BEL AIR–BEVERLY CREST NEIGHBORHOOD COUNCIL

Ad Hoc Committee on Environmental Issues

DRAFT MINUTES OF THE MEETING (VIRTUAL)

Friday, November 13, 2026 – 5:00 PM

Held via Zoom and by telephone

DRAFT – Subject to approval by the Committee

This meeting was conducted virtually in conformity with California Senate Bill 707 (Durazo), effective January 1, 2026 (Gov. Code § 54953.8), and Los Angeles City Council File 23-1114. Members of the public could participate by Zoom or by telephone and were offered the opportunity to comment in real time, as stated on the posted agenda.

CALL TO ORDER, WELCOME TO THE GROUP, AND ROLL CALL

Committee Chair Mindy Rothstein Mann called the meeting to order at approximately 5:08 PM and conducted a roll call. A quorum (4 of 6 voting members) was present.

Name	Position	Attendance
Mindy Rothstein Mann	Chair	Present
Leslie Weisberg	Member	Present
Alonzo Wickers	Member	Present
Nickie Miner	Member	Present (left approx. 6 PM)
David Christensen	Member	Absent
Jamie Hall	Member	Present
Ellen Evans	Ex officio (non-voting)	Present

1. APPROVAL OF THE NOVEMBER 13, 2026 AGENDA

The Chair asked whether there were any changes to the agenda. None were requested.

> **MOTION – Approve the November 13, 2026 Agenda**
> **Moved by:** Leslie Weisberg
> **Seconded by:** Alonzo Wickers
> **Vote:** Voice vote. Passed unanimously.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES: MAY 4, 2026 MEETING (ATTACHMENT A)

The Chair asked for a motion to approve the minutes of the May 4, 2026 meeting. Leslie Weisberg, Jamie Hall, and Nickie Miner each stated that they had not yet reviewed the minutes and would abstain if a vote were taken. Alonzo Wickers, who also had not reviewed them, offered to move approval. Before any vote was taken, Ms. Weisberg suggested carrying the minutes over to the next meeting so members could review them. The Chair agreed.

Action: No motion was voted on. By general agreement, approval of the May 4, 2026 minutes was continued to the Committee's next meeting.

3. GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT

The Chair asked whether any members of the public were present wishing to comment on matters within the Committee's jurisdiction but not on the agenda. No members of the public were in attendance, and no public comment was offered.

4. CHAIR REPORT

Chair Mann reported that the regulation of gas-powered leaf blowers is a major priority for her. She urged the City to revisit Council File 24-0055, which is nearly two years old and appears to have been closed without the report back that Council had requested, and to finally take meaningful action to enforce the existing ban. She described the equipment as a significant health hazard to the public and to the workers who operate it and expressed hope that other neighborhood councils could be enlisted in support. The Chair asked for the Committee's advice on the best procedural path forward; that discussion is summarized under Item 5. No action was taken under this item.

NEW BUSINESS

5. GASOLINE LEAF BLOWERS

Agenda item: Discussion and possible motion to make recommendations on how to enforce the existing ban on gas leaf blowers in the City of Los Angeles, and to submit a Community Impact Statement (CIS) asking City Council to bring this issue back.

Background

Gas-powered leaf blowers were first banned in the City of Los Angeles in 1998, but the ban was never enforced. Amendments introduced by Councilmember Nithya Raman (Council File 24-0055) were adopted by the full City Council nearly two years ago. Council requested a report back, which has not been delivered, and the file appears to have been closed. The agenda noted that Council needs to act on the report back and may wish to consider additional recommendations to help ensure that enforcement succeeds.

Public Comment

No members of the public were present, and no public comment was offered on this item.

Committee Discussion

Path forward.

- Ellen Evans (ex officio) advised that the existing file is likely closed and recommended asking Councilmember Katy Yaroslavsky to introduce a new or updated motion, since the prior motion refers to 2023, and sending a letter that lays out the case. She recommended that the letter be addressed to the full City Council and highlighted for the Councilmember. She also encouraged members to request a meeting with the Councilmember and senior legislative staff at every opportunity, including through Field Deputy, Ken Miller, when he attends Council meetings.
- Leslie Weisberg stressed that the letter should be specific about why gas blowers are a critical health issue. Chair Mann agreed to prepare a supporting letter with research on the health effects, including effects on children and equipment operators.
- Ms. Evans noted that a motion was needed so that the item could be placed on the agenda of the upcoming Board meeting, with the letter serving as backup. Alonzo Wickers asked whether the motion and the letter were separate; it was clarified that no motion was needed to request a meeting with the Councilmember.

Health, safety, and equity concerns.

- Chair Mann cited air pollution, noise, and health effects as the primary concerns, stating that gas blowers pollute more than cars and that children are especially vulnerable. Nickie Miner added that sparks from gas equipment can start fires, a particular risk in the hillside areas. Members agreed the letter should lead with air quality, since it affects everyone, followed by fire safety and noise. Jamie Hall observed that framing the issue as one of air quality makes it a concern for the whole community.
- Chair Mann relayed that, in her prior conversations with the Councilmember, she had been told Council members have been reluctant to act out of concern about the impact on gardeners. She expressed her view that the workers suffer the greatest exposure to noise and pollutants. Ms. Weisberg and Mr. Hall acknowledged that some Council offices have equity concerns about gardeners and immigrant communities in the current climate, and that any proposal must be developed thoughtfully.

