

Neighborhood Council Budget Advocates

www.BudgetAdvocates.org

**Zoom Meeting
August 1, 2022, 7:00 p.m.
Meeting #3 Minutes**



Board Members	Roll Call	Region	Board Members	Roll Call	Region
Kevin Davis	Present	1	Barbara Ringuette	Present	7
Cindy Cleghorn	Present	1	David Hunter	Present 7:12	7
Vacant Seat	-----	1	Vacant Seat	-----	7
Brian Allen	Present	2	Lynda Valencia	Present	8
Garry Fordyce	Present	2	Samantha McBride	Present	8
Scott Wright	Excused	2	Vacant Seat	-----	8
Glenn Bailey	Present	3	Elias Garcia	Present	9
David Uebersax	Present	3	Vacant Seat	-----	9
Vacant Seat	-----	3	Vacant Seat	-----	9
Howard Katchen	Present	4	Jennifer Goodie	Present	10
Brandon Pender	Present 7:17	4	Vacant Seat	-----	10
Myrra Bolla	Present	4	Vacant Seat	-----	10
Jack Humphreville	Present till 8:00	5	Jay Handal	Present	11
Vacant Seat	-----	5	Kay Hartman	Excused	11
Vacant Seat	-----	5	Adriana de la Cruz	Present	11
Ernesto Castro	Present 7:14	6	Sheryl Akerblom	Present	12
Vacant Seat	-----	6	Vacant Seat	-----	12
Vacant Seat	-----	6	Vacant Seat	-----	12

- I. Welcome and Call to Order: The meeting was called to order by Co-Chair Jennifer Goodie at 7:02pm, with a full quorum in attendance.
- II. Roll Call: See above.

Also in attendance were Budget Representatives Miran Kalaydjian (Woodland Hills Warner Center NC) and Jamie York (Reseda NC); as well as Madlena M. and Pastor Mammon.

- III. Minutes:
Jay moved to approve the minutes for meetings #1 and #2 as corrected. Howard seconded, subject to corrections.
MOTION PASSED BY ACCLAMATION, with 17 for and no abstentions.

IV. Public Comment: None.

V. Election of NCBA officers for 2022-2023 term:

A. Corresponding (Recording) Secretary

1. The Corresponding Secretary shall ensure that minutes of Board actions and meetings are taken, or take them, and then review them for accuracy, distribute them to all Budget Advocates within three (3) calendar days of receipt of the draft minutes from the note-taker, send the draft minutes to the web host to post on the website and once they are approved at the following meeting, send the final approved minutes with any changes to the web host to post, and distribute digital and all other documents to the BAs as requested. The Secretary will also assist the Co-Chairs with meeting notices as needed, and perform such duties as customarily pertaining to the office.

Sheryl nominated herself as Corresponding (Recording) Secretary

Jay moved to approve Sheryl by acclamation. Cindy seconded.

MOTION APPROVED BY ACCLAMATION, with 17 for and 0 abstentions.

VI. Vacancies: Outreach will be initiated as needed. After discussion with Kay, Glenn will prepare to hold elections in regions 1, 3, and 8 simultaneously. Budget Advocates will fill additional positions through the customary mid-term elections.

VII. Motion to submit a letter in support if amended of Council File [22-0560](#) (Municipal Lobbying Ordinance updates):

Glenn moved to submit letter as written, with the requested corrections. Garry seconded.
MOTION PASSED, with 20 for and no abstentions.

Jennifer will put the final copy onto new letterhead.

Members having influence with Council President Nury Martinez are asked to bring this to her attention. Members with a Neighborhood Council that has not yet passed a CIS on the matter are encouraged to request it being agendized.

VIII. Council File [11-1020-S3](#):

- A. Update on CIS for NCs to submit regarding contributing funds to the NC Budget Advocates: Kay has been reaching out to Neighborhood Councils, but is not in attendance to report an update.
- B. Update on response to DONE's statement: The City Council Budget and Finance Committee may be meet as soon as a week from today and could agendize the matter.

