

Ms. De Haven,

I'm writing in response to your Elections Challenge for the Encino Neighborhood Council Elections on September 29, 2012.

You stated that the Challenge was based on "Eligibility of Voter" and "Eligibility of Candidate" and elaborate on those challenges by pointing out that many of the voters did not live in Encino but were affiliated with a local church. You continue by leveling the same charge against one of the candidates, claiming that Talar Dardarian "resides in Northridge and is not a resident of Encino."members of a local church.

Your "Eligibility of Voter" challenge is rejected. You state that voters were presenting identification that demonstrated that they don't live in the community but this is not a reasonable challenge because voters aren't required to live in Encino unless they are voting for the seats that require resident status in order to vote. There were two ballots that were open to members of the community who "work, own property or those who declare a stake within the ENC boundaries and affirm a factual basis for it and who are 18 years or older."

Affiliation with a local church would certainly qualify as a stake within the community and a letter from the church would certainly serve as documentation of that factual basis.

You continue by asking why other churches weren't notified of the elections and of their ability to send their congregants to the polling location but that is more of an outreach challenge, one that is not permitted under the EmpowerLA Challenge guidelines. Any concerns over outreach would be more appropriately directed to the Outreach Committee of the Encino Neighborhood Council.

Your "Eligibility of Candidate" challenge is also rejected. The deadline for challenging the eligibility of a Candidate was September 6, 2012 so your "Eligibility of Candidate" challenge fails simply because of the late filing. If you had filed on time, the challenge would still have failed because the Encino Neighborhood Council bylaws do not require Candidates for the Planning and Land Use Representative seat to be a resident but specify that eligible candidates "live, work, or own property within the Council geographical boundaries."

Ultimately, the Encino Neighborhood Council bylaws were adhered to as the foundation for the policies and procedures that were followed during the Encino NC elections. The citywide stakeholder definition includes those who live, work, own property or those who declare a stake in the community and affirm a factual basis for it. This stakeholder definition is a commitment to including the larger community, not grounds for a challenge.

Thank you for your commitment to the integrity of the Neighborhood Council electoral process.