


MOTION

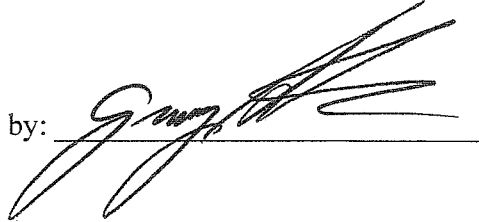
Currently, the only required training courses for neighborhood council board members are ethics and funding program administration. The latter is only for Treasurers and second signatories. Many activists within the Neighborhood Council system have expressed concerns that new board members will be ill equipped to take their seats and become effective community leaders unless DONE implements a new training regimen.

I THEREFORE MOVE that the Council DIRECT the Department of Neighborhood Empowerment and the City Attorney to report back to council with a plan for the implementation of a training program for Neighborhood Council board members that covers the following topics: (1) Ethics and Legal Issues (including the Brown Act, Public Records Act and Conflicts of Interest); (2) Workplace Violence and Sexual Harassment; (3) Funding Program; (4) City Government Basics; (5) Parliamentary Process; and (6) Community Leadership. The report should consider implementing the training program on the web, include a discussion of which board member classification types should complete each training course, a discussion about which courses should be mandatory and which should be optional and consider a defined process for sanctioning board members who fail to complete the required training.

Presented by:


PAUL KREKORIAN
Councilmember, 2nd District

Seconded by:



MOTION

The Neighborhood Council system has grown and matured over the last ten years. The needs of the system have shifted, and the role and mission of the Department of Neighborhood Empowerment (DONE) must be evaluated to best serve the Neighborhood Councils and promote their mission of public engagement and community empowerment.

DONE was originally created to establish Neighborhood Councils and foster their development. Ten years and 93 councils later, DONE must now focus on maintaining a robust, effective, accountable and transparent NC funding program.

The Neighborhood Council Funding Program gives Neighborhood Councils resources to address the immediate concerns of their community and enhance their neighborhood. Management of the funding program has been challenging for DONE, but out of necessity, DONE has reorganized and implemented several reforms to the funding program. Working closely with the Council's Committee on Education and Neighborhoods, the Office of the Controller and the Neighborhood Councils and their stakeholders, DONE has streamlined the demand warrant process, standardized forms and reporting, and increased accountability. DONE is also exploring the feasibility of an online system that would accept demand warrants, provide real time account information, and assist treasurers with reporting and financial management.

As the needs of the Neighborhood Councils change, the structure of the funding program may also need to change. The model established over ten years ago may no longer be the most appropriate. For more than a year, the Committee on Education and Neighborhoods has drawn extensive input from the public, including Neighborhood Councils and their stakeholders, to determine the best ideas for policy changes to make the Neighborhood Council system more effective, efficient, transparent and accountable. Among other things, the Committee conducted two public forums, a detailed online survey, and multiple informational committee hearings. The recommendations in this motion are the product of that outreach effort.

I THEREFORE MOVE that the Council, subject to the approval of the Mayor:

1. INSTRUCT the Department of Neighborhood Empowerment, with assistance from the Controller to report back in 90 days on the status of the Neighborhood Funding Program and DONE's efforts to (a) clarify the encumbrance process; and (b) standardize financial templates, forms, and reporting; and (c) streamline approvals and management of the program; and (d) increase accountability.
2. ADOPT a policy that requires all Neighborhood Councils to utilize the budget and reconciliation templates provided by the Department of Neighborhood Empowerment and adhere to all budget and reconciliation deadlines.
3. ADOPT a policy that requires all Neighborhood Councils to conform to the accounting system prescribed by the Department of Neighborhood Empowerment.
4. ADOPT a policy that empowers the General Manager and Board of Neighborhood Commissioners to freeze funds if a Neighborhood Council does not comply with Council policy and Department of Neighborhood Empowerment mandates, or if any of the following circumstances exist: (a) the Neighborhood Council has failed to submit a budget in a timely manner; (b) an audit of the Neighborhood Council is past due; (c) the Neighborhood Council has made prohibited or inappropriate purchases; (d) the Neighborhood Council is not in

compliance with training requirements; (e) the Neighborhood Council Board does not have a Treasurer; or (f) the Neighborhood Council Board is deemed dysfunctional.