IX. Introductions:

- A. Why did you become a Budget Advocate?
- B. What would you like to accomplish this term?

C. What City departments are you interested in?

Glenn Bailey: Glenn first became a Budget Advocate in 2012, deciding to step up after attending Budget Day and its breakout sessions for a number of years of as an interested Neighborhood Council member. Glenn is currently President of Northridge East NC and on the board of Encino NC in Regions 2 and 3. He is also involved with some of the Alliances.

Glenn is interested in an increasing variety of departments. The longer he serves, the more he realizes how the budget affects people's lives and the services provided to them.

He finds participation in the Budget Advocates to be a great opportunity to learn more and to give input directly to the departments through meeting with almost all of them.

Brian Allen: Brian became Treasurer of Granada Hills North NC immediately upon entering the Neighborhood Council system about seven years ago, having worked as a CFO for various companies for over 40 years. He thought it would be smart to join the Budget Advocates and found himself having much more desire than expected to continue making changes and recommendations to benefit the City.

Brian hopes to help Budget Advocates regain its prestige with the City. He believes that the City, and decision makers in every department, are having a tough time being practical at the moment.

Jack Humphreville: Jack has been a Budget Advocate for a long time and is affiliated with Greater Wilshire NC.

His interest is in wanting to make a difference and he would like meetings to be more budget-oriented, rather than process-oriented. He offers a solid knowledge of the City's budget process and of how to read numbers, the Council Files and the CFR.

In the past he has focused on the Pensions department, among others. He would like to be a source of information for those with questions about various departments and would like someone to create a spreadsheet providing a good understanding of each department's finances.

Sheryl Akerblom: Sheryl initially got involved with Neighborhood Councils as a minute taker for the Budget Advocates and found it very interesting. When she was removed from that position, Sheryl decided she could then become a member. This is her first term and she is Treasurer for Coastal San Pedro NC.

Sheryl is open to almost any department. She is learning as she goes and is willing to do what she can.

Ernesto Castro: Ernesto started to become involved with the Budget Advocates on and off in 2019, supporting the group's activities. He mostly joined to learn more about the City budget matters and he learns a lot from the information members bring to these meetings. Ernesto is part of Westlake North NC.

His goal this term is to become more active in the activities this agency provides.

Adriana de la Cruz: Adriana was inspired to become a Budget Advocate after meeting Jack, Glenn and others at a LADWP meeting and other events. She found their passion and knowledge of the budget

moving, became enthralled with the subject herself and pursued membership in the organization. Adriana is on the board of Del Rey NC and is a stakeholder of Mar Vista NC.

Adriana is on the advisory board for the Bureau of Street Services (now Streets L.A.) and has interest in working with that department.

Barbara Ringuette: Barbara became a Budget Advocate in 2013 when a previous member on the board of Silverlake NC nominated her.

She found the work interesting and became involved in the Planning, Housing and Building & Safety departments, and has since branched out to over 18 departments and bureaus, finding all of them fascinating.

Barbara wants to serve as a resource in helping Budget Advocates with their selection. She has a prepared list of available departments posted on the website under "Training" and can help members decide which departments they might be most interested in. Barbara also offers to be a mentor, to hold hands, rewrite and help guide and make suggestions to anyone who might be stuck and wondering what to do in the process of writing a report. She hopes to facilitate the group's process in producing the White Paper so it can be timely and as effective as possible.

Cindy Cleghorn: Cindy is most known for having worked on the Congress planning committee for about 10 years. She has attended most budget events at City Hall and has found the breakout sessions to be excellent and engaging.

Cindy represents Sunland Tujunga NC and was part of the organizing efforts for it to become certified as a Neighborhood Council. She has now stepped up as a Budget Advocate in attempts to create change in the pattern of lip service given to supporting that organization and to the amount of situations that have stayed the same as 20 years ago. Cindy encourages collaboration on any issues selected to be brought to the attention of those running the City. She looks forward to participating in the intelligence and determination of the Budget Advocates.

