

VENICE NEIGHBORHOOD COUNCIL
BOARD STANDING RULES & COMMUNITY GUIDELINES
(As of March 14, 2017)

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1. Ad Hoc Committees

All ad hoc committees are strictly advisory only to the Board of the VNC and shall:

- a. Have a mission statement approved by the Administrative Committee
- b. Report their minutes regularly to the Administrative Committee, including committee members and meeting attendees.
- c. Have a specific period of service approved by the Administrative Committee.
- d. Post agendas of posting sites and on the website no less than 72 hours prior to meeting.
- e. Have a Board members liaison assigned to their committee.

An ad hoc committee that does not have a sunset date associated with it will automatically be given a date 12 months from the date of their approval as an ad hoc committee by the Board of Directors. An ad hoc committee that has not met for 90 days shall be automatically terminated.

2. Neighborhood Committee

Neighborhood Committee nominations shall remain open pursuant to the existing VNC selection procedures until all positions are filled.

3. LUPC Committee

For information regarding LUPC processes, rules and forms, see:

- (1) LUPC website: <http://venicenc.org/LUPC>

Adopted by Board 090120: Projects which comply with the development standards of the VCZSP or which LUPC determines to be de minimis shall be placed on the board consent calendar without requiring a LUPC hearing or preparation of a LUPC report. The below form letter will be sent to the appropriate entities if the Board agrees with LUPC.

De Minimus Form Letter

Los Angeles City Planning Department
200 North Spring Street
Los Angeles, CA 90012-2601

Subject: CASE NO. (Insert Here)
Project Address: (Insert Here)
Applicant: (Insert Here)

Madame/Sir...: (Note: this will probably go to the ZA or planning staff person)

Please be advised that the Venice Neighborhood Council's Board of Officers, upon the recommendation of our Land Use and Planning Committee, has consented to take a position of "No Opinion, No Recommendation Without Prejudice" and not send a recommendation for action to Council District 11, Planning Department or any other government entity on the referenced planning case. However, we reserve the right to take a position at a later date in the event the project, as initially presented to the hearing authority, is changed without the consent of the affected parties.

Please provide a copy of the decision letter to the Venice Neighborhood Council, Post Office Box 550, Venice, California 90294, or electronically to Board @VeniceNC.org and LUPC@VeniceNC.org.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Very truly yours,
Venice Neighborhood Council
President of the Venice Neighborhood Council

Cc: Applicant
Applicant's Representative
CD11, Councilmember
Secretary@VeniceNC.org VNC Land Use and Planning Committee
California Coastal Commission

A. [Placeholder]

4. Budget Committee

The Venice Neighborhood Council does not fund refreshments at committee and sub-committee meetings.

For information regarding budget processes, rules and forms, see:

(1) VNC Budget Committee website: <http://www.venicenc.org/budget-committee/>

5. Administrative Committee
Amended 091020

The Administrative Committee does not address or consider the merits of proposed agenda items. Its function is to determine whether a proposed agenda item will be placed on the next Board

meeting agenda. Any disputes with a decision of the Adcomm can be resolved using the procedure in VNC Bylaw VII. D.

All agenda requests & supporting documents must be submitted to the Secretary no later than 7:00pm three (3) days prior to the posting deadline for the Administrative Committee meeting six days prior to said meeting. Any request not received by the Secretary as indicated above will not be considered and will be held until the next meeting. Please email supporting documents in digital format with the item title in the subject line.

- * Board Members & Committees must use the Online Agenda Request Form.
- * An Online Agenda Request Form must include contact information, item title, and fully drafted motions/letters. Incomplete or confusing motions or letters will result in the rejection of the item by the Secretary with notice to the person submitting the request & to the President.

Any letter requests shall include the names and addresses of proposed recipients. Proponents of the letter shall prepare it as decided by the board and email it to the President for review, edit and signature. The President shall return the approved version by email to the proponents with a copy to the Secretary for VNC records. Proponents of the letter shall then copy and send the approved letter.

The chair of the Administrative Committee may supercede this rule.

6. Meetings
Amended 090818

All sign in sheets shall state that furnishing of any information is voluntary.

