressed my concerns relative to her
22 motion and things like that.

23 However, I have went on record and, in our
24 rather lengthy discussion on this very topic, I did
25 state my opposition to this town hall format, but I

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01 did state my support and belief that the ideals or
02 objectives of a town hall format could be
03 accommodated within the current structure of the
04 city ordinance on these neighborhood councils.

05 And so while I don't feel that the bylaws
06 fully provide the safeguards, you know, to the level
07 that maybe I would personally want in my community,
08 I am willing to support the concept that different,
09 you know, is not necessarily a bad thing.

10 And so I think that, you know, that each
11 community, the beauty of this neighborhood council
12 process is that each community kind of gets to mold
13 this thing the way that they feel best suits their
14 community. And in Studio City where I live, we've
15 taken a little different approach as well.

16 So I think that you have made -- that the
17 Sunland-Tujunga Neighborhood Council group has made
18 an earnest effort to address the principles and not
19 just the letter but the spirit of the neighborhood
20 council ordinance, so I'm willing to support that.

21 I do believe that the term limits, the
22 recall provision, this one-year term and things like
23 that, you know, while it's good, it provides a lot
24 of flexibility on one hand. It might also, you
25 know, lead you to ruin because it could lead to not

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01 providing an opportunity for people to build a lot
02 of experience, which is going to be necessary, you

03 know, to take this to the end. I mean, it's a
04 long-term process. And so that is very, very
05 risky.

06 But anyhow, that's the model you have
07 chosen. It is clear to me, or at least it's my
08 impression, that the other group, Sunland-Tujunga
09 Council, will support and be involved, and I would
10 be confident in that and, you know, therefore,
11 supporting this.

12 The other thing is that I did appreciate,
13 while it falls short, I think, of the ideal, the
14 outreach effort has certainly been there. You have
15 made the attempt, and it was evidenced in the strong
16 show of community support tonight for the
17 Sunland-Tujunga Neighborhood Council. So for that
18 reason I would weigh in on their behalf.

19 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: Okay. Commissioner
20 Stone.

21 COMMISSIONER STONE: Thank you, Mr. President.

22 I want to first apologize to everyone here
23 for the delay in getting going on my part in that
24 it's certainly -- I don't want it to be seen as a
25 reflection of how I feel about the importance of

0119 01 this. Sometimes things get crazy. But I appreciate
02 your patience in letting us get going a little late
03 tonight.

04 We've had more than a few contentious
05 hearings around the city on neighborhood councils or
06 proposed neighborhood councils that are at odds with
07 one another over boundary overlaps, sometimes
08 personality issues.

09 I didn't know what to expect just from
10 reviewing the materials. Coming tonight I was
11 actually expecting maybe some of that West Side
12 Story rumble. I'm glad that it hasn't turned out
13 that way and I'm proud of the community that's here
14 tonight for showing unity. And I think after we
15 move forward tonight there will be a strong showing
16 of unity for the betterment of this community.

17 There were some issues talked about: The
18 overlap with -- or potential boundary overlap with
19 Foothill Trails. I think that for this group to be
20 successful in meeting with that group and coming
21 back to our commission under the provisions in our
22 plan for boundary adjustments, if it makes sense,
23 you are going to have to be unified and you're going
24 to have to work for the entire community.

25 Tonight we need to -- because we only have
0120 01 four board members here, we do need to be unanimous,
02 so I am prepared to, and was prepared prior to
03 hearing where Commissioner Lucente came out, to
04 support either group because I do not want to send
05 you guys back without a certified neighborhood
06 council. I think it's too important for this
07 community.

08 To choose between the two, it's not an
09 easy choice. I think -- in my mind, I think the
10 public testimony did support the Sunland-Tujunga
11 Neighborhood Council, not just in numbers but I
12 think in a lot of the comments that were made. The
13 most important to me got to the difference in the --
14 into the bylaws and, in my mind, the board structure
15 in the Sunland-Tujunga Neighborhood Council made a

16 little bit more sense for me in that I didn't see it
17 as being as fractionalized or split between very
18 distinct interest groups.

19 That's not to say it couldn't work, but I
20 think in choosing between the two I would have to go
21 with the Sunland-Tujunga Neighborhood Council. So
22 I don't want it to be a winner-loser situation. I
23 think the community wins tonight with certification
24 of a neighborhood council.

25 And once again, I'm proud of everyone
0121 coming together and showing unity for the community.

02 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: Commissioner
03 Herrera-Duran.

04 COMMISSIONER HERRERA-DURAN: I am really torn
05 with this decision. And I've made unpopular
06 decisions before, so I've thought about this.

07 But it seems to me that whenever there's a
08 choice to be made in terms of a decision of what
09 would work and what wouldn't in the community, those
10 people who are disenfranchised, those people who
11 haven't been at the table, those people who need to
12 be brought and need to be nurtured usually lose
13 out.

