



# Motion for the SORO NC to submit a CIS to Council File 20-0990 regarding mandatory trainings for Neighborhood Councils, and write letters to Councilmembers Koretz and Wesson requesting that they reconsider their vote on the final motion contained in the Council File

**Agenda Item:** GB051922-01  
**Date:** May 19, 2022  
**Proposed By:** Executive Committee  
**Include motion in Consent Agenda?** NO

**Michael Lynn**  
President

**Ken Blaker**  
Vice-President

**Terrence Gomes**  
Treasurer

**Baila Romm**  
Secretary

**Jon Liberman**  
Corresponding Secretary

---

## Background

City Council voted on May 13, 2022, to require additional mandatory training for all neighborhood council Board Members and for all neighborhood council Committee Members. This action was based on a joint report dated March 8, 2022, that was authored by Raquel Beltran, General Manager of the Department of Neighborhood Empowerment, and Capri Maddox, General Manager of Civil, Human Rights, and Equity Department, which recommended the implementation of mandatory training.

Following the legislative history of this council file, it is clear that this action is a massive overreach from what was originally proposed. Its original intent was to have DONE provide protocols for how neighborhood councils deal with gender identity and gender expression when a board member or stakeholder had transitioned or made known that they have changed their name or preferred pronouns. Candidly, this could have been handled by an instruction from DONE that such persons will be identified by their chosen name or preferred pronoun.

As a neighborhood council we agree with the desired outcome that all persons be treated with respect and identified as they prefer. However, we need to focus on the impact on the volunteer with respect to the number of mandatory trainings required and the amount of time that is involved in these trainings.

**South Robertson  
Neighborhoods Council**

PO Box 35836  
Los Angeles, CA 90035

P: (310) 295-9920  
E: info@soronc.org

soronc.org





We need to look to the formation of the neighborhood council system and the reason that they exist. Approximately twenty years ago, several sections of the city felt that the city no longer represented community values and that they might be better off by their communities forming their own incorporated cities. This resulted in the City of Los Angeles taking a critical look at the problem and developing a system of neighborhood councils to provide greater communication by and between the City and the community. This was created by a change to the Los Angeles City Charter which created these neighborhood councils. Each neighborhood council was designed to cover all facets of the community with the diversity of the community and the individual character of each community being the focus.

Each neighborhood council is comprised of committees dealing with specific areas of concern to the city and to the community. These committees are comprised of volunteer community stakeholders and elected volunteer neighborhood council Board Members. Each neighborhood council has a governing board who votes on motions brought forward by the individual neighborhood council committees. All the activities of the committees are performed by VOLUNTEERS who are not compensated in any fashion for the time they devote in the service to their community and to the City of Los Angeles.

Although it is couched in terms of providing training to assist Board Members performing their tasks, it must be remembered that these Board Members and Committee members are volunteers who have outside lives, have jobs, attend school, or have other competing interests on their available time. A Board Member currently must undergo at least three sets of mandatory training prior to being able to function as a Board Member. We are overtraining volunteers with the result that many well-qualified people either do not volunteer, or prematurely leave their position, due to the time demands of these ever-increasing mandatory trainings.

## Proposed Motion

That the SORO NC:

- a. submit a Community Impact Statement (CIS) to the city on CF 20-0990 requesting that the city reconsider its final vote of May 13, 2022 and refer the matter back to committee with instructions that the committee come back with alternatives that respect the volunteer nature of Board and Committee membership on



neighborhood councils by going back to the original intent of having DONE prepare a protocol as to how neighborhood councils proceed when a Board or Committee member has transitioned or made known that they have changed their name or preferred pronoun.

- b. send the proposed letter to Councilmember Paul Koretz (CD#5) and Councilmember Herb Wesson, Jr. (CD#10) asking them to reconsider their vote, bringing the matter back to the City Council to be referred back to committee.

