

Grievance Response Form

Before submitting this form, please make sure to review the [Grievance Policy](#).

Grievance Number

254

Neighborhood Council Responding

Porter Ranch

Authorized Representative

ASAAD ALNAJJAR

Email

asaadalnajjar@prnc.org

Grievant responded to

BECKY LEVEQUE

Board Member

Yes

Number of Grievances previously filed by this Grievant this calendar year

0

Last three years

0

After receiving a certified Grievance from the Department, a Neighborhood Council must, at its next regular or special meeting, but not more than 60 calendar days from the communication from the Department, take one of the following actions:

Grievance Review by Neighborhood Council

N/A - Grievant is a Board Member

What specific bylaw, rule, regulation, code, policy or directive is relevant to and supports the response to the grievance?

The existing bylaws of the Porter Ranch Neighborhood Council specifically Articles V and XIV, and the current grievance policy published by the Department of Neighborhood Empowerment (DONE) to support PRNC in its response to this grievance.

What is the nature of the response to the grievance?

Item 1: The PRNC believes that this grievance # 254 as submitted is defective, especially with respect to the witness statements, and is without merit.

With respect to her complaint, Becky Leveque stated that: 1) no misconduct (on her part) was proven, and 2) that she was not given a chance to correct any misconduct. Our response is that: 1) the misconduct was proven, and 2) any need to correct misconduct would be related to correcting her related behavior in the future. In other words, she could not retroactively correct past misconduct, but could avoid issues at following meetings (including those that will occur in the future) by not being disruptive and violating the Code of Conduct.

Item 2: The grievance policy of DONE is found in Section 22.818, Article 3 of Chapter 28 of the Los Angeles Administrative Code. Subsection 4 (C) of the policy states:

“The Department will only process a witness statement filed on a Witness Statement Form if the information contained is within the personal knowledge of the witness and relates to the facts and circumstances surrounding the Grievance. Each Witness Statement Form will be limited to one page and must be signed by the witness under penalty of perjury. A Grievant may file no more than three Witness Statement Forms in connection with any Grievance.”

The first witness statement (composed by Maria Fisk) and submitted by Becky Leveque should not have been accepted by DONE as it does not conform with the policy set form in 4 (C), specifically as it is five pages long, and not within the one-page set limit.

Also, the statement of Maria Fisk is additionally non-conforming as it does not so much relate to the facts and circumstances of the censure vote agenda item proceedings alleged by Ms. Leveque to be misconduct by the PRNC, but

instead is more akin to presenting legal advice and improperly offers an opinion and interpretation of what Ms. Fisk interpreted occurred when the Board took up the censure matter on September 9, 2020.

Item 3: The second witness statement, submitted by Paula Boland, is also problematic and is out of order violating the grievance policy for a few reasons. First, like the first witness statement, a number of additional pages were attached to it (most including questionable content from the NextDoor website (nextdoor.com) initiated couple days prior to the September 9 scheduled meeting). Secondly, Ms. Boland's comments do not conform to the facts and circumstances of the subject matter of the proceedings. Instead, we are dismayed that her written statement includes several inflammatory, accusatory, and frankly rude comments attacking the elected board members. Her inflammatory words are more of an inappropriate scolding and certainly do not reflect what would be expected in a normal witness statement or testimony supporting the filing of a grievance.

Specifically, Ms. Boland stated that she "cannot fathom this sort of sanctioned community meeting as I heard few facts and ethics". We have a hard time understanding what she even meant when she states she "heard few...ethics". She berated the Board with additional rude and unnecessary comments including:

- They (the Board) "needed to hear" (i.e., be educated about) "the City's policy; and
- That the Board needed to "be monitored for propriety"; and
- That she "implored the City to review this non moderated meeting" and "educate" us about our "duties and protocol".