14 And that's -- I've seen that with a couple
15 of neighborhood councils that have had to come back
16 to us because they couldn't settle certain issues
17 and one in which there were particular issues that
18 were brought forth of complaints that people were
19 left out or discouraged or asked to leave or
20 whatever, and we're having a hearing on that one.

21 I understand perfectly and I really feel,
22 because that's the basis of what I'm saying, what
23 the neighborhood council, this Sunland-Tujunga
24 Neighborhood Council is attempting to do in terms of
25 meeting the needs of everybody and having everybody
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01 at the table and so forth.

02 But I still have a problem that after
03 three years there are still certain people who
04 aren't at the table. And I don't find that in
05 either group here tonight, quite honestly. And I
06 can't keep, in my heart, certifying neighborhood
07 councils that they say yes, they will do it in the
08 future, because it needs to be done.

09 It needs to be started, it needs to be
10 done now. And the elections will be coming fairly
11 soon. And how do we reach out to bring in those
12 people who aren't here yet? And it is true, there
13 are some that are very difficult. But it has to be
14 done somehow. And there's been a long process with
15 this. Years. And so when does it start?

16 In my heart I have to ask when does it
17 start. And that has nothing to do with the
18 motivation, but just at some time we have got to sit
19 and say we have to bring in those people who are not
20 being brought in. Does it take one year, two years,
21 three years? How long? I'm having a real serious
22 problem with that.

23 And I know we have some boundary issues to
24 settle, but those could be settled fairly easily.

25 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: Okay. It's been an
0123
01 interesting educational experience, I suppose, this
02 evening to listen to the testimony and to see the

03 presentations given by both the groups before us
04 tonight. And I'm still not sure I fully understand
05 the underlying conflict between the two groups or
06 the reason that we're still dealing with two
07 applications.

08 There doesn't seem to me to be that much
09 of a substantive difference between the positions
10 being staked out by both groups. And as I look at
11 the two applications and try to analyze the bylaws
12 and the real issues that we have to deal with as a
13 board, I'm sort of hard-pressed to say one is better
14 than the other.

15 If I had a choice, I would say take bits
16 and pieces from each one and try to combine them and
17 make a more or less perfect neighborhood council out
18 of it.

19 But that's not our choice tonight. As a
20 board we can't take this section from your bylaws
21 and that section from your bylaws and sort of marry
22 them and make a set that we like better. We have to
23 essentially choose between one group and the other.

24 And in looking at the actions of the two
25 groups and looking at the response from the
0124 community to the two groups, it's apparent that the
01 Sunland-Tujunga Neighborhood Council has somehow
02 resonated more with the neighborhood than the
03 Sunland-Tujunga Council has. And I use the number
04 of speakers and the points that have been made by
05 the speakers in the public hearing that make that
06 judgment.
07

08 This is the evening that supposedly both
09 groups have been working for for many, many months
10 -- in one case, for several years. And it's the
11 time to showcase your support before the board, to
12 bring the people out who are vested in your
13 neighborhood council, who are vested in your
14 application.

15 And from the Sunland-Tujunga Council
16 people we have seen the core group and a few of
17 their supporters who were here tonight to
18 demonstrate what they feel is the scenario for a
19 neighborhood council which will best represent the
20 interest of their community and, on the other side,
21 we see the Sunland-Tujunga Neighborhood Council, who
22 have their similar core group and, at the same time,
23 about 25 or 30 supporters in the audience who also
24 are vested in the neighborhood council.

25 And I have to take that as evidence that
0125 there is more weight within the community being
01 given to one group or the other. That doesn't
02 necessarily mean that the structure of one versus
03 the other may or may not work out better in the long
04 run.
05

06 I do believe, however, that the
07 Sunland-Tujunga Neighborhood Council has a structure
08 that will support the community interests. I would
09 probably prefer that some of the allocated interest
10 group seats were more clearly defined by interest or
11 by community group than they are in the bylaws.

12 I do, however, think that the initiative
13 process and the aspects of the town hall effort that
14 have survived into this form of application are very
15 valuable and can be a window that the community can

16 use in the future to greatly influence the actions
17 of the neighborhood council.

18 So on those bases I would probably be
19 inclined to support the certification for the
20 Sunland-Tujunga Neighborhood Council. I do,
21 however, have to acknowledge the comments by
22 Commissioner Herrera-Duran that there is in fact an
23 outreach effort that needs to be made not only in
24 your neighborhood council but in other neighborhood
25 councils as well to encourage a diverse voice for
0126 your neighborhood council.

02 We always tell our neighborhood council
03 applicants that when you come downtown to visit city
04 hall and you bring with you your advice, those of
05 you who come as a diverse group representing a
06 consensus of all of the community stakeholders will
07 be the ones welcomed in the front door and
08 celebrated as true representatives of the
09 community. Those of you who come downtown
10 representing a very narrow interest group within a
11 small slice of the community are the ones who are
12 going to be shunted off to the back of the room and
13 said, well, maybe these people are not necessarily
14 representative of the community at large.

