Ocean Park Association Board Election 2019

MEET THE CANDIDATES: The following individuals are running for open director seats. All have met the criteria of residency and membership. OPA members in good standing will be able to vote to fill open Board seats on Saturday, December 7th at our Holiday Party.

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| **Judy Abdo (Incumbent):** Judy has lived in Ocean Park since 1974.  She has been active on social justice and social service agency boards for many years, including OPCC and Sojourn. She was a long time member of the SMRR Steering Committee. She was part of the founding staff of Ocean Park Community Organization and became Executive Director of OPCO.  She has been an elementary school teacher, a Council Deputy in the City of West Hollywood, Administrator of the Church in Ocean Park, Assistant Director of the Norton Family Office, and Director of Child Development for SMMUSD.  She served on the original Pier Restoration Corporation, was elected to the Santa Monica City Council in 1988 and served as Mayor for 3 years.  She served on the initial Urban Forest Task Force. She served on the Santa Monica League of Women Voters board for 2 years.  She is the Chair of the Pier Corporation and is Santa Monica’s representative to the Metropolitan Water District.  She serves as vice chair of the First 5 LA Commission of LA County as well as the Santa Monica Early Education and Childcare Task Force. She has served on the OPA board for 4 years, Santa Monica Forward, and the Climate Action Santa Monica Steering Committee. She represents OPA at Main Street Merchants meetings. |
| **Will Burlington:** Will is a recent arrival to Ocean Park who currently chairs OPA’s committee on Emergency Preparedness. He is a professional coach to organizations and individuals, and graduated from the highly respected Leadership Coaching Program at Georgetown University’s Institute for Transformational Leadership in Washington, DC. His primary coaching interests include executive level leadership, evolving entrepreneurs, emotional intelligence, adult development, addiction and recovery, best mindfulness practices and the latest developments in neuroscience.  Earlier in his career, Will practiced communications and Internet law with firms in Milwaukee and Washington, DC; was Chief Counsel to a member of the U.S. House of Representatives; Associate General Counsel and Head of Global Public Policy for AOL (formerly America Online), as well as Senior Vice President and Chief Communications Officer for AOL Europe in Hamburg and London.  Will graduated in 1984 with a Bachelor of Arts (B.A.) degree in government from Lawrence University in Appleton, WI and earned his Juris Doctorate (J.D.) degree in 1987 from Marquette University Law School. |  |
| **Zachary Gaidzik (Incumbent):** Zachary Gaidzik currently works for the people as LA County Supervisor Sheila Kuehl’s Field Deputy for the West/Metro Los Angeles Office.   Prior to Joining Supervisor Kuehl’s Office, Zachary was born, raised, and worked in the Santa Monica and West LA communities where he developed strong relationships and contacts with local nonprofits and small businesses. Most recently Zachary worked with Climate Action Santa Monica Climate Corps Summer Program where he designed and implemented an 8-week climate change preparedness and community outreach internship for High School and College Students. Not only did he create the program, he was also responsible for student training, securing funding for the program and outcomes reporting to various local and regional municipal agencies.  Zachary hopes to continue his time on the board serving the people of Ocean Park and working to protect its unique character and help it grow into the future as a thriving and welcoming community for all people who choose to call it home. |
| **Mark Gorman:**  I am interested in serving on the OPA board to help keep Ocean Park a great place to live. Important features of Ocean Park include our iconic history and sense of place and community, which is different even from the rest of Santa Monica. Ocean Park also has a diversity of people, buildings and businesses. These we need to preserve - while making Ocean Park more walkable, more bikeable and more neighbor friendly. I believe the main task of OPA is to keep our community informed of changes taking place that affect Ocean Park and making sure that our unique needs are recognized by City Hall. The important issues that affect our quality of life are crime and traffic. Mark has lived in Los Angeles since 1979 and Ocean Park since 2008. A retired engineer, he previously served on the OPA Board 2014 – 2017. |
| **Jeffrey Jarow (Incumbent):** Jeff is a Co-Founder of both OPA and the 4th of July Main Street Parade.  He was the community liaison for the Main Street Business Improvement District (MSBID), which is responsible for dealing with issues regarding Main Street and the Farmers Market, including putting the valet bike racks and free parking at the beach on Sunday mornings.  He was the Co-Chair of the Ocean Park Boulevard Beautification Project.  Jeff has lived in our community over 40 years.  He is married to Faye and has a son, Morgan. He is currently President of the Santa Monica Sister City Asssociation (Fujinomiya, Japan - Kizugawa, Japan, Mazatlan, Mexico - Hamm, Germany, and more to come shortly), as well as on the Boards of the "FREE" Santa Monica Symphony, the Santa Monica Chamber of Commerce, the Santa Monica Family YMCA, and the Legislative Chair of the SAMOHI PSTA. Jeff feels it is extremely important for ALL of us, as the OCEAN PARK community, to use this OPA platform to voice OUR opinions, share OUR views, and most importantly, implement OUR ideas, regarding overdevelopment on Main St., traffic circulation and parking issues throughout, pedestrian and community safety, and the growing homeless challenge, to name just a few.. |
| **Susanne Manheimer:**  I would like to be involved with OPA as I have been a resident in Santa Monica for over 20 years, sat on the Santa Monica Chamber board for Education, served on the Design Advisory Committee for the Santa-Monica Malibu Unified School District that developed the SMMUSD identity. As a creative director, I am working on my 3rd act and would like to get involved with the community now that I have the time. I would like to give OPA an “uplift” which will revitalize the neighborhood in hopes to increase membership, retention and revenue. Santa Monica has a great narrative and by doing this new creative marketing social media… the “verbal” will match the “visual.” |
| **Nick Rolston:** **(Appointee)** Nick was born and raised in Santa Monica, on Bay St. to be exact. As a child, he and his older sister frequently joined their mother with her involvement in various community organizations including the Church in Ocean Park, Co-Op grocery store, Rent Control Board meetings & more. He spent a great deal of his youth involved in activities at the SM Boys & Girls Club, swimming at the SMC Pool, and summers either at the beach or at the Santa Monica YMCA/Camp Big Bear. While at SAMOHI, Nick worked after-school for the Parks & Rec Dept. and played for the school’s volleyball team, eventually attending UC Santa Cruz graduating with degrees in psychology & education.  Nick returned to Santa Monica in 2013, moving to where he currently resides in Ocean Park. Outside of his 15+ year career in Experiential Marketing, Nick volunteers with the Santa Monica Boys & Girls Club, struggles at beach volleyball, and loves being a part of the community that helped raised him. Nick believes in empowering locals in the continued development of Santa Monica & honoring the city’s great history. He hopes as a Board Member to help OPA continue to have a positive impact on Ocean Park, while supporting our public schools & youth organizations, impacting housing issues, supporting residential continuity and maintaining a compassionate approach for the homeless population. |
| **Abe Sassoon:** Abe Sassoon was born half the world away in Rangoon, Burma. His parents brought him to the beach at Ocean Park shortly after their arrival in the U.S. He spent many summers at this beach, taking the number 7 bus from his home in Los Angeles then walking the gauntlet down Ocean Park Boulevard between Neilson and Barnard Ways where he and his friends were pelted with beer bottle caps and cigarette butts tossed by beachcombers and college guys who lived in the derelict beach shacks along the way. Finally he moved to Ocean Park in 1992. He adopted Santa Monica as his home since neither the city nor the country of his birth exist any longer. |

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