

Present: Jessica Kornberg
Rosemary De Monte
Mark Mauceri
Barbara Ferris, Committee Staff

Absent: Tor Hyams, Alex De Ocampo

Public: Nelson Bae
John F. John, Jr.

Mark Mauceri serves as acting chair in the absence of Hyams.

1. Call to Order: 7:35 PM.

2. Public Comments on Non-Agenda Items

John: Brings up requirements by DONE and BONC all Neighborhood Councils adopt a standard set of bylaws according to a developed template.

Mauceri: The committee is aware of the proposed changes and this topic will be on the agenda at an upcoming R&E meeting.

Ferris: Asked what is being done regarding reviewing Griffith Park Master Plan Working Group (GPMPWG) product? This group has been meeting (for five years) under the supervision of the Dept. of Recreation and Parks. Doesn't know the proper setting to ask about this developing issue. Will Rules and Elections weigh in on how the completed document should be reviewed and by whom?

Mauceri: At a recent meeting on Park issues at the Greek Theatre, Tom LaBonge gave an update on the document produced by the "Working Group." The PROS Committee would normally review such Park related documents. Mauceri doesn't know what plan there is for the GGPNC to review. Surmises that it's a GGPNC Board issue and will be taken up at that level.

Ferris: Believes many on the Governing Board may be unaware the PROS Committee's key members are also the same people installed on the GPMPWG. So, in effect, the GPMPWG members would be reviewing and approving their own work product.

3. Approval of Minutes from November 9, 2010

Motion to APPROVE: Kornberg

Second: De Monte

APPROVED

4. Status update on bylaw changes submission to DONE

Mauceri: The Department of Neighborhood Empowerment (DONE) has made new rules, such as documenting meetings where bylaws changes are approved. It is now required that redline copies of altered bylaws be submitted to DONE in MS Word format. Once filed, the bylaws are considered "bylaws pending"

approval” as they require approved meeting minutes—usually one month later--accompanying the submission.

Kornberg: GGPNC has been told to refer all questions and NC business to Gracie Liu who seems very competent and on top of things. Kornberg is confident that the turnaround on communications and advice will be faster and more accurate in the near future.

De Monte: So, the board functions as if the amended bylaws are in effect and DONE can later say no?

Mauceri: Says, yes, that is correct but it’s unlikely that they would not approve what the NC Governing Board approves, unless the bylaws were in contravention of City, State and Federal laws.

Bae: Bylaws changes for all 92 NCs have to go through this process?

Mauceri: Yes. This is now DONE policy.

5. Adopt a Standing Rule:

"The President and Secretary, working in concert with committee chairs and committee members, may augment previously resolved official correspondence by the Governing Board to update and/or correct factual references, spelling, and grammatical syntax, provided the nature and sentiment of the Board's intent is not changed. All official correspondence shall be disseminated (cc'd) to the entire Governing Board on or around the same time as it is sent to the specified recipient(s)." (15 mins.)

Mauceri: Opens to public comment (none offered).

De Monte: Is this for past correspondence, as well as future?

Kornberg: No, this is going forward. This is to formalize what is actually the current practice.

Kornberg: Moves to adopt as written.

Mauceri: Seconds.

DISCUSSION:

Mauceri: This gives the President/Secretary the latitude to make minor grammatical adjustments or clarifications without changing the intent of the board’s resolution.

Kornberg: 99% of what is sent out on behalf of the Board is cc'd to the Board.

Mauceri: The purpose of this rule is to make it possible to get things out in a timely manner. It also allows for the board to convey intent and allow the secretary and president to draft the letter accordingly without line by line rewrites during Board meetings; thus saving time.

PUBLIC COMMENT

John: The term “previously resolved” is open to misinterpretation.

MOTION (De Monte) to strike the word “previously”.

Second: Kornberg

Mauceri (after consensus check on the motion to amend): The motion to amend passes.

