

**Historic Cultural Neighborhood Council  
Board Meeting  
January 29, 2003**

**Minutes**

**Present:** Mary Amason, Howard Nishimura, Leslie Ito Wong, Brian Kito, Alan Kumamoto, Nancy Yee, Jonathan Jerald, William Kramer, Charles Woo, Jose Luis Sedano, Kim Benjamin, Al Soo Hoo, Peter Woo, Edmund Soo Hoo, Don Toy, Albert Domasin, Kelly Soo Hoo, Danny Young, Fr. Giovanni Bizzoto, Alicia Brown, John Schutz, Dominic Ehrler, Stephen Guerrero, Mamie Hong, Chien Linda Wong, Kam L. Lee, Ne Hay Tom, and Joan Lee

**Absent:** Daniel Gudino, Philip Young

**DONE Staff:** Romerol Malveaux, Michele Cuevas and Betty Wong Oyama

**Jim Stewart**, Facilitator, called the meeting to order at 7:50pm. Roll call was done by self-introduction by each board member.

**Betty Wong Oyama** gave an overview of DONE and the Project Coordinator role in assisting the Neighborhood Council. The following trainings will be available to elected board members of certified neighborhood councils: Brown Act, Running Effective Meetings, Treasurer Training, Ethics and Work Plan Development. Betty also stated Neighborhood Councils should communicate other training needs to the DONE Project Coordinator. DONE will assist with outreach support, facilitate communication with other neighborhood councils and assist with regional summits. The DONE Regional Centers in Lincoln Heights and Little Tokyo will help assist with copying, mailings and supportive services for meetings. Neighborhood Council legal issues can be referred to the City Attorneys, but this should be done through the DONE Project Coordinator. To avoid confusion, request of DONE by the Neighborhood Council should come through the Council President or Secretary. Betty also encouraged Board members to access the Early Notification System through the DONE Website, [www.lacityneighborhoods.com](http://www.lacityneighborhoods.com). Board members are welcome to contact Betty at 213/485-4415 for assistance.

**Michele Cuevas** gave an overview of the New Board Member Packet, which consists of:

- A. Bylaws-review
  - 1. Purpose of bylaws
  - 2. Roles and responsibilities of Board Members and Officer positions.
  - 3. Brown Act basics – 5 posting sites, 72 hours/specific agenda items.
  - 4. Review regular meetings, standing committees, quorum, vacancies,
- B. Bylaw Amendment Process

**Don Toy** asked whether there would be additional more in depth review of the materials in the Board Packet since many of the Board members are new to this process and want to fully understand the process. DONE staff responded that additional training on the material could be scheduled based upon the Board's priorities for training.

Don Toy: Mr. Toy reiterated that materials must be given to Board Members in advance for review for better understanding and meaningful discussion. Passing out a large # of materials and a 5 to 10 minute explanation is not sufficient for understanding or meaningful discussion.

**Romerol Malveaux** gave an update on Grant Program and purpose of City Funds.

Don Toy: There were many questions raised by Board Members. Staff stated they would get specific answers at a later date.

**Don Toy** purposed/motioned to move agenda item #7, Public Comments, up on the agenda, seconded by Jonathan Jerald. (Passed)

### **Public Comments:**

**Larry Wong**, member of the Wong's Family Association has been in the United States for 50 years and 40 years in Chinatown. Mr. Wong is employed as a Director of a Community Center and former Chair of the CCBA. Mr. Wong stated he participated in the HCNC Election as a candidate and had the most votes. Why didn't he get elected? If the HCNC Election Committee can't keep promises then he should not be on the ballot. He wants an explanation or he will seek legal action.