15 So it really will behoove the neighborhood
16 councils to heed some of the words that Commissioner
17 Herrera-Duran has offered this evening, that there
18 is in fact a benefit to diversity, there is a
19 benefit to representing all of the interests of your
20 community and not just a single viewpoint that the
21 survivor -- that the survival of the neighborhood
22 council in the long term rests clearly on your
23 ability to do that.

24 The problem that we have tonight is that
25 the group has been around for a number of years in
0127 training, so to speak, and some of those efforts
02 haven't shown the results that we'd like to see.

03 So it's sort of on a marginal situation
04 that I will be willing to support a motion to
05 certify the Sunland-Tujunga Neighborhood Council,
06 with the understanding that the outreach has to
07 continue and has to produce the results that we're
08 looking for in the longer term.

09 COMMISSIONER HERRERA-DURAN: May I ask a
10 question, a point of information from the city
11 attorney?

12 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: Yes.

13 COMMISSIONER HERRERA-DURAN: At this point the
14 bylaws have been presented and so forth, and I don't
15 think that we have the authority to state that at
16 the time of the election that the representatives
17 have to be reflective of the demographics that have
18 been presented to us here.

19 DARREN MARTINEZ: The available options are
20 that you could request that the applicant consent
21 tonight to amend their bylaws to include such
22 language and, if they did consent, it would
23 therefore become part of the bylaws and part of the
24 requirements that they follow, or maybe, as you
25 indicated, you could issue that statement, that that
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01 is something that you would recommend and that you
02 would request to see happen, almost such as like an

03 advisory statement to them that you would like them
04 to follow up.

05 With respect to there being some type of
06 enforcement mechanism or subsequent review, that's a
07 separate issue.

08 COMMISSIONER HERRERA-DURAN: For either one of
09 those. I know with the recommendation, that's just
10 a recommendation; we can't do anything about that.
11 But to have some heavier weight than a
12 recommendation that the elections are
13 representative, that the people who are coming to
14 vote and so forth represent what is in the community
15 and not just what has -- you know, we've had three
16 years to get there with something.

17 DARREN MARTINEZ: I understand. But one item I
18 would point out is there is that diversity
19 stakeholder group interest requirement in the plan
20 so that no stakeholder group can hold the majority
21 of that governing board. That is one of the
22 requirements that is applicable to the group,
23 because it is part of the plan.

24 In terms of that group or classification
25 that is voting, that's going to be a manner or
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01 method for outreach, and perhaps the Department,
02 whenever they are working with this group towards
03 election procedures or toward that eventual goal of
04 conducting the elections, it will be something that
05 the Department with the group may be in a more
06 effective position to assist this group to
07 accomplish.

08 That's the best suggestion I have.

09 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: Okay. I'd like to
10 entertain a motion.

11 COMMISSIONER HERRERA-DURAN: Do we have --
12 Mr. President, I just saw her. I know you didn't
13 see her.

14 RITA MORENO: Rita Moreno, with the
15 Department. I just wanted to call your attention
16 that that language is in their bylaws under Article
17 6, "Governing Body," the second paragraph after the
18 bullet points, it would be Page 3 of the
19 Sunland-Tujunga Neighborhood Council's bylaws, which
20 do indicate that the composition of the board will
21 be such that one stakeholder group does not comprise
22 a majority of the board.

23 So the language is there, but we
24 definitely intend to work with whichever group is
25 certified to do that extensive outreach prior to the
0130
01 elections.

02 And just finally, Commissioners, we
03 omitted one article in the advisory. In your -- the
04 legal findings for the Sunland-Tujunga Neighborhood
05 Council, in the advisories under Number 5 it says
06 that we advise the applicant against enforcing
07 Article 6, Section H. 3, 4, and 5, but we'd like to
08 add Article 10, Section E, which is the recall, to
09 not enforce it without the guidance and approval of
10 the Office of the City Attorney to ensure that
11 stakeholders' rights are not being violated.

12 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: Okay.

13 COMMISSIONER STONE: Mr. President, while staff
14 is close to the podium, there were also, with regard
15 to the Sunland-Tujunga Neighborhood Council bylaw,

16 required bylaw changes; is that correct?
17 RITA MORENO: Yes, those you have in the legal
18 findings as well a request to amend Article 7, which
19 will state how the members of the committee which --
20 how -- what constitutes a quorum and how decisions
21 will be made. And that's the group of people that
22 will be able to make decisions on behalf of the
23 neighborhood council between certification and the
24 initial election. And we also need to have --
25 actually, they did submit the list of those

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01 members.

02 Further, Article 8, Section E and H, was
03 to correct the language so that it clearly indicated
04 that stakeholders had equal voting rights. The
05 district representatives can vote for their district
06 representative and the at-large officer seats and,
07 also, they can vote for each one of the
08 organizational seats.