Mauceri: Calls for consensus on motion as amended.

PASSED (as amended to strike word “previously”).

6. Continued review of bylaws governing the composition, election or appointment of Governing Board members; discussion and action as appropriate. (60 mins.)

Mauceri: Is there a call for discussion?

MOTION (Kornberg) to discuss

SECOND: De Monte

PASSED (motion to discuss).

PUBLIC COMMENT:

John: Finds it difficult to comment when no motion is stated on the agenda.

However, he would like to give general comments. Highly recommends keeping some appointed, such as Nyla Arslanian who brings 30 years of arts experience to the Board. Some appointed members don't wish to run for elected office but would be happy to serve if appointed. Also, Betty Wong (former DONE representative), in the past, cited GGPNC as a model for best practices.

Mauceri: Explaining there is no motion yet because the R&E committee is carefully reviewing options to ultimately present to the Board, adding Ms. Wong's remark to GGPNC did not refer to GGPNC board composition.

Ferris: The question is what portion of appointed members to elected members is best for the community and for efficient Board function. There is agreement that some appointed members are desirable and necessary. Feels that wishing not to run for office is the weakest of arguments for why appointed is important.

Kornberg: Recaps the discussion of last meeting wherein 15 would be elected and four appointed. However, to prevent 15 candidate slates from gaining an immovable voting bloc, perhaps it would be best to have voters only allowed to vote in the district for which they have declared a stake. Suggests devising some language that can be taken up at the next R&E meeting. Also, we need to do this in time to let May appointees know how long their terms would be for should the Board augment the current system.

De Monte: What about continuity? If 15 new board members are elected and all fifteen are new to the board at any given election cycle, it could be a problem.

Mauceri: There should be some appointed members because it allows the board to recruit core competencies the board needs to function at any given time. As for terms of next appointment rounds, it's not difficult to let certain May appointees know that their term may be for one year. Re voters: Under current rules anyone can declare a stake anywhere, in fact one person voted in every NC election held on the same day just to see if he could. If the rule was that you have to choose only one district to vote in, it would compel stakeholders with multiple interests to declare one stake; you have to choose where your priority is—you could only choose one district to vote in. This approach would curtail the “grossing up” of votes, potentially rendering “gaming the system” highly unlikely.

De Monte: What some NCs do is have one elected At-Large seat in a district and everyone in the district votes for that; specific-interest seats are voted on by specific-interest stakeholders; such as Business or Education.

Mauceri: It's possible to condition the election nearly any way you want. We're not there yet. In some NCs what you declare as your stake determines the ballot you get handed. Mauceri's research indicates that at the creation of the GGPNC it was agreed those who formed the GGPNC would not seek seats on the council. Under that premise, they discussed at length multiple permutations of board composition. The current composition is what they arrived at after much debate. Ultimately, several steering committee members wound up seeking and obtaining council seats.

Kornberg: The weakness of special interest only voting is that it gets very complicated to structure and very difficult to pass at the board level (vis-à-vis amending bylaws). If we're losing special designation seats we need to have a way to serve those special interests.

Mauceri: Opens to public comment.

PUBLIC COMMENT

John: Suggests one scenario: 15 elected, 3 in each district, 1 elected student representative which would involve youth in voting and on the board, Six appointed. This youth seat would be new each year. Overall, his suggestion is a ratio of 30% appointed.

Kornberg: Could have students appoint every year.

Ferris: Although the student seat concept is an interesting one, that scenario would make a twenty-two-seat board. Not in favor of increasing over all board in number from nineteen to twenty-two.

Mauceri: In De Monte's scenario there would be five ballots (one for each district) and five At-Large candidates everyone would vote for.

Kornberg: Electing five At-large seats opens the door to a slate/voting bloc again; not comfortable with that.

