

**WEST HOLLYWOOD  
DISABILITIES ADVISORY BOARD  
MINUTES  
MAY 9, 2001  
WEST HOLLYWOOD CITY HALL**

**CALL TO ORDER:** Chair Pavich called the Meeting to order at 5:37 PM.

**1. ROLL CALL:**

**PRESENT:** Board Members Arrigo, Pavich, Ring, Saur, Semonco, Weber and Weltman.

**ALSO PRESENT:** Howard Jacobs, Deputy to Councilmember Prang, Deputy Clerk Bell and Deputy Clerk Sims.

**ABSENT:** Board Member Ahern and Dietrich.

**4. APPROVAL OF AGENDA:**

**ACTION:** Approve the Agenda of Wednesday, May 9, 2001 as presented. **Motion Board Member Weltman, seconded by Board Member Arrigo and unanimously carried.**

**5. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

**ACTION:** Approve the minutes of April 11, 2001. **Motion Board Member Weltman, seconded by Board Member Arrigo and unanimously carried.**

**6. PUBLIC COMMENT:**

MAYOR PRO TEM GUARRIELLO, WEST HOLLYWOOD, spoke about re-appointments and having the meetings televised on a regular basis.

**7. STAFF COMMENTS:**

Howard Jacobs stated that Staff Liaison Springer was attending a funeral and would attend later. He also asked if there was any interest in riding in the Christopher Street West Gay Pride Parade on June 17, 2001. He also announced that a new TTY system had been installed in City Hall. He commented that the board members should contact Sam Baxter, Facilities & Landscape Manager, or Terri Slimmer, Transportation Manager, if they want to be on the committee, regarding the new street furnishings on Santa Monica Boulevard. Mr. Jacobs introduced the new staff support, Deputy

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Sims and the board members wished Board Member Semonco, a happy birthday.

**8. UNFINISHED BUSINESS:**

**A. SUB-COMMITTEE REPORTS: None.**

**B. LETTER TO WEST HOLLYWOOD CITY COUNCIL ON THE HIGH PRICES OF PRESCRIPTION DRUGS:**

**ACTION:** Receive and file the letter, deleting the word "compassion", and the last sentence. Mayor Pro Tem Guarriello offered to take the letter to the City Council. **Motion Board Member Weltman, seconded by Board Member Semonco and unanimously carried.**

**C. DISABILITY AWARENESS DAY:**

**ACTION:** Tabled to June meeting.

**9. NEW BUSINESS:**

**A. ENFORCEMENT OF DISABLED PERSONS PARKING.**

Don Korotsky provided background information as outlined in the staff report dated May 9, 2001.

**ACTION:** 1) Receive and file the information provided by staff regarding disabled parking placards; and, 2) The Parking Services Division create a special parking enforcement unit to identify and prosecute the unlawful use of disabled person placards in the City and return with a draft of the manual.

**Motion Board Member Weltman, seconded by Board Member Saur and unanimously carried.**

**10. PUBLIC COMMENT: None.**

**10. DISABILITIES ADVISORY MEMBER COMMENTS:**

**A. SUMMARY OF COMMISSION/ADVISORY BOARD CHAIRS' MEETING.**

Chair Pavich gave a summary of the Commission/Advisory Board Chairs Meeting:

- ◆ Business License Commission discussed issues regarding the Municipal Code not having anything regulating restaurants working as nightclubs.
- ◆ Fine Arts Commission discussed the Urban Arts Subcommittee approving the west parcel of the Sunset Millennium and the sculpture to be completed by November, 2001. Also, on May 26, 2001 the Veteran's Memorial Task Force would meet to discuss placards to be placed on the memorial.
- ◆ Santa Monica Boulevard Art Sub-committee discussed criteria to display temporary art.
- ◆ Senior Advisory Board discussed Senior Month and the Senior Health Fair in Long Beach. Ric Rickles was honored by the Los Angeles City Commission on Aging. Completion of the Zoning Ordinance and revisiting the hedge issue; General Plan review, regarding the seismic element.
- ◆ Women's Advisory Board discussed Denim Day on April 25, 2001; Take Your Daughters to Work on April 26, 2001; Breast Cancer Awareness month in October.
- ◆ Human Services Commission discussed reviewing the current funding organizations to make the Request for Proposals go smoother.
- ◆ Transportation Commission commented that Rosewood Elementary Valet Parking was approved and the permit parking signs have been re-designed and approved a new Parking Guide has been approved.

**B. GENERAL COMMENTS REGARDING DISABILITY ISSUES:**

Board Member Arrigo commented that two meetings could be televised annually and have the meetings at West Hollywood Park.

Board Member Saur commented that what is televised on cable needs to be closed caption.

Board Member Saur stated her interest to be a liaison to the Public Safety Commission.

Staff Liaison Springer arrived at 6:24 p.m.

