



Altadena Town Council

Meeting Minutes – May 20, 2025

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=07ddjMz2U1k>

Start time – 7:00 pm – 9:10pm

1. CALL TO ORDER – meeting called to order at 7:00pm – Victoria Knapp, Chair

1.1 Flag Salute – Chien Yu - Firefighter Engineer, Pasadena Fire Department

1.1.1 Diane Marcussen introduced Firefighter Engineer Chien Yu

1.2 Roll Call - Kim Yu, Recording Secretary

1.2.1 Following Councilmembers were present: Connor Cipolla, Victoria Knapp, Nic Arnzen, Milissa Marona, Dorothy Wong, Jon Carmody, Darlene Greene, Isis Moulden, Vi-Eyvette Stewart Gordon, Pat Sutherlen, Diane Marcussen, Sylvia Vega, Reggie Wilkins

1.2.2 There was 1 unexcused absence: Adam Vourvoulis

1.3 Approve May 20, 2025, Meeting Agenda - Nic Arnzen, Vice Chair

1.3.1 Agenda was approved with some minor changes as reflected in these minutes

2. OFFICERS' REPORTS

2.1 Chair - Victoria Knapp

2.1.1 Robust number of activities in Altadena – happy to see many in person

2.1.2 Recognition of AAPI Heritage Month

2.2 Vice Chair - Nic Arnzen

2.2.1 ACONA meeting May 27th – link for meeting will go out to email list.

Email Nic Arnzen if you want to join the ACONA mailing list

2.2.1.1 Sheriff's update and neighborhood captain program –
Altagether.

2.2.1.2 Conversation with Steve Crowder, Mayor of Paradis
facilitated by Victoria Knapp

2.2.1.3 Acknowledgment and congratulations to Victoria Knapp
who was Assemblyman John Harabedians' pick for the
California State Assembly's Woman of the Year award.

2.3 Recording Secretary, Approve March 18th, 2025, Minutes - Kim Yu

2.3.1 March 1, 2025, minutes were approved with a few corrections.

- 2.3.2 Councilmember Stewart-Gordon pointed out three errors that were updated. Councilmember Yu motion to approve, Councilmember Arnzen seconds

- 2.3.2.1 Councilmember Sutherlein abstains

2.4 Treasurer - Milissa Marona

- 2.4.1 Opening balance o \$3,284.00. spent \$200 Google Office Space fees for March and April with a current closing balance of \$3,084.00

2.5 Corresponding Secretary - Connor Cipolla

- 2.5.1 Councilmember Cipolla read into public record two letters recently voted for approval by the full council.

- 2.5.2 Letter written to Sheriff Luna asking for a station captain, and more resources.

- 2.5.2.1 Council members who voted to approve: Nic Arnzen, Connor Cipolla, Reggie Wilkins, Kim Yu, Milissa Marona, Darlene Greene, Pat Sutherlen, Japhena Musson, Adam Vourvoulis, Diane Marcussen, Vi-Evette Stewart Gordon (voted in support of letter at time of meeting)

- 2.5.2.2 Council members in opposition to the letter: Isis Moulden, Dorothy Wong

- 2.5.2.3 No reply: Jon Carmody and Sylvia Vega

- 2.5.3 The second letter was sent to Kathryn Barger asking for permit fees for rebuilding in Altadena post Eaton Fire, to be waived or impactfully discounted.

- 2.5.3.1 Council members who voted to approve: Nic Arnzen, Milissa Marona, Connor Cipolla, Reggie Wilkins, Pat Sutherlen, Darlene Greene, Kim Yu, Japhena Musson, Jon Carmody, Vi-Evette Stewart-Gordon, Isis Moulden, Diane Marcussen, Adam Vouvoulis

- 2.5.3.2 No replies – Sylvia Vega, Dorothy Wong

3 PUBLIC SAFETY REPORTS

3.1 Altadena Sheriff's Station - Acting-Captain Marquez

- 3.1.1 crime rates numbers trending down: burglaries were down 28% from March to April. Hope to see approximately 44% decrease in May.

- 3.1.1.1 2024 this time of year was the low

- 3.1.1.2 April – had 117 arrests – focus on the home checks – have arrested a few people during those home check

3.1.2 Property Security Recommendations:

3.1.2.1 Set up temporary (construction-type) perimeter fencing to create a barrier to entry. This establishes a legal basis for trespassing charges.

3.1.2.2 "Letter of Agency": Submit a "letter of agency" to the Sheriff's Department (directly to and at the Altadena Sheriff's Station) authorizing them to arrest on your behalf if trespassers are found.