Speaker cards shall have an “in lieu of speaking” option and shall become part of the permanent record. Choice of the “in lieu of speaking” option means that opposition or support will be tallied and the tally shall be announced to the board prior to any action by the board: comments shall not be read out loud.

Venice Neighborhood Council Committee meeting agendas shall contain the following statement:

[type here]

In compliance with Government Code section 54957.5, non-exempt writings that are distributed to a majority or all of the board members in advance of a meeting may be viewed at the Venice Library, 501 S. Venice Blvd.: Oakwood Rec. Center, 762 California Street; Abbot's Habit, 1401 Abbot Kinney Blvd: and Groundworks Coffee, 671 Rose Ave: at our website by clicking on the following link: <http://venicenc.org/>, 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 <place committee chair here (secretary for Board & Administrative Committee meetings)>.
Adopted 090818 per city requirement.

7. Meetings: Code of Civility

a. Collectively and individually, the members of the Board of Officers, the Parliamentarian, Ad-hoc committee chairs, and all members of Standing and Ad hoc committees of the Venice Neighborhood Council agree to abide by the following Code of Civility to ensure **that our Venice Neighborhood Council's** business is conducted in a respectful and courteous manner, and in a way that will generate respect and credibility for our Venice Neighborhood Council.

b. **The freedom to express one's views about public matters is** a cornerstone of the democratic process. The Venice Neighborhood Council welcomes the diverse views and opinions of our board members and stakeholders as they related to the issues before us. In order for these discussions to be meaningful and effective, we must treat others with respect and dignity.

c. We collectively and individually agree to abide by the following Code of Civility to the best of our abilities.

1. I will conduct myself in a professional and civil manner at all times as a representative of the Venice Neighborhood Council,

2. I will treat each member of the board and members of the public **with respect at all times, regardless of an individual's opinion, ethnicity, race, sexuality, age, disability, or religion.**

3. Even in the face of disagreement or differences of opinion, I will demonstrate esteem and deference for my colleagues and the public.

4. Under no circumstances during Neighborhood Council meetings, functions, or events will I engage in or threaten to engage in any verbal or physical attack on any other individual.

5. I will commit to communicate my ideas and points of view clearly, and allow others to do the same without interruption.

6. I will not use language that is abusive, threatening, obscene, or slanderous, including using profanities, insults, or other disparaging remarks or gestures.

7. **Derogatory language about an individual's ethnicity, race, sexuality, age, disability, or religion is not acceptable.**

8. I will take responsibility for my own actions, and will work to fulfill my role and responsibilities as specified in the bylaws.
9. I will commit to learn the applicable laws that govern Neighborhood Councils, including bylaws, standing rules, the Brown Act, ethics rules, city ordinances, and the City Charter, and will not knowingly violate any of the above.
10. **I will abide by the Neighborhood Council's meeting procedures or** rules in order to create a safe and effective environment for conducting business.
11. I will promote and enforce a safe meeting environment at all times. At moments when members of the public become disruptive and violate the rules of civility that we have pledged to follow. I will join my fellow board members in demanding that the persons conduct themselves in a respectful and orderly manner even if I agree with the point of view that is being expressed.
12. I will seek to present information truthfully, and will not knowingly misrepresent, mischaracterize, or misquote information received from others.
13. I pledge to truly listen to and hear other points of view.
14. I will practice the art of being able to disagree without being disagreeable.
15. If I find myself representing my personal interests before my **community's interests, I will publicly disclose the differences and recuse** myself from voting on such matters.
16. I will commit to good faith efforts to resolve any grievances that come before the board as specified in the bylaws.
17. I owe it to my fellow board members, the public, and the decision-makers who we are trying to influence to make the best effort to **understand the issues before me. I will "do my homework."**

8. Meetings: Code of Ethics

Board Member Certification Requirements

The Ethics Training shall comply with the current Los Angeles City requirements for certification of a board member.