12. **ADJOURNMENT:** The Disabilities Advisory Board adjourned at 6:26 p.m. to their next regular meeting on **Wednesday, June 13, 2001.**

Mock awards hurt students, parents say

By SUZANNE HURT

BEE STAFF WRITER

(Published: Friday, May 25, 2001)

GUSTINE -- At least one family is fuming over an "awards" banquet where Justine Middle School teachers publicly ridiculed poor performers -- including learning disabled students.

Wednesday night, teachers gave about 30 students certificates for such things as lying, failing to turn in homework, trying to con teachers, being chronically late and getting D's.

The coordinator of a class for students with learning disabilities gave her students "high school preparedness kits" containing Q-tips to clean out their ears so they can pay attention and Kleenex for high school teachers who may feel like crying if the students do not learn.

Michael and Danielle Berta were "livid" after their daughter, Mary, and nine boys in a class for slower learners were given the kits in front of about 200 students, parents and teachers. The family wants a public apology.

"These kids were humiliated. How am I supposed to get my daughter back in

school tomorrow feeling good about herself?" Michael Berta, 42, said Thursday. "The minute we got outside (the banquet hall), she started bawling. She actually started using the damn Kleenex they gave her in the kit to dry her eyes with."

The banquet was held to recognize eighth-graders who excelled in academics and sports. During the night, 10 teachers singled out students who have not done as well.

The Bertas were so concerned about their daughter and the reactions of other offended students that they kept 13-year-old Mary and brother Devon, 9, home Thursday. Michael Berta brought their concerns to Principal Dennis Shaw and Gustine Unified School District Superintendent Ralph Wilson.

"You've got nine boys who were taken up in front of their peers and humiliated by their teachers in a small farming community. You could have real trouble on your hands," Michael Berta said. "You could visually see some of these children were angry. These are the days of Columbine (High School). This is not a funny matter."

Awards are nothing new

The practice has been a banquet tradition for 10 years, Shaw said.

"It's something we feel is all in good fun and, we hope, in good taste," he said. "Last night was what we thought was a nice evening."

The Bertas moved from San Jose in October, hoping to give their children a better life in a small town, Danielle Berta said.

No other parents or children have complained, he said.

Mary Berta said she tried to keep a "straight face" when she was called up before the crowd.

"I didn't want to be a sore loser. I just got up there and did what I had to do," she said. "It kind of made me feel embarrassed. I'm the one who's always prepared for all my classes."

Michael Berta asked parents and students if they understood what was going on.

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"One student said, 'Yes, they're humiliating us. They always humiliate us.'" he said. "If this is what happens at the end of the year, what's been happening during the year?"

One boy left after his fourth "award," but the teachers had more for him, Berta said. He later saw the youth rip up the certificates in the parking lot.

Excuses are fodder for jokes

While learning-disabled students stood before the crowd, their teacher, Angie Parodi, showed comic strips on an overhead projector. One showed a student with no head who said his mind wandered for a moment and asked a teacher to repeat the question.

Another teacher gave a boy a "silver-tongued devil" certificate for always having a story about not turning in homework, Michael Berta said.

A special reading class teacher awarded a girl for always being the last one to finish reading. Others gave awards to students who made "alibis and excuses -- like a student who has a reason why he's late every day," Shaw said.

Parodi and Wilson did not return phone calls.

Petition on the Crosswalk at Westbourne Dr. and Santa Monica Blvd.

The Problems:

1. Visually and physically impaired persons, will encounter undue difficulty in navigating the sharp jog in the crosswalk.
2. Safety is a problem, especially for Westbourne traffic making left turns. They ascend a steep hill, causing poor pedestrian visibility, and must negotiate a 145 degree left turn. The planted median creates an additional hazard, which will obscure the view of drivers, particularly of wheelchairs in the crosswalk.
3. The design is awkward for everyone, causing pedestrians, especially the elderly more time in crossing the street, which is a safety issue in itself.
4. Most people will have to cross two streets - both Santa Monica Blvd and Westbourne, due to the fact that a majority of pedestrians moves between the businesses and residences situated at north-southeast angles, rather than north-southwest.
5. Pedestrians will continue to cross at the shorter axis of the original crosswalk location, increasing confusion in the intersection, and obviating improvements the new design may have intended.
6. Vehicular traffic will be impaired, as they encounter more separate streams of pedestrians than with the old crosswalk configuration.
  - From Westbourne, vehicles will encounter pedestrians on both left and right turns, as well as crossing Westbourne itself.
  - From Santa Monica Blvd., left-turning vehicles will encounter more pedestrians who recently crossed Santa Monica and now will be crossing Westbourne against the signal.
7. Significantly more pedestrians than vehicles cross Santa Monica Blvd at this intersection, and deserve deference.

Possible Solutions:

1. Place crosswalks on both sides of Westbourne.
2. If only one crosswalk is possible, it should be in its original location, where visibility is less of a problem, and flow of both pedestrians and vehicles is more efficient.
3. Straighten the jog in the present design.

Additional Suggestion:

Add Photo Enforcement to this intersection, as cars often speed through the long stretch from La Cienega to San Vicente, and run the light in the process.

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