



Venice Neighborhood Council

PO Box 550, Venice, CA 90294 / www.VeniceNC.org
Email: info@VeniceNC.org Phone: 310-421-8627

Venice Arbor Committee (VArb) Meeting Minutes

DRAFT

Meeting Date: April 24, 2026
Meeting Time: 11:00 AM Pacific Time
Meeting Location: Zinque, 1440 Lincoln Ave., Venice, CA
Contact: sarahwauters123@gmail.com, andreas.kemkes@venicenc.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 the Venice Branch Library at our website: <https://www.venicenc.org/committees/viewCommittee/venice-arbor-committee> or at the scheduled meeting. In addition, if you would like a copy of any record related to an item on the agenda, please contact Sarah Wauters at sarahwauters123@gmail.com.

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(Brown Act Required Language): 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 comment will be limited to one comment for 60 seconds per item.

- Please do not raise your hand more than once per item
- Raise your hand at the start of the items you want to speak on. We will then close public comment and announce the last person to speak a few minutes after the start of the item.
- No ceding your time to others will be allowed
- The meeting is being video and audio recorded.
- The public will be able to listen and speak but their video will be disabled.

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|-----------------------|---|---------------|---|
| Andreas Kemkes, Chair | X | Barry Campion | X |
| Isabelle Duvivier | X | Janin Paine | |
| Eric Schiff | X | Sarah Wauters | X |

1. Call to Order
 - a. Approval of minutes from 01/16/2026, SRW moves, AK seconds, 4-0-1 (ID abstains because she was absent)
 - b. Approval of minutes from 03/20/2026, SRW moves, AK seconds, 4-0-1 (Eric Schiff abstains because he was absent)
2. PUBLIC COMMENT Paola Pini in absentia commented that VARB should work with Thomas James Homes to landscape with natives. Isabelle suggests that the Neighborhood Org make the introduction and SRW to reach out.
3. REPORTS
 - a. Chair Report – Andreas Kemkes - SM Airport comments period closes on Sunday, encourages everyone to participate. ID comments the AK listened to the hearing about the Warren Ave. Torrey Pines, and also the astroturf approval for the 6th Ave. park -



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board of public works. Rec and Parks was supposed to do a study to find out about difference between astroturf and natural turf. But no bids came in.

- b. CFAC Report – Isabelle Duvivier - Mayor's Climate Action Plan – Isabelle finds it to be lacking. The numbers of trees planted don't correspond to Urban Forestry's numbers. Required trees from in lieu fees have not been planted since 2021 because there were not approved locations. In CD11 we are owed 130 trees but now the places have been determined. All in Westchester near airport. Isabelle suggests we enlist denizens of Westchester to lobby city for native trees.
- c. LUPC Report - Sarah Wauters - General discussion of LUPC cases that involve getting more native trees and plants planted.
- d. VVG Report – Noel Johnston/Isabelle Duvivier - Tree planting in Mar Vista Sat, Apr 25th, with a lot of neighbors, the following weekend planting on Venizia (9 trees). VVG finished removing grass from pollinator garden next to Gold's. Irrigation will get changed per Barry who met with irrigation vendors.
- e. Pollinator/Watershed Project – Janin Paine

4. NEW BUSINESS

- a. Budget for Rec and Parks
 - i. A Motion to file a CIS to support a reform measure to the city charter that was passed by the Rules, Elections and Intergovernmental Committee is supported by us, doubling the present budget of Parks and Rec to .065% of assessed property values.
 - ii. Public comment - None
 - iii. Committee discussion - We discussed that since the motion has been passed already by the Rules Committee, we want the VNC to send in a CIS to support the Reform process.
 - iv. Motion Carried ID moves, SRW seconded, unanimous approval 5-0-0.

TITLE: CIS to Support Charter Reform that Increases Parks and Rec Dept Funding

PURPOSE:

Parks in Venice are in dire need of increase in funding, both for maintenance and for refurbishment. The funding of the Parks and Recreation Department needs a more permanent solution than the yearly budget process. A recent motion passed by the City Council Committee on Rules, Elections, and Intergovernmental Relations (Council File 26-0489-2S) advocates for charter reform regarding the mandated budget levels for the Department of Rec and Parks. This motion supports a Charter reform measure that will double the amount of money required to be budgeted for the department.

BACKGROUND:

This measure would amend Charter Section 593 to ensure that the financial support of the Department of Recreation and Parks be increased from an appropriation of an annual sum of not less than 0.0325% of assessed value of all property as assessed for City taxes up to 0.0650% of said taxes, following a four-year phased increase.

In 2025, Los Angeles dropped from 49th to 90th in the Trust for Public Land's national ParkScore ranking. The City-commissioned Parks Needs Assessment (PNA) - approved by the Recreation and Parks Commission in December 2025 and developed with input from over 100,000 Angelenos - illustrates how and why: Between 2009 and 2023, RAP's budget grew only 35% while the City's overall budget grew 68%. As a result, today Los Angeles invests just \$92 per capita on parks compared to peer cities' average of \$283. RAP has lost 28% of its full-time staff since 2008 and has never fully recovered from Great Recession cuts, even as park acreage increased.

THE MOTION:



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The VNC Board approves the filing of a Community Impact Statement to support and urge the City Council to incorporate the Charter reform as recommended in the motion passed by the City Council Committee on Rules, Elections, and Intergovernmental Relations (Council File 26-0489-2S) regarding the mandated budget levels for the Department of Rec and Parks. This CIS should be sent to council file 26-0489 and Council Member Traci Park. The **Community Impact Statement** is as recited here:

“Parks in Venice are in dire need of increase in funding, both for maintenance and for refurbishment. The funding of the Parks and Recreation Department needs a more permanent solution than the yearly budget process. This motion supports a Charter reform measure that will double the amount of money required to be budgeted for the department.

The Venice Neighborhood Council supports the recommended charter reform (File number 26-0489-2S) passed by the Rules, Elections and Intergovernmental Relations Committee. This measure would amend Charter Section 593 to ensure that the financial support of the Department of Recreation and Parks be increased from an appropriation of an annual sum of not less than 0.0325% of assessed value of all property for City taxes up to 0.0650% of said taxes, following a four-year phased increase.”

This CIS should be sent to council file 26-0489 and the office of Traci Park.

- b. Change the City Flower
 - i. City Flower of Los Angeles is Bird of Paradise - discussion as to what flower would be better representative that is truly native to this place.
 - ii. Public comment - None.
 - iii. Committee discussion - Suggestions were Sticky Monkey Flower, Lupine, Bush Sunflower. It was concluded that we should start on a survey to ask Los Angelenos what flower should be the city flower.
 - iv. No motion.

5. OLD BUSINESS

- a. Drafting of Tree List for New Development and Renovation for LUPC - Tree Species and Plant Species List
 - i. **Motion to approve draft list for use by LUPC** - Venice Arbor Committee moves to send a suggested list of native tree and plant species for use in appropriate private projects that LUPC reviews. VARB reserves the right to reasonably amend the list as new native species become available.

Motion Carried. AK moved, BC seconded, 5-0-0.

- b. Mandatory Root Barriers for Parkways
 - i. No motion this time.
 - ii. Public comment - None
 - iii. Committee discussion - What reasonable action might we take? Traci Park's office per Sean Silva may be able to help. We want the requirement in the standard plan to be removed. Sarah will look for research to support scientific support for avoiding root barriers.
 - iv. Motion - None

6. ADJOURNED at 12:38

THE AMERICAN WITH DISABILITIES ACT:

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