9. Meetings: Rules of Decorum

a. Rules of Decorum During a meeting of the Venice Neighborhood Council or any of its Standing or Ad Hoc Committees, there is the need for civility and expedition in the carrying out of public business in order to ensure that the public has a full opportunity to be heard and that the Council or Committee has an opportunity for its deliberative process. While any meeting of the Venice Neighborhood Council or any of its Standing or Ad Hoc Committees is in session, the following rules of decorum shall be observed. All remarks shall be addressed to the Council or Committee as a whole and not to any single member, unless in response to a question from a member. Persons addressing the Council or Committee shall not make personal, impertinent, unduly repetitive, slanderous or profane remarks to the Council or Committee, any member of the Council or Committee, staff or general public, nor utter loud threatening, personal or abusive language, nor engage in any other disorderly conduct that disrupts, disturbs or otherwise impedes the orderly conduct of any Council or Committee meeting. No person in the audience at a Council or Committee meeting shall engage in disorderly or boisterous conduct, including the utterance of loud, threatening or abusive language, whistling, stamping of feet or other acts which disturb, disrupt or otherwise impede the orderly conduct of any Council or Committee meeting. Signs, placards, banners, or similar items shall not be permitted at any time in the Council or Committee meeting room. Unless addressing the Council or Committee or entering or leaving the Council or Committee meeting room, all persons in the audience shall remain sitting in the seats provided. No person shall stand or sit in the center aisle, nor shall doorways be blocked. The Chair of the Council or Committee, with the assistance of a Police Officer of the Los Angeles Police Department, shall be responsible for maintaining the order and decorum of meetings, as set forth more fully below.

b. Enforcement of Decorum of Speakers and Audience The Chair may request that a member of the audience or a person speaking during a public comment period who is violating the rules of decorum, comply immediately. If after receiving a warning from the Chair, a person persists in violating the rules of decorum, the Chair shall order him or her to leave the Council or Committee meeting. Any person so ordered removed shall be excluded from further attendance at the meeting from which he or she has been removed, unless permission to attend is granted upon motion adopted by a majority vote of the Council or Committee. If that person does not remove himself or herself, the Chair may request a Police Officer of the Los Angeles Police Department to remove that person from the Council or Committee meeting room pursuant to his or her lawful authority as a peace officer.

c. Penalties Any person who has been ordered removed from a meeting may be charged with a violation of the Penal Code Section 403, or other appropriate Penal Code or Los Angeles Municipal Code sections. The Council or Committee by majority vote may prohibit a person removed on the basis of

disruptive conduct from addressing the Council and its Committees for up to 30 days. The length of time of the prohibition shall be based on the number and severity of prior incidents. The length of time of the prohibition shall be based on the number and severity of prior incidents of disruptive conduct.

d. Removal Warning – Disruption of meeting

Any person who interferes with the conduct of the neighborhood council meeting by willfully interrupting and/or disrupting the meeting is subject to removal. A peace officer may be requested to assist with the removal should any person fail to comply with an order of removal by the Chair of the meeting. Any person who resists removal by a peace officer is subject to arrest and prosecution pursuant California Penal Code Section 403, Government Code Section 54957.9.

10. Grievances and CPRA Requests

Amended
090818

A. Grievances

All grievances shall be filed with the Department of Neighborhood Empowerment for review and action pursuant to Section 22.818 Article 3 of Chapter 28 of the Los Angeles Administrative Code. A copy of the grievance shall be sent to the Chair of the Rules & Selections Committee simultaneously with the filing to EmpowerLA.

B. CPRA Requests

Upon the advice of the City Attorney, on receipt of a CPRA under Article IV.B.3 of the VNC Bylaws, the secretary shall advise the City Attorney of said request and inform the VNC Board and requester of such action. A response will be provided in a timely manner.

11. Principles of Representation

1. The Board trusts and expects Board Officers and Committee Members to adhere to the following principles of representation:

a. No Board Officer or Committee Member, unless authorized in writing by the President of the VNC to do so, may in any way:

(i) Use the VNC logo or letterhead or stationery for any purpose; or

(ii) Claim to represent the VNC in any forum except:
* to present, verbatim, motions that have been considered and acted upon by the Board and which have not been subsequently repealed by the Board or superseded by a subsequent motion of the Board; and

* to correct misunderstandings or to respond to questions related thereto.