It is our understanding that the September 9 meeting was the first or at best one of only a few PRNC meetings Ms. Boland attended. If true, it reflects our concern that she was brought in as a former member of the Assembly to add gravitas to the grievance. Instead, she took the opportunity to slight and scold the Board inappropriately. Adding insult to injury, she slandered the Board when she blindly parroted the talking points of several of the NextDoor commenters that a majority of the PRNC Board Members had not been "even elected". While rudely attacking the Board, she had no qualms about stating her opinion—ironically, without any factual basis—that the Board "was more interested in their personal feelings rather than facts or the community". The reality is that neighborhood council board members throughout the City of Los Angeles devote significant time—as volunteers—in support of their communities. To suggest that PRNC Board Members are any less dedicated to our neighborhood is an affront to our extensive contribution of both our time, energy, and efforts in support of the Porter Ranch community.

Item 4: The last witness statement is also concerning and problematic. Mr. Dale Penn (A PALS Board Member) wrote with substantial bias in her favor. His words dramatically and unnecessarily exaggerated the tone of the discussion on this agenda item to the point that he is not a credible witness. Specifically, in describing the debate on this item, Mr. Penn stated that he "was appalled at this public attack". He repeated the word 'attack' or 'attacked' three times. He even stated that Ms. Leveque was "attacked"...by an "angry cohort". The discussion on September 9, was serious of course, but transpired without anger. In fact, the Board Members tone of voice could better be described as stoic or deliberate. Ms. Leveque was certainly not "attacked". PRNC Board Members are shocked for this vicious attack by a PALS Board Member whom received funding that same night by PRNC board members and turns around later with slanderous attacks. This remains to be addressed by PALS Board.

Item 5: With respect to the content of the grievance taken from the NextDoor app/website, a substantial portion of the website consists of little more than a gossip site, with many posts reflecting a winner-take-all, no holds barred discussion. Of the more than 100 comments on this (one) Next Door thread alone, the posts that were edited and hand-selected by Becky Leveque (a NextDoor LEAD) to submit with the grievance do not include many of the other posts added by some of the persons cited in the grievance. These other comments include statements in support of Becky Leveque, such as recommending that we all as PRNC Board resign or to have our pay withheld (we are of course all volunteers). A number of the NextDoor commenters who supported Ms. Leveque did not attend either meeting and/or did not know anything about the situation. For example, Liz Hecht-Ward, whose words were included in the grievance, stated that she did not know why Ms. Leveque was being censured. She did not even attend the July meeting, and stated that she did not "know any of the answers". Yet, the comments of many who did not attend either the July or the September meeting are included in the grievance as witnesses.

Many of the NextDoor comments submitted with the grievance and/or found on the related thread are little more than gossip and/or hearsay, and are not factual with respect to the censure vote. Additionally, Next Door commenters can live anywhere and register as part of a neighborhood they do not actually live in. Therefore, it would be inappropriate to even consider them with the grievance as an unknown number are not (necessarily) stakeholders in Porter Ranch or even the people shown in their NextDoor profiles.

Given that the NextDoor comments are attached to a witness statement, that witness form should be rejected and not be considered for the above reason and because it makes the form longer than the one-page limit. The other five-page witness statement should also not be considered as its length violates the established policy as well. The third witness statement—Mr. Penn's—includes such exaggerated, slanderous language as to be hard to take seriously.

Item 6: The transcripts Becky Leveque attached to the grievance and to the official record document are lies—this is a fact

and the only way to say it--she told at more than one meeting related to the original discussion of the traffic signal at Wilbur and Rinaldi.

The entire situation would have been avoided if Ms. Leveque had been present at the PRNC meetings held at the Porter Ranch Community School or read the meeting minutes that she was absent or left early where the business owner involved in planned construction at the intersection of Wilbur and Rinaldi discussed in depth his pending plans. Instead, on July 8, Ms. Leveque erroneously stated that a community meeting had not occurred, when in fact she had just not attended. That apparently led her to maliciously insinuate that Mr. Alnajjar had in some way acted inappropriately or was inappropriately connected to work planned for the intersection. Her own disruptive comments and behavior led to the censure action against her.