3.1.2.3 No Trespassing Signs: Post "No Trespassing" signs on the property.

3.1.3 You will be seeing more CHP presence

3.1.4 Councilmember Carmody asked about sheriffs' presence in Altadena and expressed that there are frustrations over lack of presence.

3.1.4.1 Captain Marquez explained that there is an increase in deputies assigned to Altadena (up to 5-15 extra deputies per shift)

3.1.5 Councilmember Carmody also asked about installing cameras in areas without internet or power

3.1.5.1 Trail cams are great options

3.1.6 Councilmember Nic Arnzen asked about what kind of crimes were happening in CT4602 where almost 90% of the tract is gone,

3.2 California Highway Patrol - Officer Keller

3.2.1 15 traffic crashes in the month of March – 4 hit and runs, 7-property damage only, 3-resulted in injuries.

3.2.2 Altadena task Force created – safety related violations, speeding, seat belt violations, red-light violations. Impaired drivers, mostly traffic related issues but can be cross discipline to help and work multi agency response.

3.2.3 MRE's – commercial enforcement unit – specialize in commercial trucks

3.3 L.A. County Fire - Maria Grycan, Asst. Fire Chief Pat Sprengel

3.3.1 187 responses in the month of March: 4 traffic collisions, 141 medical calls (120 patients transported), 2 fires – trash fire on Allen Ave. and structure fire on Washington Blvd. both on April 30th.

4 COMMUNITY REPORTS

4.1 U.S. Army Corps of Engineers – Colonel Sonny Avichal

4.1.1 Currently have 5,670 Right of Entries that USACE is working on, and the number continues to increase/change. There are about 375 opt

outs in Altadena/Pasadena/Sierra Madre. Number decreased by 25 within the last week.

- 4.1.2 105 debris crews. At 4,726 lots cleared. Returned ROE's for just over 3,000 properties. Working on shrinking that lag between number of lots cleared and ROE's returned.
- 4.1.3 Workloads declining and will see a decline in work crews
- 4.1.4 Received a list of properties that are private/commercial in nature that include non-profits, municipal buildings, parks and/or churches.
- 4.1.5 Crews taking the upcoming Sunday and Monday off for Memorial Day.
- 4.1.6 There is a lag between lots cleared and hydro mulching – COL Avichal said they are working to catch up on the backlog. If you find this is happening to your property, please contact USACE with an address and they will expedite it. Eventually, will all catch up,
- 4.1.7 95% completion mid to late summer. The last 5% are your tough issues – abatement properties, real estate transactional related issues, people who are doing it on their own, etc.
 - 4.1.7.1 Properties that opted to do their debris removal themselves have until June 30th to complete the work. If no progress has been made, the County has until July 15th to give USACE the properties that have opted to have it done themselves
 - 4.1.7.2 Tree waivers creating a lag for properties with these hazard trees. By not submitting their tree waivers and it's holding up the removal process.

4.2 Altadena Public Library – Nikki Winslow, Director

- 4.2.1 Recognition of Asian American & Pacific Islander Heritage Month. Birthday wishes to Chair Knapp, greetings from Sacramento during California Special District Association (CSDA) Legislative Days.
- 4.2.2 Board of trustee update: trustee Jason Capel resigned due to fire-related displacement to be filled by Justin Maamus. Next board meeting is Monday, June 23 at 5pm (in person and on YouTube)
- 4.2.3 Loma Alta Library opened May 17 at Loma Alta Park (Social Hall).
 - 4.2.3.1 Hours: M–F 10am–6pm, Sat 10am–4pm.
 - 4.2.3.2 Main Library remains open; hours: M–T 10am–8pm, W–F 10am–6pm, Sat 10am–4pm.
 - 4.2.3.2.1 Closed on: May 27 (Memorial Day), June 19 (Juneteenth), July 4 (Independence Day).
- 4.2.4 Bob Lucas Memorial Library

