

Grievance Board - Empower LA  
200 N Spring St., #2005  
LA City Hall  
Los Angeles, CA 90012

RE: Grievance with SONC/Appointment of Sarah Olds/Board member for Resident Area 5

November 6, 2018

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing to support the grievance being filed by Susan Collins, this is my witness statement to the appointment of Sarah Olds as a Resident Board Member to the Sherman Oaks Neighborhood Council.

On October 29<sup>th</sup>, I attended the Homeless Outreach Committee, which is a sub committee with SONC. As a group of us were discussing the housing sites proposed by SONC, which was Item 5 on the agenda, a young lady rudely interrupted us and said “we needed to bring the conversation back to what we are really here for” and then kept talking about bringing showers to the homeless in Sherman Oaks, and never stopped to consider the fact that we were in middle of our open forum. I was taken aback as I had never seen this person before and to so rudely try to steer the conversation in her direction, was not good form for the meeting, since those stakeholders who were talking, had the floor. After we told her that we had been given the time to speak, she kept talking about what she wanted to do for the homeless (blanket drive, protein bars, showers), but seemed to not know anything about what SONC has done in the past for the homeless. During the time of the meeting – she was very pro-homeless, still interrupting the other stakeholders who were given the floor to speak from the board and behaving more like a cheerleader than a stakeholder.

That evening I went home to read the Agenda for the Executive Committee meeting that was happening the next evening and was surprised to see the name of this person from the Homeless Outreach Committee, that we had just met, being nominated for a position for Resident Area 5. I was not aware the position was open, but then to find out this pro-homeless stakeholder was being appointed, to me, felt like they were trying to recruit

like minded individuals of the SONC Board and stake the deck. In the past couple months, they just swore in Candy Williams, who is also a homeless advocate, and has her own Non-Profit for homeless women.

On October 30, I attended the Executive Board Meeting to object to the appointment of Sarah Olds to the Board on SONC for Resident Area 5. I filled out the required speaker card marking to speak on item 4B on the agenda. Myself and about 18-20 other people turned out to object. When 4B came up on the agenda – Sarah Olds proceeded to talk about how she wants to help the homeless, her ideas, and again, the pro-homeless person acted more of a cheerleader than a stakeholder. I was called to speak and not only objected her appointment but has mentioned that I had never seen her before at any meeting before October 29<sup>th</sup>, and that she was not representing the diversity of Sherman Oaks. The Executive Board proceeded to push her appointment thru to the SONC Board even though the majority of the stakeholders objected at that meeting objected, and stakeholders asked that they postpone the vote till more candidates can be presented. Every stakeholder that spoke objected to her appointment, but we later found out that Ron Ziff stated to Susan Collins that she was the only one who objected to Sarah Olds being appointed. How can that be when we all have speaker cards that objected and even spoke on it?

On November 5<sup>th</sup>, I attend the SONC Regular Board Meeting, Item 11 on the agenda was the Introduction of Sarah Olds. I was there to once again object to her appointment to the board and filled out a speaker card. Sarah Olds was given time to speak on her behalf, and this was not the same pro-homeless cheerleader we had seen at the other two meetings. She gave a speech of how she was diverse, she stated she was not sure how she felt about certain homeless issues and tried to come across as someone who would be more balanced when voting on homeless issues and other hot topics that came across the boards desk. When I spoke, I stated that she did a 180 as this was not who she presented herself on the last two meetings. For me, she showed a lacked integrity at that point. She changed her tune when she realized that a large number of people objected her appointment. It was as if she had been coached to change her approach, demeanor and tune about being pro-homeless. Again there was an overwhelming group speaking against her appointment, but the board passed her through.

My Objection is this: The board is predominately pro-homeless, and does not reflect the diversity of the community. They appointed another pro-

homeless advocate in less than 3 months. The hot button in Sherman Oaks is the 2 proposed homeless sites and we need someone on the board to speak more for the stakeholders and who will look out for our interest, and bring ideas that can represent everyone who lives in Sherman Oaks. I have lived in Sherman Oaks for 18 years, and have been active with the board for 2 years. I am concerned that for 2 years, Sarah Olds will be on a board that does not reflect me or my neighbors views.

Thank you,

Pamela Harris  
18 year Stakeholder  
14210 Dickens Street, #13  
Sherman Oaks, CA 91403