Don Toy: Larry Wong, Elder & General Secretary of the Federation of Chinese American Organizations of the Wong's Family Association has been in the United States for 50 years and 40 years in Chinatown. Mr. Wong is an owner and director of the Golden Dragon Restaurant. Mr. Wong has served as Director, Chair or President of many organizations in Chinatown. Some of them include the Chinese Consolidated Benevolent Association, Yingon Merchants Association, Chinese Committee on Aging, CCOA Housing Corporation and the Chinese Confucius School. Mr. Wong stated that the interim HCNC Officers and DONE Election Committee were very inconsistent, subjective, unfair, and made many mistakes in implementing the election. However, Mr. Wong still participated in the HCNC Election as a candidate and followed and abided by all rules and guidelines set up by HCNC Interim Officers, Election Committee and agreed to by DONE. He was one of the top vote getters in this category and won a seat to represent non-profit at large. The only reason he is not on the HCNC Board is because the City Dept. DONE and their allies did not like the results and interpreted the by-laws to their liking and advantage. If the interim officers, Election Committee and DONE will not be fair and democratic then he and other candidates should not be on a ballot and there was not need to hold an election. DONE has, by their actions of turning over election results, taken away the people's civil and voting rights. With over 150 people here from Chinatown, Mr.

Wong wants an explanation and resolution to this injustice. Otherwise, he and the community will seek legal action.

**George Poon**, a Community Worker with the Senior Citizen Center. Stated he is upset that he was disqualified as a top winner.

Don Toy: Explain, give reasons.

**Catherine Vu** stated she was not happy with HCNC's final election results, especially the results of the Non-Profit Representatives. She, too was removed as one of the top Non-Profit winners.

Don Toy: Explain, give reasons.

**Alan Gee**, CD1 Field Representative congratulated and welcomed the HCNC Board Members. He informed the Board of upcoming events. The Chinatown Gateway was finished 5 days ago. A Lighting Ceremony will take place in March. Chinatown Library opening will take place on 2/6/03. A new Stop Sign was placed in Victor Heights/Forgotten Edge on Figueroa Terrence and Alpine St.

**Peter Woo** questioned Public Comments, why DONE Staff do not respond.

**Jim Stewart** explained Public Comments gives the public an opportunity to voice their concerns before the Board. At this time no response is necessary.

#### **Bylaws:**

**Jim Stewart** stated the HCNC Board Members are to adopt the HCNC bylaws at this time.

**All Soo Hoo** stated the bylaws have many typographical and grammatical errors and questioned whether addressing these errors would require a formal amendment to the bylaws.

**Jim Stewart** advised that typically, making such changes can be done by the organization's Secretary without it being considered an amendment.

**Edmund Soo Hoo** suggested forming a bylaw sub-committee to review the bylaws with DONE and make recommendations on how to improve the bylaws.

**Jim Stewart** asked for Board comments and stated if the bylaws are not adopted tonight, it his understand from DONE is that the Board doesn't exist.

Don Toy: Romerol Malveaux stated and concurred that if by-laws are not passed the HCNC does not exist.

**Don Toy** stated that Michele Cuevas advised that any agenda item could be tabled for future discussion, so why can't adopting the bylaws be tabled to the next meeting?

Don Toy: The by-laws in it's entirety has just been presented without thorough review and discussion. It is not reasonable to pass a document of this importance and that will govern all HCNC activities without full review and discussion.

Jim Stewart clarified that the Michele Cuevas comment related to the election of officers.

**Romerol Malveaux** stated the bylaws give the HCNC authority and establish the HCNC's existence. Without adopting the bylaws the HCNC Board would not be able to continue the meeting or make any amendments.

Don Toy: And would not exist. Mr. Toy responded that DONE staff is pushing the HCNC Board to approve the by-laws by duress – says that the HCNC does not exist unless by-laws are passed.

**Peter Woo** suggested the Board adopt the bylaws for 30 days until the next meeting and amend the bylaws.

Don Toy: After discussion and consideration.

**Jim Stewart** stated, this could not be done. No amendments can be made without adopting the bylaws first and the Board must adopt the bylaws to exist as a body that can take official action.