This rule shall not apply to the President of the VNC.

b. Any Board Officer or Committee Member may identify themselves as such in any forum. If doing so in support of or in opposition to a matter being considered in a non-VNC forum, s/he shall make clear that s/he is representing her/himself personally and is not representing the VNC or a VNC Committee. If the Board has considered and acted upon a motion dealing with a matter under consideration in a non-VNC forum, the nature and disposition of the motion considered by the Board shall be disclosed.

2. Conflict Resolution Committee

Subject to approval of the Board, the VNC President shall appoint 5 stakeholders to **serve as a Conflict Resolution Committee (“CRC”) and shall** designate one of them as Chair for the purpose of hearing complaints alleging violations of the above principles of representation as follows:

a. A written complaint shall within 15 calendar days of receipt by the Secretary, be referred to the Chair. If the Chair determines that the complaint qualifies as a violation, then the Chair shall schedule a hearing within 60 days by giving written notice to all parties which shall include the following:

- * The complaint, and the date, time, and location of the hearing;
- * The hearing rules as established and approved by a majority of the CRC and as ratified by the Board; and
- * A statement that the CRC strongly encourages the parties to attempt to settle their dispute by mediation before a mutually acceptable neutral third party of their choice; said statement shall include a non-inclusive CRC-compiled list of neutrals as an assist.

b. At a minimum, the hearing rules shall be informal and shall allow each party to present arguments and to call and question witnesses. Court rules of evidence and procedure shall not apply.

c. The Chair, or an acting Chair as below selected, shall preside at the hearing, and the hearing panel shall be comprised of a minimum of the Chair (or acting Chair) and 2 other CRC members. In the event that the Chair deems himself/herself to have a conflict, the other members of the CRC shall appoint an acting chair for that hearing only.

d. Within 15 calendar days after the hearing, the Chair shall notify all parties and the President and Secretary in writing of the decision. Within 7 calendar days following transmission of the decision to the parties, a party may appeal the

decision to the Board by written request to the Secretary. The request must include grounds for appeal. The decision and any appeal by the Board with 60 calendar days of receipt of the decision or an appeal by the Secretary. The board may adopt or amend or overturn a decision of the CRC by majority vote. The decision of the CRC, as amended by the Board, will be final and a synopsis shall be posted on the web for one month and published in the next VNC newsletter.

12. Vacancies

Officers selected to fill vacancies under Article IV G.4 shall serve as Board Officers until confirmed or replaced as specified in said Article.

13. Vacancies: Treasurer

The President, in the event of a vacancy in the Treasurer position, may appoint a **stakeholder (including VNC Officers, with the exception of the President) as a "Fiscal Agent" pro-tempore**. The Fiscal Agent will perform duties of the Treasurer until a Treasurer is duly elected.

14. Procedure for Board Consideration of Consent Calendar Items

Consent Calendar items are motions of Standing Committees considered to be routine by the Administrative Committee. Board approval of the Consent Calendar constitutes approval of all motions contained therein.

There will be no separate discussion of Consent Calendar motions unless a Board Member or a member of the public requests removal of the item from the Consent Calendar, in which case the Chair will place the item on the regular agenda where the Chair deems appropriate. Anyone wishing to contest a Consent Calendar item on the Board agenda must appear in person at the Board meeting and explain to the Board the reason the item is contested.

15. Definition of Factual Basis Shareholder under LA City Ordinance 179680 Deleted 091117 as redundant of VNC Bylaws Act IIIA

16. Publication of Events Adopted 090421

The Venice Neighborhood Council MAY publicize the events, announcements and information from the Departments, Agencies and Officeholders of the City of Los Angeles, the County of Los Angeles, the State of California and the Federal Government of the United States of America. The events and activities of other organizations may be publicized by the Venice Neighborhood Council only if the VNC Board of Directors agrees to sponsor or endorse such events, activities or organizations.

17. Dispute Resolution Service

Upon request by affected parties to a Venice-related dispute, the VNC will provide facilitation assistance to negotiations between them by maintaining and web-posting a list of willing facilitators from which parties may choose and arrange appropriate meetings at their mutual convenience.