Cindy has interest in the Planning and Building & Safety Departments. She also has interest, and current frustration, in the Bureau of Street Lighting and the difficulty she has experienced in getting lights back on within her community.

That Cindy is a 35+ year business owner.

David Hunter: David is good with numbers and is the current Treasurer of Echo Park NC, which motivated him to become first a Budget Representative and then a Budget Advocate.

Since then, he has enjoyed participating in the drafting of the White Paper because it allows him access to departments of his choosing and the ability to ask questions face-to-face of those in power.

He plans to continue attending meetings with the LAPD, the Department of Cannabis Regulation and the Housing Department.

David Uebersax: David became the first Treasurer of Greater Griffith Park NC when it started in 2010. When he joined Winnetka NC he originally became Assistant Treasurer and then President. Expecting more free time next year from a limited second term, he chose to join the Budget Advocates.

David has spent most of his time working with DWP, especially through Griffith Park. Due to the number of tanks in the area, he developed a good relationship with the Neighborhood Council Representative, the Department of Public Works and the Bureau of Street Services, where his Father-in-Law had also previously worked.

David has a background in Finance, having worked for a bank in regulatory reporting, and in professions that have required significant integrity of data and integrity of finance.

Elias Garcia: Elias is Treasurer of Central Alameda NC in Region 9. He became a Budget Advocate because he wanted to learn more about the City's budget.

Elias is interested in the LAPD, the Housing Department and the Street Lighting Department.

Garry Fordyce: Garry was drawn to the Budget Advocates as a very concerned stakeholder and Neighborhood Council member. He was frustrated with the lack of voice available to stakeholders and saw the Budget Advocates as being that voice. Garry joined the Budget Advocates as a member, after three consecutive years of attending virtually every meeting, participating on committees and meeting with department heads. He is now starting his third term as a Budget Advocate.

This term, Garry hopes to assist the group in regaining the respect of the City, which he considers to have been lost over the past two years. He would like to facilitate departments, committees, Neighborhood Councils and the Mayor in having greater awareness and greater recognition of the Budget Advocates.

Garry has a strong connection with numbers and has served on 7-8 committees in the past year, across different departments. He intends to choose a committee once he determines how matters are progressing.

Howard Katchen: Howard initially became involved with the Budget Advocates as a Budget Representative, then became a Budget Advocate by default when the Bylaws were amended to include three Advocates from each region. Howard set up the Budget Advocates' existing financial system, including the soliciting contributions from Neighborhood Councils to support operations and events, which has now been deconstructed by DONE. Howard has been a member of Sherman Oaks NC since 2010. He was Treasurer for eight years and is now First VP. Howard has a diverse financial background, began his career in international banking, traveled the world and worked as CFO for corporations managing domestic and international financial operations. This year Howard would like to see the Budget Advocates work collaboratively and collectively to produce the White Paper in a more timely manner than in the past, so as to truly have an impact on the Budget & Finance Committee, the Mayor and those directly involved in making decisions on the budget. His departments are yet to be determined.

Howard has been a member of Sherman Oaks NC since 2010. He was Treasurer for eight years and is now First VP. Howard has a diverse financial background, having studied banking in England, traveled the world and worked as CFO for corporations dealing with border security, financial issues and both international and domestic financial operations.

This year Howard would like to see the Budget Advocates work collaboratively and collectively to produce the White Paper in a more timely manner than in the past, so as to truly have an impact on

the Budget & Finance Committee, the Mayor and those directly involved in making decisions on the budget.

His departments are yet to be determined.