- 4.2.4.1 Renovations nearing 85% completion. Tentative grand reopening: mid-August 2025.
 - 4.2.5 Recruiting for: Adult Services Manager, Youth and Family Services Manager, and Youth and Family Services Librarian (position posted recently)
 - 4.2.6 “Crisis and Recovery Committee” formed post-Eaton Fire.
 - 4.2.6.1 Engaged a lobbyist; submitted budget request letters to state legislature. Requested property tax backfill funding.
 - 4.2.7 Mental Health Awareness Month
 - 4.2.7.1 Weekly virtual meditation (Tuesdays at 6:30 PM).
 - 4.2.7.2 Teen wellness workshop with Kiki Williams on Thursday at 4:30 PM.
 - 4.2.8 Summer Reading Program: June 2 – August 16
 - 4.2.8.1 Kickoff event: Saturday, June 7 at 10:00 AM (Main Library parking lot).
 - 4.2.9 Book Sale rescheduled to June 28–29
 - 4.2.10 Art Exhibition: Kenny Arts' *"Beauty for Ashes"*—paintings of Altadena before/after fire.
 - 4.2.11 Councilmember Carmody: Asked if Loma Alta Library will be permanent — confirmed temporary but may remain longer-term. Councilmember Arnzen: Thanked library for support of Altadena Pride (June 14) — start and end at the library.
- 4.3 LA County Parks and Rec – Sam Estrada
 - 4.3.1 Loma Alta reopening on May 17th – huge success
 - 4.3.2 Concerts start this Saturday May 24th
 - 4.3.3 Exciting programming all summer long
 - 4.3.4 Parks and facilities are open all weekend long including Sundays.
- 5 Special Presentations
 - 5.1 Charles White Park Artist Presentation - Catherine Azimi & Patricia Gomez, LA County Arts and Culture, Wesley Clark, Artist
 - 5.1.1 Capital improvements at Charles White Park include a permanent civic art installation honoring Charles White.
 - 5.1.2 Wesley Clark was selected in Fall 2023 via a competitive process with community input (including Charles White's son, Ian White).
 - 5.1.3 Clark's conceptual design features three sculptural elements representing Charles White as a man, artist, and teacher.
 - 5.1.4 Materials: cast bronze figures and GFRC (glass fiber reinforced concrete).

5.1.5 Complementary artwork by Ian White with etched panels will be installed throughout the park.

5.1.6 A community meeting with the artist is planned for summer 2025.

5.2 Consolidated Sewer Maintenance – Alex Villarama, Public Works

5.2.1 Proposed sewer rate increase - \$14/year over 3 years then 2% annual inflation increase each year with a total 5-year increase of \$45.73

6 COMMITTEE REPORTS

6.1 Legislative Committee – Milissa Marona, Chair

6.1.1 SB465 – California Alert Acts – schedule for May 23 hearing

6.1.2 County approved pilot self-certification program for residential rebuilds

6.2 Renters Protection and Recovery – Darlene Greene, Chair

6.2.1 Launched new renters' newsletter with resource links

6.2.2 Planning a June Town Hall

6.2.3 48 units to be released soon at \$600/month

6.2.4 Next meeting on Wednesday, June 1

6.3 By-Laws - Connor Cipolla, Chair

6.3.1 Reminder for each census tract to represent on the bylaws committee still waiting on final committee members

6.4 Communication - Nic Arnzen, Chair

6.4.1 Regular meetings: First Mondays at 7pm on Zoom – contact Nic Arnzen for more info

6.4.2 Altgether – founded by John Mayo has formed a system with neighborhood captains and looking to work with the Altgether network to get information out

6.5 Altadena Eaton Fire Recovery Fund Advisory Committee - Milissa Marona, Co-Chair

6.5.1 Bulletin Displays donated billboard space to help promote the fund

6.5.2 Application Window- May 27-June 10. Distribution begins June 24

6.5.3 Website: eatonfirefund.org

7 GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT

7.1 Sylvia Andrews: Advocated for streamlined, direct cash assistance and transparency in nonprofit fund distribution.

7.2 Leah Beal: Questioned mandatory rebuild of garage/ADU amid housing cost burdens; advocated for flexibility.

7.3 Terry Williams: Raised concerns about looting and public safety.

7.4 Karen Maya: Promoted a free legal clinic for disaster-related issues. Contact: 626-744-8018.

8 CENSUS TRACT REPORTS

8.1 4610 – Councilmember Moulden

- 8.1.1 Concerns raised over dust and air quality from debris removal.
- 8.1.2 Residents encouraged to report violations to SCAQMD (1-800-CUT-SMOG), USC's reporting portal, or council.
- 8.1.3 Reports of individuals falsely identifying as utility/public works employees. Residents urged to call the sheriffs or 911
- 8.1.4 Ongoing issues with maintenance of County owned lots – a walkthrough and accountability are requested.

8.2 4611 – Councilmember Stewart-Gordon

- 8.2.1 Streetlights restored on Lake Ave. from Calaveras to Altadena Dr.
- 8.2.2 Positive law enforcement visibility noted
- 8.2.3 Residents are still sad about not having an Altadena post office

9 ADJOURN – 9:10pm