18. VNC Vision Goals Adopted 090421

To stimulate the vitality of the VNC, the Board and VNC Committees are encouraged to consider the below VNC Vision Goals in their deliberations.

Although the VNC is a political body, and inevitably it may become embroiled in issues that divide the community, these goals are designed to promote a more proactive, collaborative vision for VNC Committees to include in their deliberations as they formulate recommendations for Board consideration. The intent is to create a working framework of integrated strategies capable of achieving, over time, broader consensus and increased:

Focus on Children

Consider strategies that promote and expand opportunities for children to experience direct meaningful involvement in all aspects of the social and economic and cultural activities of the Venice Community. Include this focus on Children as an integral part of the consideration of strategies in all of the below Vision Goals.

Participation: Consider strategies that encourage & facilitate broader involvement of stakeholders, major organizations, community groups, and government institutions, etc.

Walkability: Consider strategies that reduce the use of cars and that promote alternatives such as walking, skateboarding, biking and bike racks, circulation systems (trolleys), park & ride rather than additional parking, street-narrowing/sidewalk widening, walk/bike/skateboard lanes separated from traffic, easier neighborhood pedestrian access to commercial stores, etc.

Diversity: Consider strategies that encourage & facilitate realistic recommendations designed to increase economic diversity, including affordable housing, etc.

Creativity: Consider strategies that promote the arts, encourage & facilitate creativity. This can apply to architecture, public art, social events (neighborhood gatherings/street movies/theatre/dance/pottery...), etc.

Collaboration: Consider strategies that encourage & facilitate exploring of non-traditional options for achieving shared objectives, etc.

19. Limitation on Ratification of Bylaw Amendments
Adopted 090818

The Board cannot hold a stakeholder ratification for the same bylaw amendment or an amendment that addresses substantially the same issue in any six month period.

20. Outreach and Events Committee

A. Town Hall & Event Guidelines
Adopted 090818

The VNC's Bylaws make the Outreach Committee and the Outreach

Officer responsible for organizing our quarterly Town Halls. In 2007, the Outreach Committee appointed a Town Hall/Event Producer to provide continuity of supervision, expert knowledge, communications coordination and a single point of responsibility for all Town Halls. Our Producer oversees all areas of the event including approval of expenditures, programming, promotion, and physical arrangements.

While determining the topic of each Town Hall is the responsibility of the Outreach Committee, Town Hall content and planning is often delegated to **one of the VNC's Standing or Ad Hoc Committees**. **During the first** stages of planning for each Town hall, the Outreach Officer and Producer meet with those helping to organize the event and an Event Plan is agreed to and put in writing. The plan is established to insure efficient communications and decision making while maintaining the due diligence requirements imposed by our bylaws. Changes to the plan must be approved by the Outreach Officer.

The Producer will make sure that all VNC rules and procedures as well as any city ordinances governing Town Halls and Events are communicated **to those planning Town Hall events**. **It is the producer's responsibility to** periodically review Town Hall plans to insure that the established rules, procedures and ordinances are followed. As such, it is suggested that the Producer be invited to all planning meetings.

Town Hall expenditures must be approved in advance by the Producer and invoices/receipts properly submitted to the VNC Treasurer. (Note: Under LA City finance rules, the VNC cannot reimburse any expenditure by non-Board members)

B. [Placeholder]

21. Elections, Ratifications, Referendums

A. Scheduling
Adopted 090915

The Venice Neighborhood Council will not hold “Saturday only” elections, ratifications or referendums.

B. [Placeholder]

22. Posting of agendas, meeting notices and Minutes

The VNC Committee Chairs are responsible for posting agendas and meeting announcements for their committee meetings in accordance with the Brown Act and the Plan for Neighborhood Councils.

The VNC Secretary is responsible for producing accurate minutes of Stakeholder, Board of Officers and Administrative Committee meetings. The VNC Standing & Ad Hoc Committees chairs are responsible for producing accurate minutes of their respective committees. The VNC Secretary and the VNC Standing & Ad Hoc Committees chairs are responsible for public posting of minutes on the VNC website no later than seven (7) days after the meeting at which they are approved but not more than 45 days after the meeting at which the minutes were taken.

