

Your Community Impact Statement has been successfully submitted to City Council and Committees.

If you have questions and/or concerns, please contact the Department of Neighborhood Empowerment at NCsupport@lacity.org.

This is an automated response, please do not reply to this email.

Contact Information

Neighborhood Council: Woodland Hills-Warner Center

Name: Heath Kline

Phone Number:

Email: h.kline@whcouncil.org

The Board approved this CIS by a vote of: Yea(15) Nay(2) Abstain(1) Ineligible(5) Recusal(0)

Date of NC Board Action: 12/12/2022

Type of NC Board Action: Against unless Amended

Impact Information

Date: 12/22/2022

Update to a Previous Input: No

Directed To: City Council and Committees

Council File Number: 21-0407

Agenda Date:

Item Number:

Summary: CF21-0407 Neighborhood Council / Standardize Election Rules / Stakeholder Participation The Woodland Hills-Warner Center Neighborhood Council (WHWCNC) is urging the City Council to request a supplemental report from the Department of Neighborhood Empowerment (EmpowerLA) in response to City Council File 21-0407. The WHWCNC Board has concerns about the accuracy of the report submitted by EmpowerLA on 10/14/2022, citing discrepancies with raw election data available on EmpowerLA's website. The WHWCNC Board is also concerned about the possibility of self-affirmation being mandated by the City for NC voter eligibility. Our board believes that self-affirmation undermines the safeguards in place to prevent fraudulent board takeovers by special interest groups and is only appropriate for NCs where there is no distinction in qualifications for board seats. Our NC structure depends on recognizing, preserving, and promoting our seven distinct sub-communities of interest areas within our NC boundaries and having representatives of three types to encourage diversity of viewpoints and interests. Self-Affirmation will undermine the structure of our board and the equally weighted voices of our stakeholders. Our NC structure depends on recognizing, preserving, and promoting our seven distinct sub-communities of interest areas within our NC boundaries and having representatives of three types to encourage diversity of viewpoints and interests. Self-Affirmation will undermine the structure of our board and the equally weighted voices of our stakeholders. The board emphasizes that Neighborhood Councils are independent under the City Charter and any amendments to their bylaws regarding voter qualifications must be made by each NC, not the City Council, EmpowerLA or any other entity. Please see our posted CIS for additional details.

Board

President Dena Weiss, Area 4 CB Org.
Vice Pres. Mihran Kalaydjian, Area 6 Bus.
Treasurer Paul Lawler, Area 2 Bus.
Secretary Karen DiBiase, Area 1 Bus.
Parliamentarian Leslie Simon, Area 6 Res.

Aaron M Quantz, Area 1 Res.
Mark Schwartz, Area 1 CB Org.
Reina Cerros McCaughey, Area 1 Alt.

Arturo Velasquez, Area 2 Res.
Sean McCarthy, Area 2 CB Org.
Phillip Swain, Area 2 Alt.

Mark Bell, Area 3 Res.
John Sandy Campbell, Area 3 CB Org.
Annamarie Donkin, Area 3 Alt.

Don Patterson, Area 4 Res.
Martin Lipkin, Area 4 Bus.
Rachel Tabak, Area 4 Alt.

Christopher Waddy, Area 5 Res.
Julie Waltrip, Area 5 Bus.
Theresa Campbell, Area 5 CB Org.
Gretchen Gasell, Area 5 Alt.

Heath Kline, Area 6 CB Org.

Aaron Williams, Area 7 Res.
Vacancy, Area 7 Bus.
Houtan Hormozian, Area 7 CB Org.
Christine Robinson, Area 7 Alt.

August Steurer, At-Large
Bobbie Wasserman, At-Large Alt.
Talia Isaacs, Youth (At-Large)

*Board Authorized Submittal
by Heath Kline
for
Dena Weiss, President
d.weiss@whcouncil.org*

Action Passed on 12/12/2022

Members Present: 23
Quorum: 12

Members voting Aye: 15
Members voting Nay: 02
Members Abstaining: 01

Members Ineligible: 05
Members Recused: 0

Contact Person:
Heath Kline
818-312-5610
h.kline@whcouncil.org

RE: CF21-0407. Neighborhood Council / Standardize Election Rules / Stakeholder Participation

The Woodland Hills – Warner Center Neighborhood Council [WHWCNC] strongly encourages the City Council to require the Department of Neighborhood Empowerment to submit a supplemental report-back responding to City Council requests in City Council File 21-0407. Further input from experienced Neighborhood Council Board Members, which improves upon the report’s initial conclusions, should better serve as the basis for City Council decisions.

The WHWCNC Board bases this advice on the knowledge that fellow Neighborhood Councils [NCs] report the report-back from EmpowerLA, submitted to City Council on 10/14/2022, contains factual errors when compared to raw elections data available on EmpowerLA.org. The Department’s limited attention to detail and awareness of statistics concerns the WHWCNC Board. Consequently, our NC expects that the City Council will not rely on the 10/14/2022 report for making changes to the regulation of NC Elections. However, further study is essential, especially regarding self-affirmation.

The WHWCNC Board is highly concerned that self-affirmation by potential voters will become mandated by the City. The founders of this NC crafted the structure of WHWCNC to minimize the possibility of an organization’s takeover of the Board to follow its self-serving agenda. Our NC structure depends on recognizing, preserving, and promoting our seven distinct *sub-communities of interest* areas within our NC boundaries and having representatives of three types to encourage diversity of viewpoints and interests. Unfortunately, the feared takeover-attempt situation has occurred more than once. Yet, those attempts failed more than once, primarily due to the Board’s structure. Self-affirmation allows voters to jump to other areas to tilt election outcomes fraudulently. Implementing voter self-affirmation removes the safeguards upon which honest elections and the Board structure depend. Self-affirmation is only appropriate when there is no distinction in standing for Board seats.

In recent years, voter fraud has become an intense topic in America. Voter validation improves confidence in elections. The Woodland Hills – Warner Center Neighborhood Council notes that Neighborhood Councils that required voter validation, like WHWCNC, had higher voter turnout and more vote-by-mail ballots returned and counted despite them being a smaller percentage of the councils having an election in 2021. WHWCNC believes voter validation minimizes the risk of fraudulent board takeovers.

While Empower LA may make recommendations, our Board emphasizes that Neighborhood Councils are independent under the City Charter. Therefore, any amendments to their bylaws regarding voter qualifications cannot be made by the City Council or other entity, only by each Neighborhood Council.