

**DEPARTMENT OF NEIGHBORHOOD
EMPOWERMENT WITNESS STATEMENT FORM**

FOR DEPT USE ONLY

Grievance # _____
Witness Form # _____

Witness Name: Kenneth S. Alpern Contact Number: (310) 413-6136
Mailing Address: 3222 Military Avenue Email: SEALNBEAR@aol.com
Los Angeles, CA 90034

Grievances are defined as set forth in the Los Angeles Administrative Code Section 22.818.

"The following information contained herein is within my own personal knowledge and relates only to facts and circumstances surrounding the Grievance submitted by Selena Inouye on 10/23/2020 regarding Mar Vista Community Council Neighborhood Council."

My response is as follows, as a witness to the actions associated with the grievance:

1) The good faith determination occurred after two hours of testimony, and approximately another hour of discussion and debate relative to the grievance. Ample due diligence, and letting the community know beforehand of the grievance at the 7/14/2020, were all performed. It is difficult to know or guess what other good-faith efforts could have been made to ensure more community awareness and ability to weigh in on this grievance. The details of the misconduct were entirely elaborated to the community at large.

2) The Board member herself apologized on more than one occasion, and publicly so, thereby preventing any conclusion from being made that an inappropriate action had been done. However--and this is critical--the grievance did NOT merely stop at the inappropriate action of the Board member, which everyone there (including the Board member) acknowledged was inappropriate.

The grievance ALSO included (and was connected to) a strong mention of racism and racist actions on the part of the Board member, and for this reason the grievance had to be struck down. This Board member has such a very long history of keeping low-income minority tenants in their homes, and protesting police brutality against minorities, that the grievance was overwhelmingly struck down.

The Board member appropriately apologized, no defense of the inappropriate action occurred, and is absolutely not a racist or guilty of racist actions. Accordingly, the grievance was appropriately rejected by the Board of Directors, and by the greater community at large (the majority of those testifying ardently defended the Board member in public testimony).

I declare under penalty of perjury under the laws of the State of California that the foregoing is true and correct.

Date: 11/22/2020

Name: Kenneth S. Alpern

Signature: *Kenneth S. Alpern*

Department Review

Date witness form received: _____ Date witness form reviewed: _____

Witness form reviewed by: _____ Grievance number: _____

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Witness Name: Helen Fallon Contact Number: 310-823-1303
Mailing Address: 425 Linnie Canal Email: helenandbertfallon@gmail.com
Venice, CA 90291

Grievances are defined as set forth in the Los Angeles Administrative Code Section 22.818.

"The following information contained herein is within my own personal knowledge and relates only to facts and circumstances surrounding the Grievance submitted by Selena Inouye on 10/9/20 regarding Mar Vista Neighborhood Council."

To Whom It May Concern:

I am a member of the Public and a Venice Stakeholder and a Mar Vista Community Interest Stakeholder. The Zoom format for NC meetings has allowed me to participate in and observe a number of BOD and committee meetings held by Westside NCs. I attended the July, August and September MVCC Board Meetings. In order to submit the attached witness statement, I also reviewed the Agendas, Minutes along with my notes and correspondence from those meetings.

As follows is my two page summary detailing my personal knowledge of the facts and circumstances behind this grievance. I am certain you will conclude that there has been no bylaw violation, that this grievance is without merit and reflects Ms. Inouye's inability to accept that a vote was taken and she was not on the prevailing side.

SEE ATTACHED STATEMENT OF FACTS AND CIRCUMSTANCES- 2 pages

(page 1 of 3)

I declare under penalty of perjury under the laws of the State of California that the foregoing is true and correct.

Date: 11/23/20

Name: Helen F Fallon Signature: *Helen Fallon*

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At the July 14th MVCC Board Meeting, Board Chair Hanna announced Committee Appointments. Two Board Members, Selena Inouye and Andrea Ambriz complained that they had not been appointed to chair standing committees. Ms. Ambriz was asked by Board Member Stacey Shure (1st Vice Chair and Plum Chair) which committee meetings she had attended and if Ms. Ambriz could be more specific about which committee she wanted to chair. Ms. Ambriz response was evasive. She then referred to her fellow Board Members as old, white rich, privileged homeowners, further stating that as “a young woman of color” she deserved to chair a standing committee. Ms. Ambriz suddenly demanded of Ms. Shure if she had made a vulgar gesture. The majority of Board Members appeared to be confused about what exactly Ms. Ambriz was referring to. I was fully engaged in watching the meeting and had not seen anything. Ms. Shure also denied the allegation.