09 But the organizational representatives can
10 only vote for that -- I am not sure if it's just
11 that seat or if it's just that category, and the
12 officers (inaudible) any one in any district, even
13 though if the organization or the -- whatever they
14 participate in was one of those districts.

15 So we just felt that it needed to be
16 evened out a little bit so it allowed for a little
17 bit more participation by organizational members.

18 And then Section H, in terms of stating
19 the number of members that comprise the ad hoc
20 committee -- I'm sorry, this is the one where the
21 list of the people that will make decisions, the
22 group does need to include how many members will
23 make that committee up, what the quorum is and how
24 decisions will be made. The bylaws do state that
25 that list of those members is attached, but it is no

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01 longer attached.

02 You will recall that the Department is
03 asking groups to furnish us with this because we
04 have had cases where we certify groups and then has
05 been a split and we don't know exactly who we need
06 to be listening to, and so this helps us against
07 those problems.

08 COMMISSIONER STONE: Has the applicant
09 consented to all these bylaws changes?

10 RITA MORENO: No. We need to ask the
11 applicant to consent.

12 COMMISSIONER STONE: If we could, I think it
13 would be an appropriate time to have a
14 representative from the -- for the record, somebody
15 should come up to the microphone, notwithstanding
16 the thumbs-up.

17 COMMISSIONER LUCENTE: I would also add, the
18 issue that I raised, I don't think it's adequately
19 covered in that bylaw.

20 KEN MC ALPINE: Yeah. I took up to Tony what
21 we thought we had. We have that clause in our
22 geographical representatives. We intend to have it
23 in our others. And we intend to change that with
24 any changes you make.

25 Yeah, it's in C -- the clause we want to

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01 pull is from the first bullet in C, which says
02 candidates qualify in more than one district,

03 similar to the third bullet point. And we'd add
 04 that that's what we intended, but in some of the
 05 revisions we missed that. We thought that we did,
 06 but we don't, and we will change that. Article 8,
 07 Section C.

08 And regarding the other changes, we've
 09 gone back and forth with DONE several times and we
 10 basically ran out of time for those last two, but we
 11 are willing to change according to what DONE has
 12 sent us regarding those last few clean-up issues.
 13 And for the record, yes, we consent to those.

14 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: Okay. Thank you.

15 Okay. Commissioner Lucente.

16 COMMISSIONER LUCENTE: Yes, thank you,
 17 Mr. President.

18 I would -- before I make this motion, I
 19 would like to recognize and reaffirm the comments of
 20 my fellow commissioners, especially those of
 21 Commissioner Herrera-Duran.

22 This commission has gone on record through
 23 our many, many months of meetings, you know, as a
 24 strong supporter of diversity. We have also went on
 25 record as strongly advocating additional outreach

0134 01 that would ensure that these neighborhood councils
 02 are truly representative of the community.

03 And so to the extent that an advisory
 04 statement would be included in this motion that
 05 reflected Commissioner Herrera-Duran's very
 06 eloquently stated statement previously, you know, I
 07 think that would be highly appropriate.

08 And with that, I would move that we adopt
 09 the findings of the Department contained in the
 10 evaluation of certification application report
 11 prepared by the Department's field operations
 12 division dated May 23rd, 2003, find that the
 13 boundaries meet the criteria set forth in the plan,
 14 that the applicant has satisfied the outreach
 15 criteria set forth in the plan, request that the
 16 applicant amend its bylaws as identified in the
 17 Department's report and also in the public testimony
 18 as was consented to by the applicant in record, on
 19 record, and including the advisement against
 20 enforcing certain articles in the bylaws as is
 21 outlined in the report, and find that, based on the
 22 reports presented by the Department to the board and
 23 any additional evidence presented during the public
 24 hearing, that the applicant does satisfy all
 25 remaining criteria set forth in the plan and

0135 01 ordinance and certify the applicant as a Los Angeles
 02 city neighborhood council, thereby approving the
 03 application. And that is the application for the
 04 Sunland-Tujunga Neighborhood Council.

05 COMMISSIONER STONE: Second.

06 DARREN MARTINEZ: Excuse me, Commissioner. If
 07 I may, I just want to clarify one item with respect
 08 to the advisory, that that does include Article 6,
 09 Section H-3, 4, 5, as well as Article 10, Section E,
 10 with respect to requiring the consent and
 11 authorization of the Office of the City Attorney
 12 before they enforce those articles.

13 COMMISSIONER LUCENTE: Yes, and the bylaws
 14 amendments do include adjustment -- an amendment as
 15 well to Article 8 regarding the elections,

16 specifically Article 8, Section C, relative to the
17 eligibility of stakeholders to be elected as board
18 members and limiting the ability of candidates to
19 run in multiple categories.

20 UNIDENTIFIED AUDIENCE MEMBER: Do we have a
21 time limit on that?

22 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: Okay.

