

CITY OF LOS ANGELES
INTER-DEPARTMENTAL CORRESPONDENCE

Date: June 24, 2014

To: The Office of the City Clerk
Council and Public Services
Council Committee Services Section

From: Crystal Angelo, Senior Personnel Analyst I *CA*

Subject: **Council File 11-1017-S1**
Re: Summary Investigative Report of the allegations made by
members of the North Hills West Neighborhood Council (NHWNC)

Please find enclosed the original summary report and one copy of the investigation into the allegations of discrimination and harassment made by the resigning members of the NHWNC to be received by the Education and Neighborhoods Council Committee.

Should you have any questions or need additional information, please feel free to contact me at (213) 473-0164 or by email at crystal.angelo@lacity.org.



REPORT
FROM

THE PERSONNEL
DEPARTMENT

TO: The Honorable Members of the Education and Neighborhoods Council Committee	DATE June 9, 2014
REFERENCE	COUNCIL FILE 11-1017-S1

SUBJECT: Motion to investigate the allegations of discrimination and harassment made by the resigning members of the North Hills West Neighborhood Council (NHWNC).

Investigation

To investigate this complaint, staff interviewed 16 people. Staff listened to the audio tapes of the May 2013 General Board Meeting and the Board of Neighborhood Commissioners (BONC) September 2013 Meeting. A review of documentation relating to the allegations was also conducted, including the articles posted in the media about the resignations, the NHWNC Bylaws, the City Charter, Robert's Rules of Order, emails and letters regarding the cited issues, and the minutes of NHWNC Meetings held between September 2012 and August 2013. A total of 197 hours was spent on investigating this case.

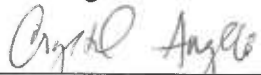
Findings

Based on the information obtained in this investigation, there is insufficient evidence to substantiate that harassment and disparate treatment based on gender, age, and/or sexual orientation existed in this case.


Recommendations

It appears that the Department of Neighborhood Empowerment (Department) and neighborhood councils need more leverage in being able to resolve issues with board members as they arise. While the NHWNC has included a removal process for board members in their bylaws, such a process is not identified in all neighborhood councils. Some councils have established one-year terms for their board officers to provide their governing body with the ability to replace members in a relatively short amount of time. The Department has the authority to take exhaustive efforts to resolve complaints regarding a violation of the City Charter Plan, which may include suspending neighborhood council activity and/or funding. If the efforts to comply with such remedies fail, the Department can begin the process of de-certifying a neighborhood council. However, the Department is limited to these types of remedies that seem to affect the entire council, and such a broad response may not suit situations where the actions of one or only a few members are problematic. From our vantage point, therefore, it appears that if all neighborhood councils amended their bylaws to include standards of conduct, including proposed responses to violations of those standards, then the neighborhood council would have a systematic way of warning and even removing board members while still maintaining activity within the community.

Submitted by:


Crystal Angelo, Sr. Personnel Analyst

Approved by:


Raelynn Napper, Division Manager
EEO, ODCR & Employee Development Division


MARGARET WHELAN,
GENERAL MANAGER