

City of Los Angeles

CALIFORNIA

HOLLY L. WOLCOTT
CITY CLERK

—
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EXECUTIVE OFFICER



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MAYOR

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Administrative Services Division

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—
MAYRA PUCHALSKI
DIVISION MANAGER

cityclerk.lacity.org

June 8, 2020

via email

Don Larson
President, Northridge Beautification Foundation

Dear Mr. Larson:

I hope this email finds you well.

The purpose of this letter is to request your cooperation related to a Neighborhood Council Funding Program (Program) matter brought to our attention by the Northridge West Neighborhood Council (NWNC).

The NWNC communicated to our Program concerns they have regarding the completion of a number of community projects funded through Neighborhood Purpose Grants (NPGs) they awarded to the Northridge Beautification Foundation (Foundation). The concerns are based on their inability to validate that the projects have been executed as stated in the NPG applications submitted by the Foundation. Multiple attempts by the NWNC on project completion inquiries have been made with the Foundation since about June 2019, but have not been fully addressed.

One of the responsibilities of the NC Funding Program is to monitor the use of City public funds, including NPG funds. As a result, we seek your cooperation in demonstrating the completion of the NPG projects funded by the NWNC listed below:

- (1) \$3,000 for the purpose of cleaning and improving areas in the NWNC community, such as Devonshire, Tampa or other busy and highly visible thoroughfares. *Check 102802 was issued on 6/1/2018.*
- (2) \$4,000 for the maintenance of the topiary installed in 2018, including trimming, weeding, and watering. *Check 105527 was issued on 5/31/2019.*
- (3) \$5,000 for a six-week program to clean and improve areas in the NWNC community, modeled after the Northridge Great Street Project. *Check 105528 was issued on 5/31/2019.*

We request that you please contact our Program within the next 14 days of the date of this letter to discuss this matter. We would like your cooperation in addressing the concerns as follows.

1. Provide a copy of an aggregated report detailing the actual breakdown of the expenditures for each NPG project.
2. Provide proof of the deliverables for the projects, i.e. any photos showing the projects now completed or while underway, etc.

Your immediate response is greatly appreciated. Please be aware that insufficient response to our request may result in our inability to consider any future requests for funding by the Foundation from the Neighborhood Council Funding Program, among other possible measures.

Please contact us at Clerk.NCFunding@lacity.org or (213)978-1058.

Thank you,

Melvin Cañas
Neighborhood Council Funding Program Manager
melvin.canas@lacity.org

CC: Mayra Puchalski, Division Chief, Office of the City Clerk
Cheryl Hass, NC Funding Program Supervisor
Janet Hernandez, NC Funding Program Supervisor
Paola Posada, NC Funding Program Staff
Semee Park, DONE Field Supervisor
Jose Galdamez, DONE Field Staff



NORTHRIDGE BEAUTIFICATION FOUNDATION

8901 Rathburn Avenue
Northridge, CA. 91325

City of L.A. Business Tax #0002980834-0001-2
EIN# 81-5463842

02-02-2020

To: Board of Directors, Northridge West Neighborhood Council (NWNC)

This cover letter accompanies a Spreadsheet, Sign-in sheets and a flash drive with 2000 plus photos re: Homeless to Work Cycles by Don Larson and Clean Streets Clean Starts (CSCS). On the Tampa Project; West side of Reseda Boulevard from Hiawatha Street, North of Devonshire Avenue, South to the Vons/Bank of America Nordhoff Street intersection; West on both sides of Devonshire past the Oakridge Park; Lassen Street.

The CSCS Work Plan is bi-weekly 2-3 hour basic Clean-up Cycles. Starting at 6AM, our Work Cycles here included both sides of Reseda. Walking South and then back North.

The same homeless volunteers cleaning-up both sides of Reseda constitutes a double Work Cycle totaling roughly 6 hours, earning double stipend payments, meals and tokens.

The community and our workers much appreciate NWNC sponsoring the West side Work Cycles and the Northridge East Neighborhood Council (NENC) the East side.

Our energetic neon safety-vested presence, always applauded by passersby, was most notably here so by residents of The Pepper Tree Condos & Apartments located across the street from Northridge Park. This Park presented many challenges when CSCS got to it. Highlighted in my postings to www.facebook.com/northridgebeautificationfoundation and then real time email updates including many of your Board of Directors.

Remember Summer 2018 being a sizzler? We worked through grueling SFV heatwaves. As a bonus after double Work Cycles, before lunch the workers were offered swim breaks in the Northridge pool. All Expenses paid by Don Larson.

NPG Performance Report - NWNC

1. basic shape-up of trees, 80 planters/tree wells
2. pick-up and removal 15-20 bags loose trash per cycle
3. removal bulky items
4. paint-up 32 fire hydrants
5. removal graffiti tags
6. Reseda/Kinzie median maintenance
7. Tampa median turn-around

Neighborhood Purpose Grant (NPG) Funds received by the Northridge Beautification Foundation (NBF) are spent exclusively within the respective Neighborhood Council's boundaries.

