

North Westdale Neighborhood Association

Minutes for May 25, 2016

by Joan Winters - Secretary

Called to order: 7:10 PM

Announcements, Public Comment. - None

President's Report and combined Airport Committee Report - given by Martin Rubin.

Martin mentioned in his opening remarks that the scheduled election of Nwana officers wasn't going to take place as no one came forward to run for office of President, Vice President, Secretary and Treasurer. This election was uncontested. Martin agreed to continue for another year as president, as did Virginia Ernst as vice president, Joan Winters as secretary and Matt Roethle as treasurer. He noted that the MVCC elections were coming up on Sunday, June 5th, taking place at the Mar Vista Farmer's Market.

Martin announced that in the first two weeks of June, the Nwana will hold its first traffic survey meeting. His appointee for Traffic Liaison, Block Captain Helen Chin, is arranging scheduling of the meeting with neighbors in this community who are interested in attending. Our 3rd annual Fall Block Party will take place on Saturday afternoon, September 10.

As for the Airport Committee report, Martin spoke on Santa Monica Airport's S.M. residents applying pressure on city staff, and that the 9th Circuit Court of Appeals overturned, in favor of the City of Santa Monica, a lower court decision regarding who has control of the airport land. It now moves back to the lower court to hear arguments on the merits.

Guest speaker: 7:20

Our invited speaker, landscape designer Paula Henson, from Terra Bella Water, gave her Power Point talk on good water and soil practices for our gardens, along with rainwater capturing. There were interested neighbors who participated by asking questions. *See my report below.

Adjournment: 8:30 PM

* MAY 25 Nwana MEETING - GUEST SPEAKER RECAP *by Joan Winters, Nwana Secretary*

Landscape designer Paula Henson, from Terra Bella Water, gave a Power Point presentation at our May 25th Nwana meeting. Her talk was on the most current handling of water conservation and soil health. It was quite informative, and some of her suggestions were something that all of us who have gardens can take advantage of.

DWP rebates are still on for lawn replacement and low-flush toilets, sprinkler heads and rain barrels. DWP link: www.ladwp.com.

Water capture: It was interesting to hear that our biggest problem with water conservation is urban runoff such as rainwater going down storm drains and out to the ocean, runoffs from roofs, driveways,

sidewalks, streets and small landscaped areas. Rain barrels, and cisterns (although far more expensive) installed on our property are some ways to capture rainwater.

Paula mentioned how gravel and artificial grass are not good materials for landscaping (except for some desert plants) as water can't be absorbed easily, and they create a heat sink. Organic sources, such as mulch, feed the microbes in the soil--which then becomes a living thing.

Our older irrigation systems are not used correctly--the newer one are programmed better, plus one needs to use appropriate sprinkler heads. Though there is still a limit on watering with an automatic sprinkler system . There is no limit on hand watering, as long as we use a shut-off nozzle. Any day is good to water this way, but not from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

There is no time limit on tree watering. Paula urged us not to forgo watering our trees. Water-stressed trees might not appear deprived of water for a couple of years. The important thing is to water the tree at the canopy, or drip line, not at the tree trunk. The time for deep-watering could be up to one hour from a hose that doesn't puddle. In other words, water slowly and deeply. She suggested that doing this three times or so during the summer would be good. Of course, the weather and type of soil, such as clay, are some factors in the length of time for watering. Please don't forget to water your trees! We are starting to see dead trees appearing and it is very sad to see, and something that could be avoided.

Paula discussed types of water, such as our drinking water, which is of very good quality, and that we are using it to flush our toilets, wash our cars and water our gardens. Gray water, such as water from our showers or our laundry (if we use special soaps and no bleach) can go directly from our laundry to our garden. An interesting fact: 60% of our water is used outside.

Some types of water: drinking water, gray water, rainwater, groundwater, recycled water and desalination water. Plants to desalinate water are energy-intensive.

Please don't dispose of pharmaceuticals in the water system.

Soil--healthy soil retains water; it's like a sponge, and it is a great filter. Compost can even absorb lead. Healthy soil makes a healthy plant--without the need for commercial plant food.