23 COMMISSIONER HERRERA-DURAN: Discussion?

24 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: Discussion of the
25 motion.

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01 COMMISSIONER HERRERA-DURAN: I come back again
02 to the city attorney. 'Cause some of the things --
03 what is it that we can do in terms of attempting to
04 ensure that at the time of -- and I understand what
05 Mrs. Moreno had said -- that the neighborhood
06 council is reflective of the demographics that have
07 been presented to us and not just those who happen
08 to or will come out.

09 DARREN MARTINEZ: Right. Are you referring to
10 the demographics that are on the board once the
11 board is elected?

12 COMMISSIONER HERRERA-DURAN: Well, I think so.
13 And I'm also -- see, my concern is that we get out
14 to those people who haven't come out yet who need
15 the extra outreach. We're always saying it will be
16 done and we're getting experiences now where it's
17 not being done. We have given people the benefit of
18 the doubt -- and I'm not saying these people won't
19 do it; that's not my issue. But it hasn't been done
20 and I keep shooting myself in the foot with that.

21 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: Commissioner
22 Lucente.

23 COMMISSIONER LUCENTE: Yes, you know, my
24 comments were more reflective of the future because,
25 you know, I think that this -- they have

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01 demonstrated broad community support for this
02 application. We heard, you know, scores of speakers
03 tonight from all different -- well, a score plus 10,
04 so I know, I can't add. But we heard from a lot of
05 people and from business interests, from residents,
06 from different types.

07 So my comments were more directed to how
08 do we provide those safeguards for the future,
09 because I think they have demonstrated broad-based
10 community support for this application.

11 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: I think at some
12 point in that discussion you have to realize that
13 the -- it's the effort of the outreach that will
14 ultimately produce the results at the poll and that
15 when you are talking about the initial election to a
16 neighborhood council board, the Department
17 undertakes a mailing to stakeholders, which is much
18 more of a blanket outreach than any of the outreach
19 that's done prior to that time. And that outreach
20 hopefully will be done in a number of languages and
21 other means which will address some of the diversity
22 questions.

23 Our -- in our electoral process
24 nationally, we can never guarantee that the
25 electorate will actually reflect the underlying

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01 census data of the residential population. For
02 whatever reason, in many situations you have an

03 electoral which actually votes which is somewhat
04 different than the underlying demographic might
05 indicate.

06 And I don't know of any way that we can
07 actually guarantee or legislate that the electorate
08 has to be true to the underlying demographic
09 because, frankly, people have a choice not to vote
10 or not to participate at the same time.

11 COMMISSIONER HERRERA-DURAN: I think that I
12 will -- I want to ensure that the outreach is done
13 and it's done in all the languages. I'll tell you
14 one of the reasons I have a problem with this also,
15 is that there's a lot of -- not only language
16 differences but a lot of cultural differences which
17 have not been considered in terms of when we talk
18 about it.

19 I know that among people who are not used
20 to participating, if they come to a group where
21 there's a lot going on, where there isn't some kind
22 of a system that they can follow, they can get
23 discouraged and they will get intimidated and they
24 will leave and they won't come back.

25 And this, if we do that -- my feeling is
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01 if we do that now when we're starting out, we won't
02 bring these people back for several years. And that
03 concerns me. That's one of the reasons I think all
04 of us are here. And I want you to understand that.

05 We have to -- if there are people there
06 who don't speak the language and don't quite
07 understand and can't move as fast as some of the
08 others, they don't know the rules of order and that
09 sort of thing, my concern is that this town hall
10 concept -- and we're not dealing with that -- will
11 forget about that and let these people fall behind.

12 That's extremely important. If we're
13 going to really work within the concept and what we
14 wanted with the neighborhood councils with everybody
15 as much as possible participating, those are the
16 kinds of things that we have to be concerned with
17 and those are the kinds of things I'm concerned
18 with. And I want those out front.

19 We have to be careful of those who are not
20 used to participating. We can have as lively a
21 discussion as we want, but if we do that and exclude
22 by whatever, by just not paying attention or
23 whatever to other groups, I want you to be very,
24 very cognizant of that, they will be turned away;
25 people will be turned away, especially those who do
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01 not speak English, who are not used to that kind of
02 -- there's different ways in which the Koreans will
03 react, the Armenians will, the Hispanics, the
04 African-Americans. All of us react differently.

05 And those are the kinds of things that I'm
06 concerned that won't be taken in consideration with
07 this sort of bringing in everybody and having these
08 discussions. That's my main concern; not that
09 people deliberately want to eliminate somebody, but
10 we will get wrapped up in the way in which the
11 majority has done things and forget that we are
12 trying to bring in other groups also. That's my
13 concern.

14 That is my biggest concern with -- and I
15 think we're at a turning point now in the

16 neighborhood council concept, whether or not we're
17 going to be doing that and whether or not we're
18 going to be bringing people or just going to be
19 going ahead.

