

# CITY OF LOS ANGELES

## BOARD OF NEIGHBORHOOD COMMISSIONERS

**RAY REGALADO**  
PRESIDENT

**JOY ATKINSON**  
VICE PRESIDENT

**LEONARD SHAFFER**  
**DEBBIE WEHBE**  
**MAGGIE DARETT-QUIROZ**  
**KEREN WATERS**  
**RANDELL ERVING**

Email: [commission@empowerla.org](mailto:commission@empowerla.org)

## CALIFORNIA



**KAREN BASS**  
MAYOR

NEIGHBORHOOD COUNCILS  
**EMPOWER LA**  
Department of  
NEIGHBORHOOD EMPOWERMENT

20<sup>th</sup> FLOOR, CITY HALL  
200 NORTH SPRING STREET LOS  
ANGELES, CA 90012

TELEPHONE (213) 978-1551  
TOLL-FREE 3-1-1  
FAX: (213) 978-1751  
E-MAIL: [EmpowerLA@lacity.org](mailto:EmpowerLA@lacity.org)

**VANESSA SERRANO**  
INTERIM GENERAL MANAGER

**ERICK MUÑOZ**  
EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT

[www.EmpowerLA.org](http://www.EmpowerLA.org)

September 22, 2023

North Hills West Neighborhood Council

Dear North Hills West Neighborhood Council Board Members:

The Department of Neighborhood Empowerment (Department) is responsible for ensuring the successful operation of the Neighborhood Council system pursuant to Los Angeles City Charter (Charter Section 901) and Los Angeles Administrative Code (Section 22.801 and 22.810 1). The Department carries out its obligations in accordance with the Charter, Administrative Code, and other applicable laws and regulations, including policies adopted by the Board of Neighborhood Commissioners (BONC).

As you will recall, the goals and objectives of a Neighborhood Council, as listed in the Plan for a Citywide System of Neighborhood Councils, (Plan), are to:

- Promote public participation in City governance and decision making process so that the government is more responsive to local needs;
- Promote and facilitate communication, interaction, and opportunities for collaboration among all Certified Neighborhood Councils regarding their common and disparate concerns;
- Facilitate the delivery of City services and City government responses to Certified Neighborhood Councils' problems and requests for assistance; and
- Foster a sense of community for all people to express ideas and opinions about their neighborhoods and their government.
- Meet at least once per calendar quarter

First, we would like to acknowledge the work of the North Hills West Neighborhood Council (NHWNC) over the years and the commitment of the

current board members to serve as a voice for the community through the Neighborhood Council. In this letter, we hope to be able to provide clarification and next steps for the board.

On September 21, 2023, the North Hills West Neighborhood Council (NHWNC) was unable to establish a quorum for the third time in the 1st quarter of the fiscal year, and because of this, the board was unable to meet. To assist the NHWNC in reaching a meeting, the Department will place the board in Exhaustive Efforts (EE).

We also want to acknowledge and apologize for a mistake in our interpretation and application of the Board of Neighborhood Commissioners (BONC) Loss of Quorum Policy in July. In our efforts to help the board fill vacant seats to establish a quorum, we made a mistake that resulted in the board not being able to meet in July for its regular board meeting. In the months to follow, additional barriers prevented the board from meeting. In August, the board was unable to reach a quorum and September had the same result. NHWNC needs seven (7) board members present to establish a quorum and we recently learned that only six (6) board members are able to attend board meetings. This will prevent the NHWNC from meeting unless our Departments steps in to support.

To assist with the board's return to a successful and functional Neighborhood Council, the Department hereby places the North Hills West Neighborhood Council (NHWNC) in Exhaustive Efforts.

During the period of Exhaustive Efforts, the Department will work with the NHWNC to set the agenda and conduct any meetings and/or training. The Department will temporarily lower the quorum from seven (7) to four (4) to support the board in filling vacant positions. When a Neighborhood Council is placed into exhaustive efforts their funds are frozen by the Office of the City Clerk. The Department will work with the Office of the City Clerk Funding team to make proxy payments on behalf of the NHWNC so that administrative and outreach functions remain uninterrupted. During this period, all committee meetings are suspended. The following Exhaustive Efforts work plan prescribes the required action to be completed before returning to normal status:

- Assist the board in filling at least one vacant board seat so they are able to conduct board meetings.

The estimated timeframe to complete this work plan is two (2) months. The board may complete the items described above in a shorter period of time, at which time, our Department will assess the possibility of an early release from Exhaustive Efforts. Please note, that the Department reserves the right to adjust the work plan for the board when deemed necessary. Failure to comply with the parameters outlined above may result in the Department seeking additional action.

For any questions, comments, and/or concerns, please feel free to contact John Darnell by calling (213) 473-7470 or via email at [john.darnell@lacity.org](mailto:john.darnell@lacity.org).

The Department appreciates your time and volunteer efforts in the community and looks forward to working with you as partners in making North Hills West Neighborhood Council a strong and effective voice for your neighborhood, your community, and the city.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "John Darnell". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

John Darnell  
Neighborhood Empowerment Advocate

Cc: Vanessa Serrano, Interim General Manager

Ray Regalado, President of the Board of Neighborhood Commissioners

Keren Waters, Commissioner, Board of Neighborhood Commissioners

Erin Seinfeld, West Valley Area Representative, Office of Mayor Karen Bass

Myrka Martinez, Deputy District Director, Office of Councilmember John Lee

Ayelet Feiman, Deputy City Attorney, Office of the City Attorney

Ann-Marie Holman, Director of Communications, Department of Neighborhood Empowerment

Thomas Soong, Director of Policy and Government Relations, Department of Neighborhood Empowerment

Gibson Nyambura, Director of Innovation, Department of Neighborhood Empowerment

Mariel Camilo, NC Funding Representative, Office of the City Clerk