At that point, the only disparaging remarks had been made by Ms. Ambriz and there was no way to verify exactly what had happened since Zoom does not have an instant replay feature. Board Member Stacey Shure may have reacted to Ms. Ambriz’ remarks with a vulgar gesture, but no indisputable facts or objective witnesses were available. Before the situation escalated, Board Chair Hanna, also stated he hadn’t seen anything, took control of the meeting.

At the next MVCC Board meeting in August, Ms. Shure stated that after reviewing the tape, she saw that she had made a rude gesture and sincerely apologized for her lapse in judgement and took full responsibility for her actions.

As follows is my 9/5 e-mail to Drexel Heard the Executive Director of the LA Democratic Party regarding what transpired during the August MVCC Board meeting.

“ I attended the August Mar Vista Community Council Board meeting. At the meeting a large group of speakers identified themselves as a women’s democratic group (some stating that they were board members of this organization along with Andrea Ambriz and also organization officers). More than an hour of the MVCC meeting was wasted while these interlopers publicly berated the Chair, Board Member Stacy Shure and the community. Demands were made for resignation, comments included accusations of racism and favoritism. It was very apparent that many of these speakers were repeating and defending misinformation, were taking things out of context and had never bothered to verify the facts.

Having also attended the June and July MVCC Board meetings, I know that this organized attack on the Neighborhood Council stems from two separate incidents: 1) Ms. Ambriz not having been appointed as Plum chair, a position that Ms. Shure holds and 2) Ms. Shure’s very brief frustration (Ms. Shure offered a heartfelt apology for this lapse) with Ms. Ambriz after Ms. Ambriz yet again attacked Board Members as being old, white, out of touch and racially biased.

Ms. Ambriz constantly reminds everyone that as “a young woman of color” she is entitled to be rewarded but has yet to demonstrate that she will put in the work required to be rewarded. Her questions and comments during Board Meetings demonstrate that more often than not she simply hasn’t done her homework. She frequently engages in invoking “personal privilege” mistakenly believing that this entitles her to yet another opportunity to lecture her fellow board members on their shortcomings., while insisting that she is very well versed in Robert’s Rules.

I don’t understand exactly what young democrats are being taught about the democratic process but the lack of respect and disdain for process, rules and experience practiced by the members of this group is disheartening.”

At the September MVCC Board Meeting, a motion to censure Ms. Shure was submitted by four Board Members including Ms. Inouye and was placed for consideration on the Agenda. Ms. Shure did not attend the September meeting. Even though she had already publicly apologized in person at the August Board meeting, she submitted a second written apology that was read out loud. Almost 30 public comments were made, many by non-stakeholders affiliated with Andrea Ambriz. Every Board Member spoke to the motion with no time limit. My recollection is that approximately two hours of the meeting was devoted to the censure motion.

As follows is a portion of my public comment made during the 2 minutes each public speaker was allotted:

"I would remind you that (unlike other public commenters) at least I've actually attended Board Meetings. Repeatedly making provocative statements, should ensure that you are willing to give up reacting with self-righteous indignation when you finally get a reaction, but apparently Ms. Ambriz is not willing to take any responsibility for how she behaves. She repeatedly makes comments about the age and ethnicity of fellow board members, that they are old, rich, white privileged homeowners. No small wonder that Ms. Shure had a momentary lapse of judgement and in frustration made a gesture often made by LA drivers. This Board shouldn't waste any more time on an issue for which Ms. Ambriz has already received two very public apologies."

Ms. Inouye's grievance that the Board did not engage in a good faith determination when they did not support the censure motion is specious. Ms. Inouye's suggestion that a motion should have been brought forward at the July Board meeting to discipline Ms. Shure when no facts were in evidence would have been procedurally incorrect and a violation of the Brown Act. Ms. Inouye could have brought forward such a motion, to be heard at the August Board meeting, regarding the July incident, but she chose not to. Instead, she and 3 other Board members submitted a censure motion that was heard at the September Board meeting. Ms. Inouye's filing of a grievance, when the censure motion was extensively discussed, every member of the public who wished to speak was heard, all Board Members were given ample time to comment and the motion failed for lack of a majority, is in and of itself an example of how Ms. Inouye is not acting in good-faith and has submitted a grievance that does not meet the standards sent out in the grievance policy.



Helen Fallon, 11/23/20

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I declare under penalty of perjury under the laws of the State of California that the foregoing is true and correct.

Date: _____

Name: _____ Signature: 

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