5. CONTINUE a policy to prohibit the rollover of unencumbered funds and DIRECT the Department of Neighborhood Empowerment, with assistance from the City Administrative Officer, Chief Legislative Analyst, and City Attorney, to report back on alternative funding models, including a grant based funding system.
6. DIRECT the Department of Neighborhood Empowerment, with assistance from the City Administrative Officer, Chief Legislative Analyst, City Attorney, Controller, and Board of Neighborhood Commissioners, to report back in 90 days with a mechanism for Neighborhood Councils to request rollover funds on a projects by project basis and as deemed appropriate by the Board of Neighborhood Commissioners or a committee comprised of representatives from the CLA, CAO, and DONE that (a) defines the types of projects that will qualify for rollover funds; and (b) details the application and approval process; and (c) establishes deadlines to complete an approved project.
7. DIRECT the Department of Neighborhood Empowerment, with assistance from the City Administrative Officer, Chief Legislative Analyst, City Attorney, and Controller, to report back in 90 days on equipment purchases made by Neighborhood Councils in fiscal year 2010-11 for city and proprietary departments and guidelines to maximize the benefit to the department and the Neighborhood Council.
8. DIRECT the Department of Neighborhood Empowerment, with assistance from the City Administrative Officer, Chief Legislative Analyst, and the Information Technology Agency, to report back in 180 days on the feasibility of developing an electronic system for the Neighborhood Council Funding program that will (a) integrate purchase card and FMIS data for real time tracking of expenditures and fund balances; (b) accept electronic submission and approval of budgets, demand warrants and reconciliations; and (c) provide an interface to track and create financial statements and treasurer reports for the board.
9. DIRECT the Department of Neighborhood Empowerment, upon adoption of these policies, to immediately notify all Neighborhood Councils of the changes to the policies and procedures that govern the Neighborhood Council Funding Program, and to report back in 90 days on their outreach efforts.

Presented by: _____
PAUL KREKORIAN
Councilmember, 2nd District

Seconded by: _____

MOTION

The Department of Neighborhood Empowerment (DONE) functions as a day-to-day advisor to the Neighborhood Councils of the City of Los Angeles, provides training and guidance to new Neighborhood Councils and board members, and, when issues arise it has the authority to correct abuses and sanction against bad behavior.

Our city's system of organized neighborhood activism stands at a crossroads. The system is no longer nascent, but DONE's work to assist the neighborhood councils in their advocacy, realize efficiencies and train neighborhood council board members how to work within the sometimes labyrinthine city bureaucracy – as well as administer the neighborhood council funding program – is unceasing.

Many neighborhood council leaders have expressed their desire to see a sweeping reform of the neighborhood council system and the Department of Neighborhood Empowerment that puts neighborhood councils in charge of their own destinies and grants much greater autonomy for day-to-day functions.

This objective necessitates a system that balances the City's need for orderly administration with the desire by neighborhood activists for greater autonomy, and also allows the next generation of neighborhood leaders to benefit from the guidance and wisdom of the leaders that continue to shape the system, and our City, today.

Over the past 18 months, the Education and Neighborhoods Committee and my office have embarked on a mission to collect input and thoughts on ways to reform and streamline the Neighborhood Council system and governance structure. After conducting dozens of Committee meetings on this subject, as well as two regional town halls attended by over 250 stakeholders, combined with an exhaustive and extensive survey that asked more than 80 questions, we have reached the conclusion that a regionalized system of governance, whether by ad hoc or standing committees, that provides self-governance and autonomy for Neighborhood Councils is the preferred and most efficient way to reform the Neighborhood Council system. Of the 217 respondents who responded to the survey my office conducted earlier this year (41% of whom identified themselves as neighborhood council members), a wide majority (69%) called for some type of regional governance structure.

Further, a model already exists for the implementation of this regional approach. City planning decisions are considered, analyzed and implemented by Area Planning Commissions without the direct involvement of the Mayor's office or the City Council.

I THEREFORE MOVE that the Council DIRECT the Department of Neighborhood Empowerment, the Chief Legislative Analyst, the City Administrative Officer and the City Attorney to report back in 6 months with a plan to implement, in the next budget year, a structure of governance and administration that provides greater autonomy and self-governance for neighborhood councils and reduces DONE's workload. The report should consider transferring responsibility for many aspects of the operations of the neighborhood council system, including, but not limited to, funding, elections, communications between the city and its neighborhood councils, outreach between Neighborhood Councils and stakeholders, dispute resolution and training, to permanent or as-needed regional authorities or bodies that can operate with the oversight of the Department of Neighborhood Empowerment.

Presented by:



PAUL KREKORIAN
Councilmember, 2nd District

Seconded by:



JUN 14 2011

ORIGINAL


MOTION

When a stakeholder files a complaint against the action(s) taken by a Neighborhood Council, there is no system-wide standardized process for handling that grievance. Furthermore, processes that do exist are established by the Neighborhood Council against which a grievance is filed, which leads many stakeholders to question the validity of Neighborhood Council actions when it comes to controversial issues.

In those circumstances, it is critical for the integrity of the Neighborhood Council system that the complaints be handled swiftly, transparently and fairly.

I THEREFORE MOVE that the Council DIRECT the Department of Neighborhood Empowerment, the City Attorney, City Administrative Officer and Chief Legislative Analyst to report back to Council in 90 days with a plan for the implementation of a system of regional complaint panels composed of board members of various Neighborhood Councils from similar regions that will convene to address stakeholder and board member grievances as-needed, and at the request of the General Manager for the Department of Neighborhood Empowerment. The report should consider guidelines for panel selection, implementation and range of authority.

Presented by:



PAUL KREKORIAN
Councilmember, 2nd District

Seconded by:

