



hermonnc.org
info@hermonnc.org

HERMON NC GOVERNING BOARD

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Hermon Neighborhood Council Special Board Meeting Agenda

April 14, 2022 | 7pm

Please click the link below to join the webinar:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/91021688981>

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The City's Neighborhood Council system enables civic participation for all Angelenos and serves as a voice for improving government responsiveness to local communities and their needs. We are an advisory body to the City of Los Angeles, comprised of volunteer stakeholders who are devoted to the mission of improving our communities and bringing government closer to us. All agenda items are actionable unless otherwise noted.

In conformity with the September 16, 2021 enactment of the California Assembly Bill 361 (Rivas) and due to concerns over COVID-19, the Hermon Neighborhood Council meeting will be conducted entirely with a call-in option or internet-based service option.

I. WELCOMING REMARKS:

- A. Call to order
- B. Roll Call
- C. Virtual Meeting Protocols
- D. Informal Survey on Outreach Efforts (Facebook, Instagram, Flier, Friend, etc.)

II. COMMUNITY/GOVERNMENT REPORTS & ANNOUNCEMENTS: (Representatives from government offices, Police Department, and community-based organizations. Reports and Brief presentations only. Any questions, please follow up with presenter on the side so meeting may proceed as scheduled (up to 30 minutes total).

- A. LA City Council District Representative
- B. Mayor's Office
- C. City Attorney's Office
- D. LAPD
- E. Hermon Area Schools
- F. Other community organizations

III. PUBLIC COMMENTS

Comments from the public on non-agenda items within the Board's jurisdiction (Up to 1 min/speaker)

IV. Treasurer/Financial Update (discussion and possible action - up to 10 minutes) - Courtney Davison

- A. Funding Dashboard ([link here](#))
- B. Detail on outstanding funding commitments
- C. Financial/budget items for discussion and possible action
 - 1. March 2022 Monthly Expenditure Report
- D. Discussion and possible action regarding FY 2021-2022 budget (up to 5 minutes)

1. Reallocation of \$4,000 From Outreach Expenditures Category to Neighborhood Purpose Grants Category (\$3,000 from "re-installation of Hermon banners" and \$1,000 from "outreach including postage, flyers, brochures, and postcards for promotion of HNC meetings and events")
- V. ADMINISTRATIVE ITEMS (discussion and possible action – up to 15 minutes):
 - A. Review and Adoption of Minutes for March 2022 meeting
 - B. Storage solution discussion for Hermon holiday decorations
 - C. Hermon Median Improvement Plan discussion and next steps
 - VI. Outreach Updates (discussion and possible action – up to 5 minutes)
 - A. Discussion of potential future outreach activities or efforts
 - B. Status on quote for design and/or fabrication of new Hermon Banners
 - VII. Neighborhood Purpose Grant Committee Update (discussion and possible action - up to 15 minutes)
 - A. Discussion and possible approval of Neighborhood Purpose Grant Applications (listed alphabetically by requestor):
 1. Art in the Park Community Cultural Programs - up to \$2,500 to fund the Arroyo Seco Cine Club, a series of screenings in Hermon Park that present non-commercial experimental film and video art
 2. Hope of the Valley Rescue Mission - up to \$2,500 for the purchase of snacks and replacement meals for the Arroyo Seco Tiny Home Community for the people currently at the site.
 3. Bushnell Way Elementary School (BWES) - up to \$1,224 for gift with school logo and catered lunch for BWES teachers and staff appreciation week.
 4. Bushnell Way Elementary School (BWES) - up to \$1,343 for lunches, t-shirts with school logo, and cookies for BWES 5th grade culmination celebration.
 - VIII. Hermon Emergency Preparedness Committee Update (discussion and possible action – up to 5 minutes)
 - A. Upcoming committee meeting and other announcements
 - IX. LGBTQ+ Committee Update (discussion and possible action - up to 5 minutes)
 - A. Upcoming committee meeting and other announcements
 - X. Homelessness, Housing, and Tenants’ Rights Committee Update (discussion and possible action - up to 5 minutes)
 - A. Upcoming committee meeting and other announcements
 - XI. Community Impact Statements (CIS) and Positions – discussion and possible action (up to 5 minutes)
 - A. CIS in support of CF-22-0178 Tenant Utility Bills / Third-Party Billing Agencies / Landlords / Ratio Utility Billing System (RUBS) / Transparent Process Implementation (City Council motion attached)
 - B. CIS in support of CF 22-0280 Fair Chance Housing Ordinance / Applicant Criminal History / Discriminatory Tenant Screening Practices (City Council motion attached)
 - XII. Hermon Land Use Committee Update (discussions and possible action - up to 5 minutes)
 - XIII. Upcoming committee meeting and other announcements
 - XIV. SCHEDULING OF NEXT COMMITTEE MEETING
 - XV. REQUESTS/MOTIONS FOR FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS
 - XVI. ADJOURNMENT

Time allocations for agenda items are approximate and may be shortened or lengthened at the discretion of the Chair.

PUBLIC INPUT AT NEIGHBORHOOD COUNCIL MEETINGS – Public comment cannot be required to be submitted in advance of the meeting, only real-time public comment is required. If there are any broadcasting interruptions that prevent the public from observing or hearing the meeting, the meeting must be recessed or adjourned. If members of the public are unable to provide public comment or be heard due to issues within the Neighborhood Council’s control, the meeting must be recessed or adjourned. Public comment is limited to 2 minutes per speaker, unless adjusted by the presiding officer of the Board.

PUBLIC POSTING OF AGENDAS - Agendas will be posted for public review at www.HermonNC.org and as follows:

- Hermon Fellowship Center 5800 Monterey Road, Los Angeles, CA 90042
- Hermon Dog Park in Hermon Park
- Fresco Market 5914 Monterey Road, Los Angeles, CA 90042
- You can also receive our agendas via email by subscribing to L.A. City’s Early Notification System at:

<https://www.lacity.org/your-government/government-information/subscribe-meetings-agendas-and-documents/neighborhood>

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NOTICE TO PAID REPRESENTATIVES – If you are compensated to monitor, attend, or speak at this meeting, City law may require you to register as a lobbyist and report your activity. See Los Angeles Municipal Code Section 48.01 et seq. More information is available at ethics.lacity.org/lobbying. For assistance, please contact the Ethics Commission at (213) 978-1960 or ethics.commission@lacity.org

PUBLIC ACCESS OF RECORDS – In compliance with Government Code section 54957.5, non-exempt writings that are distributed to a majority or all of the board in advance of a meeting may be viewed at 200 N. Spring Street, L.A., CA, at our website: HermonNC.org, www.empowerla.org/hnc/ or at the scheduled meeting. In addition, if you would like a copy of any record related to an item on the agenda, contact Katherine Harrington, Board Vice-Chair, at katherine@hermonnc.org.

RECONSIDERATION AND GRIEVANCE PROCESS For information on the HNC's process for board action reconsideration, stakeholder grievance policy, or any other procedural matters related to this Council, please consult the HNC Bylaws. The Bylaws are available at our Board meetings and our website www.empowerla.org/hnc/

SERVICIOS DE TRADUCCION Si requiere servicios de traducción, favor de avisar al Concejo Vecinal 3 días de trabajo (72 horas) antes del evento. Por favor contacte a J. Quezada, al (818) 425-9976 o por correo electrónico jorge@hermonnc.org para avisar al Concejo Vecinal

(CF-22-0178)

MOTION

Under the City of Los Angeles' Rent Stabilization Ordinance, landlords who pay all the costs of electricity and/or gas services for a rental unit are allowed to increase the maximum rent or maximum adjusted rent an additional one percent for each such service paid by the landlord, not to exceed a total of two percent. Many landlords instead opt to bill tenants directly, presumably because the allowable one to two percent rent increase fails to offset the cost of utilities.

Many large buildings, however, do not have individual meters for each unit. Rather, they have a single meter covering the entire building. As a result, the utilities billed to a given unit are not a direct reflection of that unit's actual utility usage, but an estimation of that unit's portion of the whole building's utility costs.

Many landlords contract with third-party billing agencies who calculate and collect utility bills from tenants, usually based on a Ratio Utility Billing System (RUBS), which calculates bills for each unit based on things like square footage, number of occupants, number of water fixtures, etc.

Tenants do not have a way of knowing how these third-party agencies calculate the amount charged to each unit, leaving tenants who suspect they are being overcharged with no clear way to verify or dispute their bills. Additionally, the practice of using private companies to bill tenants often leaves many low-income tenants unable to take advantage of low-income utility services.