## Considerations

Committee review:  
*(highly recommended)*

Votes For: 5

Against: 0

Amount previously allocated in Committee's working budget:  
*(applies to funding motions only)*

\$ N/A

### Arguments for:

1. The strength of the system of neighborhood councils is the volunteer nature of the system.
2. Adding mandatory trainings is not needed if you review the legislative history of the file.
3. Volunteers are being deterred by the time required for mandatory trainings.
4. DONE is understaffed and this would increase the burden on individual employees of DONE without guaranteeing any preferred outcomes by requiring the training.

### Arguments against:

1. The General Manager of DONE feels that this is a good program



**south robertson  
neighborhoods council**

City of Los Angeles Certified Neighborhood Council

PO Box 35836

Los Angeles, CA 90035

(310) 295-9920

[info@soronc.org](mailto:info@soronc.org)



[soronc.org](http://soronc.org)

Honorable Paul Koretz  
5<sup>th</sup> Council District  
City of Los Angeles  
200 N. Spring Street, Suite 440  
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Honorable Herb Wesson  
10<sup>th</sup> Council District  
City of Los Angeles  
200 N Spring Street, Suite 420  
Los Angeles, CA 90012

May 19, 2022

Re: Council file 20-0990

Dear Councilmembers:

City Council voted on May 13, 2022, to require additional mandatory training for all neighborhood council Board Members and for all neighborhood council Committee Members. This action was based on a joint report dated March 8, 2022, that was authored by Raquel Beltran, General Manager of the Department of Neighborhood Empowerment, and Capri Maddox, General Manager of Civil, Human Rights, and Equity Department, which recommended the implementation of mandatory training.

Following the legislative history of this council file, it is clear that this action is a massive overreach from what was originally proposed. Its original intent was to have DONE provide protocols for how neighborhood councils deal with gender identity and gender expression when a board member or stakeholder had transitioned or made known that they have changed their name or preferred pronouns. Candidly, this could have been handled by an instruction from DONE that such persons will be identified by their chosen name or preferred pronoun.

As a neighborhood council we agree with the desired outcome that all persons be treated with respect and identified as they prefer. However, we need to focus on the impact on the volunteer with respect to the number of mandatory trainings required and the amount of time that is involved in these trainings.

We need to look to the formation of the neighborhood council system and the reason that they exist. Approximately twenty years ago, several sections of the city felt that the



## south robertson neighborhoods council

City of Los Angeles Certified Neighborhood Council

PO Box 35836

Los Angeles, CA 90035

(310) 295-9920

[info@soronc.org](mailto:info@soronc.org)



[soronc.org](http://soronc.org)

city no longer represented community values and that they might be better off by their communities forming their own incorporated cities. This resulted in the City of Los Angeles taking a critical look at the problem and developing a system of neighborhood councils to provide greater communication by and between the City and the community. This was created by a change to the Los Angeles City Charter which created these neighborhood councils. Each neighborhood council was designed to cover all facets of the community with the diversity of the community and the individual character of each community being the focus.

Each neighborhood council is comprised of committees dealing with specific areas of concern to the city and to the community. These committees are comprised of volunteer community stakeholders and elected volunteer neighborhood council Board Members. Each neighborhood council has a governing board who votes on motions brought forward by the individual neighborhood council committees. All the activities of the committees are performed by VOLUNTEERS who are not compensated in any fashion for the time they devote in the service to their community and to the City of Los Angeles.

Although it is couched in terms of providing training to assist Board Members performing their tasks, it must be remembered that these Board Members and Committee members are volunteers who have outside lives, have jobs, attend school, or have other competing interests on their available time. A Board Member currently must undergo at least three sets of mandatory training prior to being able to function as a Board Member. We are overtraining volunteers with the result that many well-qualified people either do not volunteer, or prematurely leave their position, due to the time demands of these ever-increasing mandatory trainings.

Sincerely,

President  
South Robertson Neighborhoods Council

[President@soronc.org](mailto:President@soronc.org)