20 Go ahead.

21 DARREN MARTINEZ: Excuse me, Commissioner.
22 Perhaps then a suggestion that you may want to
23 consider is setting this item for a future agenda
24 before they conduct their outreach for a status on
25 their outreach with respect to their elections.

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01 That way you'll get the time to, you know, perhaps
02 have the group come before you again to look at
03 outreach as well as make suggestions to the
04 Department or to the group itself.

05 COMMISSIONER HERRERA-DURAN: Thank you. I
06 appreciate that very much. But if I'm going to vote
07 one way or the other, I'm going to vote and let it
08 go. Because I have to rely that the Department is
09 going to do its job.

10 But I just wanted that out on the table,
11 that we are coming to a landmark and whether or not
12 we're going to be really inviting people to the
13 table or we're going to -- and the buck stops here,
14 folks. It doesn't go anywhere else.

15 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: Commissioner
16 Lucente.

17 COMMISSIONER LUCENTE: Yes. And to that point,
18 I want to go on record to say that I did not make
19 this motion -- I fully agree with your comments,
20 Commissioner, and I did not make this motion on the
21 faith that these folks will fulfill this obligation,
22 because I saw no less than five people come up with
23 a flier in hand that was presented to them in
24 multiple languages and that yielded a result.

25 And that was evidenced in the, you know,

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01 outreach, that that outreach, you know, resulted in
02 people -- a higher level of participation than we
03 have witnessed, you know, at several other
04 hearings.

05 So my concern is that the safeguards are
06 there for the future and that it continues, you
07 know, and I think that's -- anyway, I just wanted to
08 go on record.

09 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: One suggestion I
10 might make is that I'd ask the applicants to agree
11 to a provision in the bylaws which would state that
12 the election procedures and the election materials
13 must be presented in a minimum of three languages
14 and that they must be made available in quantities
15 sufficient to support the underlying demographics of
16 the community.

17 COMMISSIONER HERRERA-DURAN: Thank you.

18 I also wanted to say I appreciate the work
19 that has been done by everybody. More than once I
20 heard here today that this is a group, a community
21 that's been split that had worked together.
22 Whatever the decision is tonight, I hope that that
23 really comes through.

24 I'm going to put that back on you. The
25 buck stops here for some decisions but that buck

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01 stops over here for you as a community to work
02 together. And remember, this is not people we are

03 certifying, this is a neighborhood council, and
 04 certain governances, it is not -- we are not
 05 certifying people because -- well, I'll leave it.
 06 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: I'm going to ask the
 07 maker of the motion to accept an amendment to ask
 08 the applicants to accept language in the bylaws to
 09 ensure that the election materials and election
 10 procedures are publicized and made available in a
 11 minimum of three languages.
 12 COMMISSIONER LUCENTE: Yes, I accept that
 13 amendment.
 14 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: And second?
 15 COMMISSIONER STONE: I accept that as well.
 16 COMMISSIONER HERRERA-DURAN: Thank you.
 17 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: And we'll ask the
 18 applicants to come to the microphone and accept that
 19 on the record.
 20 KEN MC ALPINE: Yes, we accept that. And we've
 21 already started to work toward that.
 22 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: Okay. Thank you.
 23 COMMISSIONER LUCENTE: I'll call the question.
 24 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: With that, we'll
 25 call the question and we'll poll the commission.

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01 Commissioner Lucente.
 02 COMMISSIONER LUCENTE: Yes.
 03 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: Commissioner
 04 Herrera-Duran.
 05 COMMISSIONER HERRERA-DURAN: Yes.
 06 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: Commissioner Stone.
 07 COMMISSIONER STONE: Yes.
 08 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: And I, yes. I think
 09 that's number 70. We thank you.
 10 For the record and only for procedural
 11 purposes, I need a second motion with regard to the
 12 Sunland-Tujunga Council.
 13 COMMISSIONER LUCENTE: So moved.
 14 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: And move to deny the
 15 application for the Sunland-Tujunga Council. We
 16 have a motion.
 17 COMMISSIONER STONE: Second.
 18 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: We have a second.
 19 I'll poll the commission.
 20 Commissioner Lucente.
 21 COMMISSIONER LUCENTE: Yes.
 22 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: Commissioner
 23 Herrera-Duran.
 24 COMMISSIONER HERRERA-DURAN: Yes.
 25 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: Commissioner Stone.

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01 COMMISSIONER STONE: Yes.
 02 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: And I, yes.
 03 Thank you all for your participation this
 04 evening. We'll take a two-minute break while the
 05 hall is cleared.
 06 (Recess)
 07 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: All right. I'm
 08 going to ask everybody to take the conversations
 09 outside. We have a couple of items we have to get
 10 through tonight.
 11 The next item is, amazingly, the general
 12 manager's report. Mr. Nelson.
 13 GREG NELSON: Greg Nelson, general manager.
 14 I'll be brief because I don't have a whole lot of
 15 words left in me here.