Enforcement challenges.

- Chair Mann noted that past obstacles included limited police resources, a requirement that officers witness the violation, and uncertainty about staffing. She suggested that gardeners' regular schedules could make enforcement easier, and that existing parking enforcement staff might be used. Ms. Weisberg favored financial penalties and ticketing; Mr. Hall responded that the City lacks the capacity for ticketing, and he and Ms. Weisberg expressed differing views on the best approach. Members noted that neighbor reports in Bel Air have not produced results.
- Members noted that the sale of new gas blowers has been restricted statewide, but that existing equipment remains in use.

Ideas discussed (no consensus on a single mechanism).

- Homeowner responsibility. Ms. Miner proposed that homeowners own electric blowers for gardeners to use and be subject to fines if gas equipment is used. Chair Mann noted that homeowner responsibility was one of the items requested in the 2024 report back. Mr. Hall

suggested strict liability for homeowners for illegal use by those they employ. Ms. Weisberg cautioned that overly punitive measures would be harder to pass and that many homeowners are simply unaware of what equipment is used.

- Landscaper licensing. Mr. Hall described a permit program in San Marino requiring landscapers to certify compliance with local codes, and Ms. Evans reported that Pasadena, South Pasadena, and Arcadia also license landscapers. Chair Mann suggested pairing a free license and sticker with a short educational class. Mr. Wickers cautioned that license revenue should be tied to actual enforcement. Ms. Miner questioned whether the model would fit a city of Los Angeles's size, and Ms. Weisberg expressed concern about burdening individual gardeners.
- Business license process. Mr. Hall suggested using the City's existing business license renewal process to require an annual attestation of compliance with the leaf blower ban and the protected tree ordinance, supplemented by periodic emails or an online course.
- Education and outreach. Ideas included public-awareness videos and campaigns, an insert in the annual brush clearance mailer or property tax bill, and outreach to homeowners' associations, apartment owners, and neighborhood councils.
- Exchange programs, rebates, and incentives. Members discussed South Coast AQMD exchange and rebate programs, including whether commercial rebates remain available and why the existing exchange is not workable for homeowners, who do not own gas equipment. They also discussed a one-for-one exchange and a possible tax credit or property tax benefit for purchasing electric blowers.

Direction of the letter.

- Mr. Wickers asked whether the letter should raise the issue and request enforcement without prescribing a single solution. Ms. Evans observed that Council could find fault with any particular solution, and recommended highlighting the impact and demanding enforcement. Chair Mann proposed citing neighboring cities as examples that solutions are possible. Members agreed to take this approach.

Motion

> **MOTION – Gas-Powered Leaf Blower Enforcement Letter**
>
> **Moved by:** Alonzo Wickers (restating the language proposed by Ellen Evans, ex officio)
>
> **Seconded by:** Leslie Weisberg
>
> **Text:** "The Bel Air–Beverly Crest Neighborhood Council will write a letter highlighting the damage gas-powered leaf blowers cause in terms of air pollution, fire safety, and noise that affect the community and the operators of the equipment, and demand enforcement, potentially including licensing, that can allow enforcement without detriment to landscaping businesses."

Following the second, Chair Mann asked whether the motion must expressly call for Council to reopen the matter and for the report back. Ms. Evans advised that this could be filed as a CIS. By general agreement and without objection, the motion was understood to include submission of a CIS asking City Council to bring the matter back and obtain the overdue report back.

Amendment

During discussion of exchange and rebate programs, Ms. Evans suggested a friendly amendment. After a brief discussion of procedure, the Committee voted on the amendment before the main motion.

AMENDMENT – Add exchange and rebate programs

Moved by: Mindy Rothstein Mann

Seconded by: Alonzo Wickers

Text: To add equipment exchange and rebate programs to the list of ideas for programs that could allow enforcement, and to state that such programs should be simple and equitable for both residential and commercial users.

Vote: Voice vote. Amendment passed; no opposition was voiced.

VOTE ON MAIN MOTION, AS AMENDED

Vote: Voice vote. Motion passed as amended; no opposition or abstentions were voiced.

Action: The Bel Air–Beverly Crest Neighborhood Council will write a letter highlighting the damage caused by gas-powered leaf blowers (air pollution, fire safety, and noise) and demanding enforcement, potentially including licensing and equipment exchange and rebate programs, without detriment to landscaping businesses, together with a CIS asking City Council to bring the matter back and obtain the report back. Chair Mann will prepare the supporting letter, and the item will be placed on the agenda for the Board.

GOOD OF THE ORDER & ADJOURNMENT – NEXT MEETING DATE

Jamie Hall reported that the City has released a draft Urban Forest Management Plan for public comment from November 12, 2026 through January 11, 2027, and asked that the Committee agendize it for a future meeting. Because the item was not on the agenda, no discussion or action was taken.

Members discussed scheduling so that the Committee could meet and prepare a letter in time for the December 16, 2026 Board meeting. Ellen Evans noted that the Board's January meeting falls after the comment deadline. By general agreement, and without a formal vote, the Committee tentatively scheduled its next meeting for Thursday, November 19, 2026 at 12:30 PM. Alonzo Wickers indicated that he may be able to join late because of class. Ms. Miner had left the meeting before the date was selected and asked to be informed of the date chosen.

The meeting adjourned at approximately 6:02 PM.

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