Jay Handal: Jay is currently Treasurer of West L.A. NC, Sawtelle NC and Venice NC. A Budget Advocate since 2008, he helped to form the group and the details of the organization. In 2008 the group demanded the Mayor declare a financial emergency and Jay was instrumental in getting a lot of things put through, including the emergency meeting with Eric Garcetti, when the Mayor returned from his tour of duty to attend a televised Budget Advocate meeting to address the City's financial issues. Ron Galperin took Jay's place when Jay took a break from the group, then requested him back, upon moving into direct work with the Mayor.

Jay's goal this term is to revitalize the Budget Advocates by restoring the group's relevance and respect from the City. This can happen through holding good meetings, giving good suggestions and not getting caught up the fray. He looks forward to showing the City solid ways to get rid of waste and fraud and better ways to raise revenues.

Jay has particular interest in: LAPD (he cares about public safety), the Department of Neighborhood Empowerment (which he believes has become dysfunctional and a waste of money for the City and must be overhauled with BONC) and Cannabis (Los Angeles is losing a lot of money from revenue on taxes, being among the top three worst cannabis-run cities in California). Jay owns five cannabis units and sees how poorly the city does its work in this regard.

Kevin Davis: Kevin was a Budget Representative for a number of years before stepping up as a Budget Advocate under Mayor Villaraigosa. He has been President of Foothill Trails District NC for 11 years and is its last original member.

Kevin's key focus is outreach and communication: facilitating an understanding of what Neighborhood Councils are about and the value of having such an organization available to advocate on their behalf. He has been working hard to visit all Councils in his region and is making a commitment to more regular attendance this year at Budget Advocate meetings.

In the past Kevin has worked on Contract Administration and Rec & Parks, being a former, longtime member of that department. He is interested in continuing to cover both departments and in generally getting the word out to the community and in helping people understand the options for Neighborhood Councils in gaining notice.

Lynda Valencia: Lynda is President of Arroyo Seco NC and joined Budget Advocates after Jay visited the Council talking about the honor of serving and about the other options for getting involved, such as participating in the Budget Advocates. Arroyo Seco has been having a tough time since Hermon was divided into a separate Neighborhood Council.

Lynda likes to follow the money and has done so both in her work history and since her appointment to the board of her HOA last year.

She is interested in covering Parks & Rec, the Department of Neighborhood Empowerment and Planning & Land Use, regarding the environmental impact.

Myrra Bolla: Myrra has long been concerned about how the City is being run. She first ran for a seat on the board of Van Nuys NC at someone's suggestion, after having expressed concern about how the City was handling community issues. Myrra was attracted to the Budget Advocates upon reading the White Paper and understanding it as a great marketing.

Myrra began her volunteer work as parent representative from the Kester Elementary School to LAUSD Parents Community Center and there she was offered to work as Community Coordinator on PT basis. She volunteered in non-profits dealing with domestic violence, Family Law Court and child welfare. Myrra worked as Council/Community coordinator in not-for-profit public-private entity. For the past 16 years Myrra worked in a financial firm as Executive Assistant.

Myrra is navigating through trainings as a new member of the group and is focusing on becoming educated in the work, so she can be effective as a Budget Advocate.

Samantha McBride: Samantha joined Budget Advocates as Liz left and is finishing her first year as Treasurer of Historic Highland Park NC.

She'll be able to better determine her role in Budget Advocates and what she'd like to accomplish as she learns more.

Samantha has interest in the Library and in Rec & Parks, but is open to others and will be checking the spreadsheet to see which departments need attention.

Brandon Pender: Brandon was appointed as a Budget Rep in 2011 after working within the Council system since 2010, first with Studio City NC, then later with Greater Toluca Lake NC. He was appointed a Budget Advocate on his first try and attended meetings at all six Neighborhood Councils in Region 4 during his first years in office. He brought the region, and Greater Toluca Lake NC, into greater participation with the Council system.

