

A Note From the



Encino Neighborhood Council

By Alex Garay

It's difficult to imagine that we are more than half way through 2020 and like many you may be asking yourself, "Where has the time gone?"

When the COVID-19 pandemic hit, we, like everyone else, were told to stop all of our meetings and time seemed to just stand still. The Encino Neighborhood Council (ENC) however did not stop; we immediately put out a call to all dentists in the area asking for PPE donations and collected masks and gloves for our frontline workers. We provided meals for first responders and frontline workers. We funded food banks so those in need would be able to obtain meals using our emergency funds. We checked in on some of our most vulnerable residents by contacting them with a friendly hello to make sure they were aware of valuable resources and provided a list of open restaurants that were open for take-out or delivery.

Neighborhood Councils started demanding that the City allow us to meet during the

emergency, although it took months we are now able to meet virtually using Zoom webinars.

As we all were attempting to get a handle on the pandemic, we then faced the tragic and unjustifiable death of George Floyd. In the middle of a worldwide pandemic, millions of people across the globe turned to protesting as we once again have to deal with racial injustice. Protesting is a great way to get a unified voice across to leaders when change is not just needed but also demanded by the people.

The safety, wellbeing and preservation of our community are our top priorities.

It became apparent that not all the people protesting were there to share a unified voice. Groups of destructive individuals decided to turn to looting and destruction. Even our community was a target, Encino trended on

social media as a location where looting and destruction would occur. After receiving an early call from the Councilmember's Encino Field Deputy we worked closely with our local businesses to make sure that they were aware of the potential threat. The Councilmember immediately requested a robust police presence in Encino and fortunately the threat did not materialize. A peaceful protest did occur in Encino without incident.

As we move forward and the ENC's meetings resume we will continue to address the issues and concerns our community faces. We will work closely with the City on important issues that we're facing; homelessness, crime, developments and the effects the pandemic has caused, and may continue to cause, to our residents and businesses.

At our June General Board meeting the ENC approved encumbering funds from our current fiscal year to purchase new signs for Ventura Blvd to reflect the new restricted parking times along Ventura Blvd. The

(continued to page 7)

A Note From the Encino Neighborhood Council Cont'd

(continued from page 5)

ENC and City Council previously approved the changes but the new signs were never purchased. With Citywide budget cuts it could take an inordinate amount of time before the new signs are purchased and installed – the ENC approved this motion so we can make an immediate change in the community. The funding request is currently under review by City Funding.

In addition we selected our Executive Committee for the next year. Following are the selections that were made by the board:

President: Alex Garay, Vice President: Victoria Miller, Treasurer: Patricia Bates and Sergeant at Arms: Lee Blumenfeld. The Secretary position was not voted on as our Secretary was out ill. This position will be selected at the July meeting.

We already have some important items for our July General Board meeting agenda including the introduction of a Neighborhood Council Disaster Fund for all Neighborhood Councils in the City and CF 20-0692, where it's been requested that City Council identify cutting at least \$100-\$150 million from the LAPD's budget.

As an advisory board, any motion that passes or fails turns into a recommendation to

the City from the Neighborhood Council.

Our General Board meetings are usually held on the 4th Wednesday of each month and we will have other items on our agenda for the July meeting.

Our committees are starting to meet as well. The ENC's Airport Committee had their first virtual meeting as they continue to monitor the concerns of air traffic noise coming from the Van Nuys Airport.

The ENC's Planning and Land Use Committee will be meeting on July 14 and the ENC's Outreach Committee should be meeting on July 6. The Outreach Committee will discuss how the ENC can continue reaching out to our residents during these challenging times and discuss how events may look moving forward.

In 2021 all Neighborhood Councils will have their elections and it's never too early to start planning. Our Homelessness Committee will be scheduling a meeting soon to go over all the latest developments with the homeless population and the latest numbers from the point in time count.

Keep checking our website for the latest information on meetings and updates at www.encinonc.org

Although virtual meetings may be here for a while

we will also start planning on how the ENC may be able to meet in person since the Encino Community Center has completed their renovations! We're excited to resume meetings in the facility when it's safe to do so.

Even though we're still getting accustomed to our virtual meetings they allow a method to meet safely and remain active in serving the community. Virtual meetings also provide a path for anyone to participate in the meeting, whether by watching on a computer/device or by calling in – anyone that participates may speak during public comment or on an agenda item. We will continue to serve our constituents and stakeholders during these challenging times.

The safety, wellbeing and preservation of our community are our top priorities.

For more information on how you can get involved with the Encino Neighborhood Council please visit our website at www.encinonc.org or you can email the President directly at president@encinonc.org.

Follow council updates on their Facebook page as well @ [encinoneighborhoodcouncil](https://www.facebook.com/encinoneighborhoodcouncil).

We look forward to virtually seeing you at our meetings – please stay safe!

Alex Garay is the current President of the Encino Neighborhood Council.