Mauceri: There is currently bylaw language providing a structure recognizing the board couldn't predict the emergence of stakeholder groups requiring representation. The At-large seats (as originally set forth by the GGPNC founders) were to compensate for that by compelling the Board to recognize a need for representation, and appointing someone to address it.

Ferris: Points out districts are easier to organize for specific interests, for instance businesses that wanted to organize for a specific issue that is important to them. It is easier to elect a representative for that interest than it is to win the majority of votes from the 40,000 people who currently reside within the GGPNC boundaries.

DeMonte: Objects, saying unless it's area-wide it can't work. District specific interests can become divisive.

Mauceri: Opines a "one-person, one vote" albeit per district, sounds like a good model. Let's concentrate on special interest seats for the moment.

De Monte: The majority of NC boards elect special interest seats.

Mauceri: Doesn't particularly want a totally elected system. Does like the idea of appointing some seats for specialized tasks or underrepresented interests and then have them function as a transition steering committee after the general elections, especially if the Board saw an entire turnover. Suggests (non-voting) Chair Emeritus to round out the committee to help with transition and maintain continuity.

Kornberg: Objects to "steering committee." Words matter and the phrase should be "transition team" not steering committee. Feels "Emeritus" isn't a good title either, it should be Past President. The idea is to prevent self-perpetuating boards. We already addressed that to an extent by approving the bylaw that removes the ability of appointed members to help appoint others.

Mauceri: Opines having the District Representative now responsible for appointments has the potential to be a far worse paradigm unless increasing the number of elected board members and limiting the number of appointees balance the equation. If we don't do this right and finish this process we will have made the system far worse. So it's important to get it right and get it balanced.

Kornberg: Wants to think about the student seat concept proposed by John F. John, Jr. Feels we are close to a consensus. She'd like to try to draft some language to be considered at next meeting.

Mauceri: So far, likes the idea a voter must declare a stake in one district and can vote on the two district representatives in that district, and then vote for five cross-council candidates, Education, Business, Recreation, etc.

Kornberg: 1st piece of homework is drafting language, the 2nd piece of homework is to comb the bylaws to look for implications of changes; She'll draft language.

Mauceri: Will go through bylaws and draft language and compare with Jessie. Has always been in favor of youth representative. Would like to check with East Hollywood to see how they handle things like late hours and such.

De Monte: Will help review bylaws for implications and consequences.
[They'll bring to next meeting.]

Mauceri: Let's talk about which five positions are essential. Feels that Planning and Zoning should be an elected seat. Let stakeholders review the candidate's credentials and elect the best person based on core competencies and experience. That person, by default would become the Chair of the Planning, Zoning and Historic Preservation Committee (PZHP), ditto for Education, Business, Recreation, etc.

Kornberg: Business, Planning, Education, Recreation, and believes Public Safety is a critical position.

De Monte: Offers: education, business, community based or outside organizations—but she's not ready to define...

Mauceri: Sounds like we agree on Business, Education, Recreation and the cross-council seats to be named later.

Kornberg: Public Safety

Mauceri: Good discussion here.

Kornberg leaves at 9:30 PM.

PUBLIC COMMENT

John: 30% appointed is ideal balance. 15/1/6 or 10/5/1, mix. Feels Planning would be worst one to be elected, opining it is ripe for influence peddling of developers. Special interest seats in his estimation should be: Education, Recreation, Business, Public Safety and Arts.

Ferris: Not in favor of Planning as an elected seat: there is a danger in boxing the NC Board into a corner. Let's say a Planning Seat is elected and the bylaws say that seat chairs the Planning committee; then you could have someone who does nothing and you're stuck for two years.

Mauceri: Elected positions are accountable to the constituents that elect them, non performance is recognized quickly.

Mauceri: With no other on topic comments offered, brings discussion to a close.

7. Other Comments and Announcements

None.

8. Adjourn: 9:50 PM

Motion (to adjourn): De Monte

Second: Mauceri

PASSED (motion to adjourn).

(MM:bf)