

# WESTWOOD NEIGHBORHOOD COUNCIL

March 8, 2023

Agenda Item # 12

## HOLLYWOOD STUDIO DISTRICT NEIGHBORHOOD COUNCIL

To :

February 15, 2023

Karen Bass, Mayor, City of Los Angeles  
Hugo Soto-Martinez, Councilmember, Council District 13  
Angie Aramayo, Director of Awareness & Engagement, DoNE  
Raquel Beltrán, General Manager, DoNE

As chair of the Hollywood Studio District Neighborhood Council I requested assistance from the Department of Neighborhood Empowerment (DoNE) to help us meet quorum. Several of our members had moved out of the district and I felt that re-entering exhaustive efforts would allow us to continue to serve while recruiting new board members.

During the public board meeting on February 8, 2023, DoNE informed us that attendance for an event sponsored by the non-profit arm of the Los Angeles Sheriff's Department was mandatory for all sitting board members and that our board would be using our community's funding to sponsor the event which was taking place outside of our district. This was DoNE's "solution" for new board member recruitment and community engagement.

Our local DoNE representative, Mr. Mario Hernandez, threatened our removal from the board if we did not attend. Myself and several other board members immediately objected to this mandate. It is disgraceful that DoNE would without our consent allocate our community's tax dollars to support this organization. Especially with no vote, board consideration, or public comment. Furthermore, it is reprehensible that DoNE would force public officials, including Black members, to choose between expulsion or attending an event hosted by law enforcement.

In a respectful and diplomatic fashion we offered Mr. Hernandez multiple alternatives for youth-oriented community events which are not associated with hate or violence and actually take place in the district. He refused to budge.

My grandfather, a proud Jewish-American fought against Nazi tyranny as member of the U.S. Army. He lost nearly his entire extended family during the Holocaust. When he returned home, he dedicated himself not just to Jewish causes but to the Civil Rights movement. He was there during the March on Washington and watched Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. deliver his most famous speech. He believed that only solidarity could defeat hate. He was right.

In the spirit of his enduring legacy and all those who have dedicated their lives to the righteous and noble creed of justice, equity, and good trouble: I have decided to resign from the board with immediate effect and am humbled to share that our entire executive committee and a majority of board members have chosen to resign in solidarity.

I'm proud of the work we've accomplished during my tenure. We were the first to pass a comprehensive strategic plan for the Hollywood Studio District. DoNE lauded our exceptional work in doing so. We established a permanent HSDNC community garden, joined alongside nearly a dozen non-profits for local events, recruited volunteers from nearby universities, picked over 200 bags of trash, installed solar-powered lights outside a historic children's theatre, and worked alongside CalTrans to take on graffiti and bulky items. Our work will continue outside of the HSDNC.

Thank you to my neighbors for the opportunity to serve. It has been my highest honor. Black Lives Matter.

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