23. VNC website posting authority

VNC President, and Communications Chair shall have universal authority to change the VNC web site.

24. Outreach Chair Duties/Responsibilities

Mission: To engage the broad spectrum of Stakeholders for collaboration and deliberation on matters affecting the community including events, issues and projects.

1. Chair Outreach Committee Meeting and Maintain Outreach Committee web page. Holds regular monthly meetings and special meetings as needed. Creates Outreach Committee meeting agenda and ensures the posting of the agenda and minutes in accordance with the Brown Act and VNC policy.

2. **“Organize quarterly Stakeholders meetings and special events”** (from Bylaws).

Three of the quarterly Stakeholder meetings are generally organized as “Town Halls”; the fourth meeting is the annual Venice BBQ, held in the summer. Event

topics are selected by the Town Hall subcommittee of the Outreach Committee composed of the Outreach Chair, the President, the Event Producer (see below) and one or more Board Members.

The Event Producer (appointed by the Outreach Chair) provides continuity of supervision, expert knowledge, communications coordination and a single point of responsibility for all Town Halls. The Event Producer oversees all areas of the events including approval of expenditures, programming, promotion, and physical arrangements. Town Hall content and planning is often delegated to one of the **VNC's Standing or Ad Hoc Committees**. During the first stages of planning for each Town Hall, the Outreach Officer and Event Producer meet with those helping to organize the event and an event plan is agreed to and put in writing.

3. Coordinate VNC Tabling Activities

The Outreach Committee staffs a table at events throughout the year. The tables distribute literature about VNC and City events, issues and services; provide for direct interaction between stakeholders and VNC representatives; and provide a means for stakeholders to sign up for VNC emails.

a. **Venice Farmers' Market (currently weekly on Fridays)**

b. Other regularly scheduled tables are located at the Venice BBQ, Abbot Kinney Festival and other events as determined by the Board or Outreach Chair.

4. VNC Press Releases and email blasts

Coordinate the design, printing and distribution of VNC literature such as press releases, email blasts, and descriptive pamphlets.

The Outreach Chair is responsible for providing and distributing all press releases and edited content for email blast articles. All press releases and email blast articles must be approved by the President. The Outreach Chair is also responsible for relationships with the press, ensuring that the press has access to the Board as necessary, answering press questions and conducting outreach to the press.

5. VNC Newsletter

Ensures that a printed newsletter is prepared according to a schedule determined by the Board: works closely with the Newsletter Editor (appointed by the Outreach Chair) to determine editorial budget and helps with copy-editing newsletter content. Responsible for relationships with

newsletter vendors (layout, print, distribution), expediting payments and troubleshooting problems.

6. Outreach Budget

Works with the Treasurer to budget for Outreach activities.

Monitors expenses charged to Outreach budget.

25. Board Absences Defined

For purposes of Article V. Governing Board. Section 7. Absences, only; a full **meeting's attendance by a Board member is defined as more than half the** duration of the entire meeting. The Secretary shall keep a record of the arrival and departure times of all Board members.

26. Board and Committee Agenda Posting Policy

1. The agenda shall be posted or linked on the appropriate Board or Committee page and posted or linked on the Calendar on the VNC website.

2. Posted at Beyond Baroque as the 24 hour accessible site, and the Venice Library.

A copy of all regular and special Board and Committee agendas shall be submitted to the Department of Neighborhood Empowerment at: NC Support ncsupport@lacity.org to be posted through the Early Notification System (ENS).

27. **24 Hour Notice "Special Meetings"**

All 24 Hour Notice "Special Meetings" shall require written pre-approval by the VNC President or Vice President or a designee appointed by the President.

28. Paper Records Retention Policy

Paper records of the VNC do not need to be retained for more than five years.

29. Multiple Committee Jurisdictions

When topics arise that cross multiple committee jurisdictions, the Vice- President shall determine which committees have jurisdiction or whether there should be a joint committee meeting to vet or discuss the **topic."**