



CITY OF BEVERLY HILLS
455 N. Rexford Drive
Beverly Hills, CA 90210
Municipal Gallery
Sunshine Task Force Committee

SPECIAL MEETING HIGHLIGHTS

Thursday, March 15, 2018
5:30 PM

Meeting Called to Order

Date / Time: March 15, 2018 / 5:31 pm

In Attendance: Mayor Lili Bosse, Councilmember John A. Mirisch, Chuck Aronberg, Magali Bergher, Ed Brown, Linda Brown, Mark Elliot, Marilyn Gallup, Lori Greene-Gordon, Bradley W. Hertz/Los Angeles Lobbyist Association, Marcia Hobbs/The Beverly Hills Courier, Steve Mayer, Anne Ostroff, Elliot Ponchick, Ronald Richards, Marcia Smith, Victoria Talbot/The Beverly Hills Courier, Thomas White, Debbie Weiss, Allyson Wittner, Assistant City Manager George Chavez, City Attorney Larry Wiener, Chief Assistant City Attorney Lolly Enriquez, Director of Community Services Nancy Hunt-Coffey, Director of Public Works Shana Epstein, Assistant Director of Finance Tatiana Szerwinski, Community Outreach Manager Huma Ahmed, Assistant City Clerk Lourdes Sy-Rodriguez

1) Oral Communications

Members of the public will be given the opportunity to directly address the Committee on any item listed on the agenda.

Mayor Lili Bosse read a letter from Judie Fenton for the record.

City Attorney Laurence Wiener provided an explanation on Debbie Weiss' question on why the "Oral Communications" wording states "... on any item listed..." instead of "... on any item not listed..." and requested by Mayor Bosse to be clarified and changed.

Mayor Bosse read Harvey Englander's letter for the record.

Marilyn Gallup stated that she received a generic letter from a contractor regarding work that was being done on Santa Monica Boulevard but there was no formal notice letting residents know what was being done. She asked that better outreach to residents be done by the City in the future. Mayor Bosse asked Assistant City Manager George Chavez to look into this matter.

Anne Ostroff brought attention to an email that she received from the Community Development/Planning Department regarding a change in the timeline for issuance of building permits. Mayor Bosse asked City Attorney Wiener and Assistant City Manager Chavez to look into this matter so that she can call a Special Council Meeting to discuss it if necessary.

Ms. Ostroff also asked Planning Commission Chair Lori Greene Gordon to put on the Planning Commission agenda an item pertaining to combining two lots into one.

Allyson Wittner requested that Planning Commission notices be required to have diagrams of properties when published in the newspapers.

Mark Elliott requested that Sunshine Task Force Meetings have a 1-1/2 hour duration instead of just one hour so that more items can be discussed.

Steve Mayer asked that the Chair of all Commissions, not just Planning Commission, be able to put items on the agenda.

- 2) Discussion on the following: (1) add an attestation to the application form that no member of a developer/contractor's team has been subject to a disciplinary action on any development in any city; (2) disciplinary actions by the Community Preservation Office should be available in the City's online property database; and (3) a contractor (e.g., West Coast Arborist) who violates the code, breaks state law, and places its workers at risk should not be involved in any way in the City**

All present voted in favor of the above items.

Thomas White requested that the City Council Study Session minutes reflect the "no" votes of Councilmembers.

- 3) Discussion on requiring the following information be provided by a registered legislative advocate: (1) has the lobbyist worked on a campaign of any Councilmember or Commissioner they are appearing before? (2) has the lobbyist donated time or money to any Councilmember or Commissioner they are appearing before? (3) has the lobbyist had a social or personal friendship outside of City Hall with any Councilmember or Commissioner they appear before?**

Ronald Richards brought up that Bradley Hertz has not disclosed who his client is for the referendum. He also stated that when the Councilmembers ran for office, lobbyists donated money to their campaign but their names were not disclosed. He advocated for the names of lobbyists who donated money to Councilmembers' campaigns be disclosed for transparency purposes. He also stated that lobbyists who donated money to Councilmembers were on the steering committees of Councilmembers but the names were not disclosed.

Marcia Smith commented that some of the Councilmembers and Commissioners are her friends but she does not influence them on any of their decision-making.

Ms. Gallup stated that she personally knows of Councilmembers who had friendships with people and who were biased in their decisions.

Ms. Wittner agreed with Mr. Richards and Ms. Gallup that information should be disclosed.

Mr. White agreed that disclosure is the first step to transparency and advocated that Councilmembers and Commissioners recuse themselves when there is a conflict of interest.

Marcia Hobbs from The Beverly Hills Courier commented that #8 and #10 on Mr. Richards' letter are very difficult questions.

Bradley Hertz from the Los Angeles Lobbyist Association commented that social relationships are very hard to define and disclosing these relationships is an overkill.

Councilmember John A. Mirisch agreed with Mr. Englander's suggestion in his letter for lobbyists to file a quarterly report disclosing amount of fees received by each client during the quarter.

Ms. Greene Gordon remarked that people are not disclosing ex parte private meetings. Mr. Elliot also pointed out that Councilmembers do not disclose some of their ex parte communications.

Mayor Bosse stated that she does not vote in favor of issues because of friendships. Mr. Richards remarked that disclosure is not to contest the integrity of Councilmembers but residents are entitled to know. Both Mayor Bosse and Councilmember Mirisch agreed that Councilmembers should disclose information but should not be forced to recuse on an item.

Mr. Wiener requested clarification on the definition of "private club" and Mr. Richards will add "travel" to #11.

Everyone present except Mr. Hertz and Ms. Smith were in support of the questions (Mr. Hertz was not in favor as a lobbyist and Ms. Smith was not in favor as a community member). It was agreed upon to remove #s 3, 4, 8, 9 and 10 on Mr. Richards' letter and #s 5, 6, 7 and 11 agreed on. Mr. Richards and Mr. Wiener will meet and work on the questions and bring them back at the next meeting.

4) Suggestion for City staff to provide residents notice of topics being placed on the agenda at least 72 hours before packet goes out to City Council

Mr. Richards stated that City staff should be compelled to say in advance what items are on the agenda so that residents can provide comments to Councilmembers in advance of the Council meetings. Mayor Bosse and Councilmember Mirisch agreed that this should apply only for land use issues. Mr. Wiener added that exceptions would be emergency ordinances. Mr. Chavez remarked that the City has a policy to not release the agenda and staff reports unless final and viewed by Councilmembers.

Mr. White stated that misleading titles affect the public input on items.

Chuck Aronberg requested not have Council meetings up to 1:00 in the morning.

Mr. Elliott asked that staff reports be available on Thursdays prior to Monday holidays and asked that residents be e-notified.

5) Discussion on expanding access to city data under the “open gov” initiative

Mr. Elliot requested that City information and documents be publicly available, exceptions will be Police records. Councilmember Mirisch agreed, but as long as there are no security issues. Mr. Chavez reported that not all information are available in the City’s website but may be requested from staff.

6) Discussion on when is it appropriate to expect from a city official the provision of information relating to a policy or program versus the advisability of filing a public records request as the first step to gaining that information

Item not discussed.

7) Discussion of Assembly Bill re. land use/zoning regulations

Item not discussed.

8) BHUSD

Item not discussed.

9) Voter Fraud

Item not discussed.

10) Adjournment

Date / Time: March 15, 2018 / 6:57 pm