16 Tomorrow is going to be another attempt to
17 bring together the board of directors of the
18 Van Nuys Neighborhood Council and to get them to
19 find a way to solve their election challenges. So
20 hopefully at the end of tomorrow night we'll have
21 some good news.

22 Commissioner Christopher has agreed to
23 chair the meeting, so he'll at least start it. I
24 don't know if he'll be there at the end, but he'll
25 at least start the meeting. And we will hope for

0146 the very best on this one.

02 Number two, the mayor --

03 COMMISSIONER HERRERA-DURAN: Before you go on
04 to that one, also, with Van Nuys, we had asked for
05 and I think we decided on the human relations
06 council to do an inquiry into some of the statements
07 about --

08 GREG NELSON: Racial incidents.

09 COMMISSIONER HERRERA-DURAN: I was trying to
10 think --

11 GREG NELSON: That's what human relation said,
12 hate incidents or racial incidents.

13 There was a meeting in the mayor's office
14 on Thursday and that was brought up by the executive
15 director from human relations, and they will begin
16 now the process of trying to talk to the people to
17 figure out just the extent of the problem, talk --
18 to try to find some of the witnesses and talk to
19 people.

20 COMMISSIONER HERRERA-DURAN: As long as
21 something is started. Thank you.

22 GREG NELSON: Because that could be a serious
23 matter.

24 And the mayor's proposed budget went to
25 the city council last week. The budget had in it

0147 four additional new positions for our Department,
02 but the recommendation from the chief legislative
03 analyst was accepted by the city council and those
04 four new positions were temporarily eliminated from
05 the budget. So they will be reviewed probably in
06 about six months.

07 The rumor is that it will take until
08 probably between Thanksgiving and Christmas for the
09 state legislature to decide whether or not it's
10 going to eliminate a lot of the vehicle license tax
11 funding from cities. If that happens, then the
12 budget hit is going to be pretty severe, so the city
13 council's action was to begin preparing for that.
14 So we'll probably have to wait until around the
15 holidays to see what the effect is going to be on
16 the city's budget, and then they'll review those
17 proposals that are in the mayor's budget.

18 A little over a week ago, I went to
19 Minneapolis. They invited me there at no taxpayers'
20 expense to speak to their equivalent of the congress
21 of neighborhoods. And I will do a written report on
22 that because there were a number of interesting
23 things that I learned. But I did want to mention
24 two of them.

25 Their system is quite unique. It began in

0148 01 1990 when a state bill was passed that gave the
02 neighborhood councils the ability to spend millions

03 of dollars each in tax increment funding. They can
04 spend it on operating or they can spend it on
05 projects. So they have spent an enormous amount of
06 money since then on projects; mainly housing
07 projects and community development projects.

08 To do that, each neighborhood council has
09 to prepare a neighborhood action plan, which is
10 something that we began teaching the neighborhood
11 councils to do at the last congress of
12 neighborhoods, basically a list of the projects and
13 programs that they want for their neighborhoods.
14 This is an extremely difficult process, evidenced by
15 the fact that in Minneapolis, of 66 neighborhoods,
16 58 of them have neighborhood action plans. And they
17 have been at this for over 12 years.

18 I also went to them with one particular
19 request and I said, "I bring up this question every
20 time I communicate with other cities. I'm going to
21 bring it up to you." I said, "I would like your
22 advice and your guidance and your experience on
23 outreach, especially when it comes to renters,
24 monolingual, nonEnglish populations."

25 And I said it's my theory that even though
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01 Minneapolis and these other cities are smaller than
02 the city of Los Angeles, the techniques used, for
03 instance, to reach renters in a neighborhood of
04 20,000 in Minneapolis are probably ones that we can
05 apply in neighborhoods here of 20,000.

06 And the response of the people in
07 Minneapolis was the same as the response from people
08 in all the cities: Absolutely nothing, no ideas.
09 This is extremely difficult. I'm sort of -- it's
10 become a personal crusade now to see if we can come
11 up with two or three good ideas to reach out to
12 communities of low civic participation. I will
13 continue and I will not give that up. And when we
14 find them, we will share them with everybody.

15 And in the last point I was going to
16 mention on Minneapolis is that I actually stunned
17 them into silence when they mentioned that one of
18 their biggest problems was that their city council
19 does things at the last minute, puts things on the
20 agenda, brings up staff reports, and doesn't tell
21 anyone about them.

22 And I told them how in the city of
23 Los Angeles we have a system where people can
24 actually subscribe to the agendas of commissions and
25 committees and city council and have them sent to

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01 their e-mail in-boxes and they don't have to spend
02 three or four hours a day combing the internet,
03 seeing what's up there. And they were just stunned
04 into total silence.

