

## Budget Advocates Report, August 2019

The Budget Advocates wrapped up their contribution to the 2019-2020 City budget in May. On May 6, the Budget Advocates made a presentation to the City Council Budget and Finance Committee regarding the recommendations in the Budget Advocates' White Paper. There was quite a bit of questioning from the Councilmembers regarding the White Paper and answers from the Budget Advocates. There were also some presentations from individual Budget Advocates regarding the Departments they met with and wrote reports on. I think the Budget Committee was very receptive to our input and appreciated all the work we had done. We had previously met with Mayor Garcetti regarding the 2019-2020 budget on March 14.

The City Council passed the 2019-2020 budget in May, adopting some of our recommendations.

We then turned our attention to the 2020-2021 budget. It's important to get started early in this process, since the City Departments, City Administrative Officer (CAO), Mayor, and City Council Budget and Finance Committee are already starting to work on the upcoming budget for 2020-2021.

We had a very successful Budget Day on June 29 at City Hall; 540 persons registered for the event and a large number of those actually attended. Speakers included Board of Neighborhood Commissioners President Joy Atkinson, City Controller Ron Galperin, City Councilmember Paul Koretz, Jacob Wexler from the CAO's Office, and Jack Humphreville. Video of the proceedings from Channel 35 is posted on the [NCBALA.com](http://NCBALA.com) website.

New Budget Advocate officers were elected at Budget Day – the co-chairs are Carol Newman of the Lake Balboa NC and Jack Humphreville of the Greater Wilshire NC. Jack writes the LA Watchdog column for [CityWatchLA.com](http://CityWatchLA.com) and is very knowledgeable regarding the City budget, especially problems regarding the pension funds and deficits. He's also president of the DWP Advocacy Committee. Carol is an attorney and used to work for the United States Justice Department.

The plenary session was followed by regional breakout sessions during which budget concerns were identified by the Budget Representatives from the various Neighborhood Councils and Stakeholders.

The Budget Advocates had a retreat on July 20, where we worked on planning for the upcoming fiscal year. We discussed input from Budget Day, planned for our upcoming meeting with the Mayor, and discussed our upcoming meetings with the City departments.

We met with Mayor Garcetti on July 24 to kick off our input into the 2020-2021 budget. This discussion mostly focused on broad issues involving revenue, expenditures, deficits (in particular the structural deficit), pension plan shortfalls, and intergenerational theft. Jack Humphreville led most of the discussion. To get an idea of the issues discussed, see Jack's LA Watchdog columns in [www.CityWatchLA.com](http://www.CityWatchLA.com); do a search for Humphreville to see his many columns. In particular, see the July 1, 2019 column entitled "The Structural Deficit Leads to a Service Deficit/Bankruptcy and Intergenerational Theft," found here: <https://www.citywatchla.com/index.php/la-watchdog/17975-the-structural-deficit-leads-to-a-service-deficit-bankruptcy-and-intergenerational-theft>

We will soon be starting our meetings with City departments, which will take place in October, November, and December, to write the departmental reports for incorporation into this year's White Paper by December 31.

The Budget Advocates hold public meetings twice a month, on the first Monday of the month at City Hall, and on the third Saturday of the month at another location. You are all welcome to attend, and you can listen in by telephone if you don't want to travel to the meeting. Check the NCBALA.com website for the dates and times, and the agenda has the call-in number and code.

If your Neighborhood Council has not already selected its two Budget Representatives, please make sure that is done, pursuant to the Bylaws. Until then, the President and Treasurer are the Budget Reps. Please provide the names and contact information of the Budget Representatives to me.

And if your Neighborhood Council has not already done so during the past few months, please agendize a contribution to the Budget Advocates for the current Fiscal Year. The average contribution from NCs has been approximately \$500.00 but some have provided more. Your support will be appreciated and assists the Budget Advocates in maintaining their communication and outreach for the year. The required NC Funding Contribution Form for Fiscal Year 2019-2020 is linked here: <http://ncbala.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/08/Budget-Advocates-Funding-Contribution-Fillable-Form-FY-2019-2020.pdf>

Best regards, Jeff

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