Brandon typically focuses on the Public Safety Committee, Police, Fire, Emergency Preparedness and the City Attorney's Office since the vast majority of the City's budget goes toward these expenditures. He is a former law official, and chaired two Public Safety Committees across his two Neighborhood Councils. Within his tenure as a Budget Advocate, Brandon also helped address the crisis within the City caused by widespread killings by a renegade police officer, in addition to many other problems and lawsuits throughout the Police and Fire departments. The Budget Advocates provided opinions on all these situations and interviewed with departments.

Brandon has additional interest this year in the Department of Neighborhood Empowerment and he wants to reexamine the department's credibility and its relationship to the City and the Council system. Certain issues have come up repeatedly and are getting worse, such as department members treating those elected to run the Council system as volunteers.

Brandon also wants a committee created to address the City's preparation for the Olympics in the next six years, regarding infrastructure, homeless problems and an under-manned Police Department.

In the coming term, he would like there to be an emphasis on reports and how they're presented, what is included in those reports and on how Budget Advocates talk to people in getting the information. He would also like for members to help each other with Neighborhood Council visits by ensuring that, if

one person can't attend a meeting, an e-mail request is sent out asking others to cover it, so Councils don't see Budget Advocates visit only when they want to get re-elected.

Jennifer Goodie: Jennifer has been a Budget Advocate for a few years now and initially got involved because she was told South L.A. was under-represented in the group. Jennifer is starting her second term as Co-Chair and had intended to take a break after her previous term, but felt it was important to make sure South L.A. could continue to have a seat at the table.

Jennifer is interested in the LAPD, the Department of Neighborhood Empowerment and Building & Safety. She has covered all of these departments in the past and has particular interest in the DONE this year and in their contracts – especially their no-bid contracts and how the money is being spent. She finds the lack of oversight on vendor contracts alarming and expects this to be a pattern throughout the City.

Budget Reps:

Jamie York: Jamie represents Reseda NC. Her interest is primarily in Ethics and the Department of Neighborhood Empowerment, but also in anything the City Council doesn't want Budget Advocates to be interested in. She is generally interested in accountability issues and in discretionary spending: both in how the money comes in and in how it's spent.

Miran Kalaydjian: Miran represents Woodland Hills-Warner Center NC. His interests are in Ethics, L.A. Streets and Budget & Finance. He is happy to be continuing to learn from everyone in the group, especially the veterans, who were mentoring him before COVID started.

X. Restructuring of Budget Advocates: Discussion will be held at the retreat regarding how work is currently divided among members and at meetings and how this can be improved. Please bring questions and ideas on the subject.

XI. Committee Reports:

A. All committees need members. Finance and Outreach need the most members the most urgently.

B. Finance Committee:

1. FY 2021-2022 End of Year Financial Report

a) Status on receiving a closeout from DONE: Brian received a response to his request for raw data, explaining that the information would be delivered in another couple days.

2. FY 2022-2023 Budget

a) Finance Committee to create

C. Outreach: No report.

D. Bylaws: No report.

E. Budget Day: No report.

XII. Upcoming Meetings and Events:

- A. BONC Monday, August 15th, 1:00pm: August 2 meeting cancelled, due to National Night Out.
- B. Budget Advocates Saturday August 20th: Retreat scheduled 9:00am – 12:00pm.
- C. Congress of Neighborhoods Saturday, September 24, 2022

XIII. Items for Future Meeting Agendas: E-mail future agenda items to labudgetadvocates@gmail.com.

- Neighborhood Council visits will be discussed at the time of that department's report at the retreat. Members should conduct Neighborhood Council visits, get the e-mails (and phone numbers, if possible) of all Budget Representatives within that council and send the information to Adriana. If they don't have a Budget Representative, politely ask Council to agendize appointing, or electing, two of them.

- As Parliamentarian, Glenn will proceed as Chair of the Bylaws Committee.

XIV. Adjournment: Jennifer adjourned the meeting at 8:48pm.

Next meeting August 20, 9:00 am – 12:00pm (Retreat)

Minutes of Budget Advocate meeting #3 (August 1)

ELSPETH WEINGARTEN

Aug. 8, 2022