#### **Public Comments:**

**Tracey Lovejoy** stated she was disqualified as a Non-Profit candidate because her business address is not within the HCNC boundaries even though her organization services within the HCNC boundaries. She would like the Board to review her candidacy and the bylaws.

**Donald Jarvis** recommended the Board adopt the bylaws and amend the bylaws to require having pre-registration for elections for accuracy of true stakeholders within the HCNC boundaries.

**LeeAnn Soo Hoo** stated she was concerned and upset with the final results of the Non-Profit winners. Especially with Catherine Vu, not being one of the winners.

Don Toy: Explain reasons – expand.

**Larry Wong** stated there are 3 vacancies and it is ridiculous for HCNC to have another election to fill these seats. They should just appoint the original winners.

Don Toy: Larry Wong stated there are 3 vacancies and it is ridiculous for HCNC to take actions until these seats are filled. Original winners are the rightful.

**William Kramer** wants to know what are the HCNC Board Member's powers?

**Romerol Malveaux** stated there is no Board until the bylaws are adopted. Meaning, the bylaws are the rules by which the Board takes actions. Without bylaws, the Board cannot take official action.

**Alan Kumamoto** wants clarification of not adopting the bylaws vs. adopting the bylaws.

**Romerol Malveaux** – by not adopting the bylaws, the Board doesn't exist in an official capacity. DONE will continue to preside over HCNC meetings with a facilitator. Adopting the bylaws, you have an official Board to take official actions.

**Jose Luis Sedano** recommends the Board to adopt the bylaws and have further discussions in amending the bylaws

**Howard Nishimura** stated prior to the HCNC election, all candidates received a copy of the bylaws. All should have reviewed the bylaws by now.

**Leslie Ito Wong** recommends the bylaws to be translated to other languages for the Non-English speaking Board Members.

**Alicia Brown** encouraged the Board to adopt the bylaws so that HCNC can move forward.

**Peter Woo** also encourages the Board to adopt the bylaws.

**William Kramer** wants DONE to publicly comment that DONE will continue to support and provide resources to HCNC.

**Romerol Malveaux** stated that DONE needs to receive direction from the HCNC Board on the kind of support that is needed.

**Motion to adopt the bylaws (passed 18 ayes, 9 against).**

A Board member immediately proposes that the Board form a committee to look into amending the bylaws.

**Leslie Ito Wong** suggested that the bylaws committee consists of at least one Board member from each community.

Motion to form a committee consisting of at least one representative from each of the communities to review the bylaws (passed).

**Don Toy** suggests that DONE should make sure that all translation equipments are working properly prior to all meetings. He noticed that the majority of the head - sets were not working. Don also suggest that DONE provide a tape recorder to record the minutes for all meetings. He doesn't see anyone taking minutes.

Don Toy: Other housekeeping items include a good sound system, equipment available so Board Members can hear each other, equipment/translators for Board Members etc.

**Jim Stewart** assured him and the audience that DONE staff is taking minutes.

**Betty Wong Oyama** stood up and stated she was taking the minutes.

**Don Toy** wants a draft of the minutes to all Board Members to review before finalizing the minutes at the next HCNC meeting.

**Edmund Soo Hoo** requested that DONE provide the following at the next meeting: PA System, translated materials, interpreters and translation equipment.

**Romerol Malveaux** reported DONE would review what support could be provided.

**A Board member** inquired about filling the vacant seats.

**Jim Stewart** recommended that the Bylaws Committee be charged with reporting to the Board recommendations for filling the vacant seats.

**Romerol Malveaux** advised that in the near future DONE will provide Conflict of Interest Forms for Board Members.

**Future Agenda Items:**

**Peter Woo** request to have discussion of HCNC Election Results

**Next Meeting:**

**Kelly Soo Hoo** request to hold the meeting at a later time.

**Jim Stewart** stated per the HCNC bylaws, the next meeting will be held on February 11, 2003 at 7:30 pm.

Board members suggested Italian Hall.

Meeting adjourned at 8:30pm.