Tenants in the City would benefit from the implementation of a transparent process by which they could identify their utility charges. In 2003, the City of Seattle adopted an ordinance that requires landlords and the third-party billing agencies they contract with to disclose their RUBS formula in tenants' utility bills, along with readings of the meter for the entire building at the start and end of the billing period. This allows tenants to verify the amount for which they are being billed, ensuring they are not being overcharged.

I THEREFORE MOVE that the City Council instruct the Los Angeles Housing Department, with the assistance of the City Attorney, to report back within 60 days with recommendations for the implementation of an ordinance that will require greater transparency for tenant utility bills. The report back should include recommendations for:

- An ordinance that will require landlords and third-party billing agencies to provide a detailed written disclosure of the methodology used to allocate utility charges to each tenant;
- Any restrictions and regulations for the billing of utility services outside a tenant's primary unit, including for common areas of buildings;
- A protocol for tenants and landlords to resolve disputes over utility charges, with the possibility of LAHD as a mediator;
- A liability framework in which landlords are liable for the actions of third party billing agencies that violate the ordinance;
- A private right of action for tenants against their landlords for overcharging and violations of the ordinance; and
- Allowing low-income tenants whose utility bills are processed by private companies to take advantage of low-income utility services.

PRESENTED BY:

PAUL KORETZ Councilmember, 5th District
NITHYA RAMAN Councilmember, 4th District

SECONDED BY:

MIKE BONIN Councilmember, 11th District

MOTION

All Angelenos deserve access to stable, affordable housing. In fact, stable housing is one of the most important factors contributing to positive physical and mental health outcomes for individuals and families. Currently, however, Angelenos with past criminal histories often face insurmountable barriers to housing and are routinely screened out when applying to rent housing due to criminal background checks in private rental, nonprofit affordable housing, and public housing units.

The effects of these barriers are stark: formerly incarcerated individuals are ten to thirteen times more likely to experience homelessness than those without. This cycle is also self-perpetuating—a recent survey by the Marshall Project found that affordable housing was one of the top factors cited by incarcerated individuals as something that could have kept them out of prison.

Criminal background checks for rental units also serve to reinforce the significant racial disparities present in our criminal justice system, resulting in the disproportionate obstruction of housing access for Black and Brown communities. Additionally, these background checks present significant problems in our City's effort to house our unhoused population. Decades of enforcement on individuals sleeping outside or in their cars have led to a situation where many unhoused individuals have accrued a criminal record because they are unhoused, and thus—even when matched with a housing voucher—are unable to find placements due to criminal background checks.

In order to create a more just and equitable system for Angelenos, and to reduce the substantial barriers to housing that exist, especially for Black and Brown communities and people experiencing homelessness, we must follow the lead of cities like Oakland, Berkeley, and Seattle and prohibit the use of criminal background checks when evaluating rental applications for housing.

The ordinances in these other cities increase access to housing for those with criminal records, while allowing for reasonable exemptions like owner-occupied units or shared living arrangements. The City of Los Angeles should do the same.

I THEREFORE MOVE that the City Council instruct the City Attorney, in consultation with the Housing Department, to prepare and present, within 45 days, a Fair Chance Housing ordinance that prohibits landlords from, at any time or by any means, whether direct or indirect, inquiring about an applicant's criminal history, requiring an applicant to disclose criminal history, requiring an applicant to authorize the release of criminal history or, if such information is received, using or considering that criminal history information, or taking adverse action based in whole or in part on an applicant's criminal history. The Fair Chance Housing ordinance should:

Be modeled on the Oakland and Berkeley Fair Chance Housing Ordinances;

Include exceptions similar to those in the Oakland and Berkeley Fair Chance Housing Ordinances, such as for owner-occupied units or shared living arrangements; and Create a private right of action for prospective renters, or organizations acting on their behalf, with attorneys' fees, and implement penalties for violations of the ordinance to encourage adherence to the provisions of the Fair Chance Housing Ordinance, discourage discriminatory and/or arbitrary landlord screening practices, and otherwise strengthen the enforceability of the Fair Chance Housing Ordinance.

I FURTHER MOVE that the City Council instruct the Housing Department and City Attorney to report back with a plan for education and outreach to renters and landlords in the City of LA on this policy, including estimated costs and resources needed to do so,

PRESENTED BY:

MIKE BONIN Councilmember, 11 th District

MARQUEECE HARRIS-DAWSON Councilmember, 8th District

SECONDED BY:

NITHYA RAMAN Councilmember, 4th District