

# CITY OF LOS ANGELES

## BOARD OF NEIGHBORHOOD COMMISSIONERS

VACANT  
PRESIDENT

JOY ATKINSON  
VICE PRESIDENT

LEONARD SHAFFER  
DEBBIE WEHBE  
MAGGIE QUIROZ  
KEREN WATERS  
RANDELL ERVING  
DOUGLAS EPPERHART

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  
COMMISSION EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT

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

April 11, 2024

**SENT VIA EMAIL**

Empowerment Congress Southwest Area Neighborhood  
Development Council (ECSWANDC)

### **RE: Release of the Empowerment Congress Southwest Area Neighborhood Development Council from Exhaustive Efforts**

Dear ECSWANDC Board Member(s):

On October 5, 2023 the Department of Neighborhood Empowerment (Department) sent a notification advising the Neighborhood Council had been placed in exhaustive efforts status. The Empowerment Congress Southwest Area Neighborhood Development Council (ECSWANDC) was placed into exhaustive efforts due to challenges meeting quorum. Achieving board quorum is required to conduct official business. The Neighborhood Council's inability to achieve quorum created a series of difficulties for it to successfully operate its administrative responsibilities, including the ability to fill board vacancies.

As you are aware, the Department is responsible for ensuring the successful operation of the system for Neighborhood Councils pursuant to Los Angeles City Charter Section 901 and the Los Angeles Administrative Code Sections 22.801 and 22.810.1. In carrying out its obligations, the Department works to ensure that all Neighborhood Councils comply with all applicable laws and regulations, including policies adopted by the Board of Neighborhood Commissioners.

After the Exhaustive Efforts notification, the ECSWANDC board members worked in collaboration with the Department to:

- Promote public participation in City governance by participating in two community elections events with focus on recruiting candidates for the neighborhood council selection, increasing public awareness and engagement, and encouraging gender diversity and inclusiveness.
- Identify and prioritize the community assets of the ECSWANDC to effectively promote and create awareness for the delivery of City services and City governance.
- Work with the Office of the City Clerk Funding team to make proxy payments on behalf of the Board, as Neighborhood Council funds are frozen when placed in Exhaustive Efforts.

- Continue the administrative and financial responsibilities of the Neighborhood Council to ensure its ongoing function.

The Department recognizes the work of the ECSWANDC board members in ensuring that there is continuous engagement throughout their service area, with a focused effort on filling vacant board seats. As a result of these efforts, the Department is releasing the ECSWANDC from exhaustive efforts status under the understanding that the ECSWANDC will continue to:

- Work towards planning a future board member Leadership Retreat.
- Focus on team building, skills development and strategic planning.
- Strengthen their leadership by scheduling monthly Executive Committee meetings, where officers can support the management and long term planning for the Neighborhood Council.
- Engage the neighborhood and stakeholders through outreach best practices.
- Attend and complete training(s) to ensure successful application of the Neighborhood Council Funding Policy and work with City Clerk's NC Funding Division to adhere to established funding procedures.
- Ensure that all board members complete their required essential trainings, as required to maintain board member voting eligibility.

The Department acknowledges your time and volunteer efforts in the community and looks forward to working with you in making the Empowerment Congress Southwest Area Neighborhood Development Council a strong and effective voice for your neighborhood, your community and your city. Please continue to work with your Neighborhood Empowerment Advocate Mario Hernandez for continued support. He may be reached at (213) 978-1551 or email at [Mario.Hernandez@lacity.org](mailto:Mario.Hernandez@lacity.org).

Thank you for your service!



Atziri Camarena  
Director of Civic Leadership

CC: Vanessa Serrano, General Manager, Department of Neighborhood Empowerment  
 Joy Atkinson, Board of Neighborhood Commissioner  
 Fernando Montes-Rodriguez, District Director, Office of Marqueece Harris-Dawson, Council Member of the 8th District  
 Vrenely Garcia, Events & Operations Director, Office of Marqueece Harris-Dawson, Council Member of the 8th District  
 Akinyele Turner, Field Deputy, Office of Marqueece Harris-Dawson, Council Member of the 8th District  
 R. Vanessa Alvarado, Deputy City Attorney, City Attorney's Office  
 Melvin Cañas, NC Funding Program Manager  
 Janet Hernandez, NC Funding Program Supervisor  
 Ana Cardoso, NC Funding Representative  
 Mario Hernandez, Neighborhood Empowerment Advocate