05 And after I got through speaking, a city
06 council member, state legislator, pulled me aside
07 for a couple of hours to talk about how in the world
08 we do that. So I probably gave them some good
09 ideas.

10 But I just had not realized that we are so
11 far advanced that people hadn't even thought of
12 these things.

13 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: Okay. Questions for
14 the general manager.

15 COMMISSIONER HERRERA-DURAN: I don't have a

16 question, but in case you do, if you do convene a
 17 committee to talk about outreach or whatever,
 18 brainstorming, whatever, I would very much like to
 19 participate. I did community outreach for 30 years.
 20 I would like to throw some of my ideas out there.

21 GREG NELSON: I'd be absolutely totally so
 22 excited if that could happen.

23 One of the things that you're going to be
 24 seeing coming out of the Department more and more is
 25 the way we put together groups of neighborhood

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01 council leaders to talk about improving the early
 02 notification system. And we put together groups of
 03 neighborhood council leaders to help us plan the
 04 congresses, and I think we're going to use that
 05 technique now more and more and more to bring
 06 together groups of people who want to help us deal
 07 with certain topics.

08 And I would -- we'll talk afterwards about
 09 that. I would give a king's ransom for you to be
 10 involved and leading that.

11 COMMISSIONER HERRERA-DURAN: Who gets the
 12 ransom, me or you?

13 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: Commissioner Stone.

14 COMMISSIONER STONE: Mr. Nelson, a couple -- a
 15 legislative issue of a couple weeks or months ago, I
 16 just wanted to get a quick update on it, dealing
 17 with the naming of communities citywide.

18 I seem to recall the last chapter in this
 19 story was that you sent out information to the
 20 neighborhood councils to get information from them,
 21 and I wanted to see where that stood, if we were
 22 getting any feedback.

23 GREG NELSON: Yeah. Actually, for about the
 24 third time we sent that out. And Councilwoman
 25 Janice Hahn has been expressing a lot of frustration

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01 of the fact that the response from the neighborhood
 02 councils has been almost nonexistent.

03 And I don't have too many answers. The
 04 response tends to be very, very low. And my best
 05 guess is the neighborhoods have issues that they
 06 consider much more important to them because they're
 07 probably much more localized issues: How to get
 08 themselves organized, how to form committees, how to
 09 deal with parks and gangs and issues like that. And
 10 if your neighborhood isn't one that is probably
 11 threatened by community renaming, it's probably
 12 very, very low on the radar screen.

13 So that issue still -- I've been trying to
 14 meet with Councilwoman Hahn's office and they have
 15 to keep canceling because of priorities, but we're
 16 going to go all through what her priorities are now.

17 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: Thank you, Greg.

18 The next item is Item Number 5 on the
 19 agenda, which doesn't exist, so we'll move directly
 20 to Item Number 6, which is commission business. Any
 21 commission business?

22 Seeing none, we have two people for some
 23 unknown reason who want to comment on none of the
 24 commission business: Mr. Smith and Mr. Brink.

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25 GENE SMITH: Commenting on the nonbusiness, I

01 want to bring back to your attention the issue with
 02 regard to the common boundaries between

03 Sunland-Tujunga Neighborhood Council now and the
04 Foothill Trails Neighborhood Council, and we would
05 ask that you put this on your next regular agenda
06 item for review so that we can continue to follow up
07 with regard to this matter.

08 We did have materials that had been
09 photocopied for you tonight. However, we would like
10 the opportunity to present those formally with a
11 formal petition in the future.

12 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: What I would
13 suggest, the boundary that was approved by the
14 commission relative to the Sunland-Tujunga
15 Neighborhood Council was a co-terminus boundary with
16 the Foothill Trails Neighborhood Council. There is
17 no overlap between the two councils as currently
18 certified.

19 If you and Foothill Trails Neighborhood
20 Council or the local neighborhood councils want to
21 work out a boundary adjustment, there's a provision
22 for that in the Charter and in the plan that you can
23 bring that back before us.

24 GENE SMITH: Very good. And is that based upon
25 the petition that was part of that documentation

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01 that was made available at the May 12th meeting, or
02 is there a formal petition that has been adopted by
03 the Board of Neighborhood Commissioners?

04 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: I think if you check
05 with staff, they'll be able to answer your question
06 better than I can at 11 o'clock.

07 GENE SMITH: Fair enough.

08 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: Mr. Brink.

09 CHARLES BRINK: You said enough tonight, so I
10 don't need to bother you with any comments. Thank
11 you.

12 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: Thank you.

13 Okay. Now future agenda has been
14 established. I don't know if there are any comments
15 on the future agenda, Number 7.

16 Seeing none, we can move directly to Item
17 Number 8 on the agenda, which, I believe, is the --
18 actually, we jumped all the way to 13, which -- for
19 some reason. Item Number 13 is the adjournment, and
20 all those in favor of getting out of the building,
21 please leave the building.

22 (Commission adjourned at 10:55 p.m.)

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24
25