This is concerning as Becky Leveque feels that her conduct and statements at the July 8 meeting were not disruptive. However, reviewing the transcripts SHE PROVIDED in the grievance, it is clear Ms. Leveque fabricated parts of her comments. For example, in HER transcript and in the recording of the Zoom call, Becky stated that “I live at the corner of Wilbur and Rinaldi and I have picked up a lot of dead bodies off that corner”.

PRNC Board Member David Lasher was very concerned about these extremely specific comments and requested the related records from the LAPD. To her comment of having “picked up a lot of dead bodies” there, according to the LAPD’s Valley Traffic Division, there is no record of even ONE fatality at this intersection going back nearly 20 years. How can Ms. Leveque have picked up A body, much less “a lot of dead bodies” in an intersection where no fatality accident has occurred in at least two decades?! Additionally, while Ms. Leveque lives in the vicinity and there are homes nearby, she does NOT live “at that corner” the corner of Wilbur and Rinaldi. Moreover, how would Ms. Leveque be in a position to pick up deceased victims of accidents? She works for an insurance company—not the LAFD, the coroner, or AMR ambulance.

Additionally, on several occasions, when asked about how she would have been involved in recovering bodies or assisting at accidents, she said that her comments in that regard were “a figure of speech”, adding that she “didn’t do it with my hands, but I was there”. Becky Leveque could not possibly have been on the scene of a number of accidents at the intersection of Wilbur and Rinaldi where a number of people died in traffic accidents...when NO ONE is known to have died in a traffic accident at this intersection!! It is an outlandish comment to make, much less stick to in the face of the actual facts!

If she lies and exaggerates about where she lives, what she personally experienced, and about her own actual actions—falsely stating she was involved in the emergency response to a number of fatality accidents THAT NEVER OCCURRED, all in support of (upgrading) a traffic light at this intersection—it is rational to believe that Becky Leveque felt that Asaad Alnajjar, as a City employee involved in a related field (Street Lighting), had acted in some way against her interests in regard to the signal improvements at the intersection. She insinuated as much on July 8 when she referred to Asaad Alnajjar as someone who lives “at the other end of our neighborhood council district” and isn’t “daily affected”. She went on to ask him where he worked. While Mr. Alnajjar humored her by choosing to answer the question, the insinuation was clear.

Moments later, Becky insulted and repeatedly interrupted PRNC President Issam Najm, Mr. Alnajjar, and board member David Lasher. She made statements as if there had not been a community meeting to discuss the signal upgrades at the intersection and the new building planned for the corner, but the fact is that she did not attend the PRNC meeting where the issue was discussed with the business owner. After interrupting her fellow board members and making somewhat biting statements, she sardonic finished her last interruption saying, “I’m just sorry that community meetings aren’t for the community”. Her rude, snarky, and disruptive comments were unnecessary—and based in part on fabrications. This continued uncivilized behavior on July 8 led to the censure action.

Item 7: Although unrelated to the grievance itself, the PRNC Board feels it is important to address the unsubstantiated and inappropriate comment of an individual Board member that occurred on September 9, 2020 during the censure discussion. The PRNC Board condemns any and all accusations of Anti-Semitism and the remark was not made on behalf of the PRNC, nor does it represent the opinion or position of the PRNC Board in any way.

What remedy is suggested?

Given the items listed above, the PRNC believes that this grievance # 254 is defective as submitted, especially with respect to the (3) witness statements, and is without merit. Therefore, the PRNC recommends that the proper remedy for BONC is to dismiss the grievance.

The PRNC Board is composed of dedicated professional individuals who understand the rules and the Code of Conduct they are expected to follow. This grievance is without merit as the Board followed the correct set censure procedure in complete coordination with DONE and the concurrence of LA City Attorney Office related to censuring a board member. Moreover, all the three (3) witness statements submitted by Becky Leveque do not conform to DONE policy and should be excluded for the other reasons stated herein as well.

Our remedy herein is for BONC to REJECT this baseless grievance.

Supporting Documents

[Witness Form, David Lasher.pdf](#)

To SUBMIT, please click "Save" on top right corner.

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