Expenditure of NPG Funds

1. Daily stipend payments
2. Food and water
3. Metro bus tokens – discontinued 2020

NWNC's agreement with NBF and therefore with CSCS is simple and straightforward. NPG Funds not depleted during one Work Cycle Program of 6-8 weeks remain in the NWNC "bucket" to sponsor additional Work Cycles at a future date determined by CSCS.

Actual costs vary according to the number of homeless volunteers presenting. We have found considerable variation in day-to-day participation across the San Fernando Valley. Food Expense here was more than anticipated.

CSCS maintenance of both sides of Reseda Boulevard continues with the same Work Plan on Tuesday and Thursday mornings with only three workers. But will expand as the days warm-up and the need increases. Thank you.

Follow us on www.facebook.com/cscs19/ and www.cleanstreetscleanstarts.org.

Cordially,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Don Larson". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a large initial "D".

DON LARSON

Founder, President/CEO

Director, Boots-on-the-ground Manager of Clean Streets Clean Starts

dl/ld

Enclosures: Sign-in sheets, spreadsheet, 16GB flash drive, matrix page

CC: Semee Park, Director of Neighborhood Council Operations

HIAWATHA

Chick-fil-A
Devonshire

McDonalds

① TRASH BAGS - 15-20 PER DAY WEST SIDE

② FIRE HYDRANTS = 32

③ TREE WELLS - 80

④ 260 SIGNATURES

LASSEN

FIRE
STATION

median



Plummer

Nordhoff

EXPENSE SUMMARY SPREADSHEET
Northridge West NC NPG Funds

Organization Name: Northridge Beautification Foundation, 501(c)3
Clean Streets Clean Starts

Stipend Count	Invoice Date	Per Unit	Expenses	Invoice Amount
	6/1/2018	\$1.75	Metro – Bus tokens	\$506.70
	6/21/2018		Smart N Final – Ice & Water	\$14.97
	7/12/2018		Emle's Restaurant	\$173.41
	7/17/2018		Smart N Final	\$29.75
	7/18/2018		Chick-Fil-A	\$67.13
			Mc Donald's	\$16.57
			Mc Donald's	\$19.02
	7/25/2018		Chick-Fil-A	\$132.53
			Mc Donald's	\$52.60
	8/1/2018		Mc Donald's	\$24.05
	8/8/2018		Mc Donald's	\$68.11
	8/18/2018		Joyce's Cafe – aggregate	\$684.00
	9/18/2018		Emle's	\$128.74
			Smart N Final	\$16.57
260.00	aggregate	\$25.00	Walmart, 99cent Store, Gasoline	\$6,500.00
TOTAL				\$8,434.15
NPGs May 2018 & 2019				\$8,000.00
NPG private				\$434.15
<i>Dated 02-02-2020</i>				



Melvin Canas <melvin.canas@lacity.org>

Photos

don larson [REDACTED]
To: Melvin Canas <melvin.canas@lacity.org>

Thu, Jul 2, 2020 at 2:42 PM

Basically the NPG was done for my maintenance of the area. Especially during last summer and the one in front of me is keeping the area clean and healthy which includes me hand watering all 12 plants as needed. I did repairs to the drip system also because the gofers eat through the drip line. It is also ment to keep my attention.

Sent from my iPhone

On Jul 2, 2020, at 2:38 PM, Melvin Canas <melvin.canas@lacity.org> wrote:

Good morning, Don,

Thank you for the pictures. I have been out of the office the last three days due to a family emergency, just returning today.

I see in the details information of the images that these pictures were just taken this last Sunday, speaking to the current state of the topiary, as you say, looking good and healthy. Thank you.

To add narrative to your pictures, would you please tell me also about how the NPG funds were used towards the maintenance of these topiary?

Thank you, Don,

Melvin A. Cañas
Neighborhood Council Funding Program Manager
Office of the City Clerk
Administrative Services Division
200 N. Spring Street, Suite 224, Los Angeles, CA 90012
Phone: (213)978-1058 Fax: (213)978-1040
Email: Melvin.Canas@lacity.org
Website: Clerk.LACity.org
General Email: Clerk.NCFunding@lacity.org

On Sun, Jun 28, 2020 at 12:13 PM don larson [REDACTED] wrote:
Here you go. It looks good and healthy out there. I will soon start to shape.

Sent from my iPhone



Neighborhood Council Funding Program Letter re: Northridge West NC

don larson [REDACTED]
To: Melvin Canas <melvin.canas@lacity.org>

Mon, Aug 24, 2020 at 10

Melvin. In response to your question. The gift cards are the program and is stated in front of all the neighborhood councils I get in front of. There are many video recordings out there this. I explain the CLEAN STREETS CLEAN STARTS back to work program.

It works like this; the program lasts for 6 to 8 weeks or until the money runs out. The calculation for 5 people is a lot different than 25 people.

We generally work for 3hrs at a time. We give out \$25 dollar gift cards out for the 3 hrs of work. Lunch or breakfast is included after the work period. The gift cards are always stated up front because we never hand out cash. This is why you have copies of all the sign out sheets. The number of participants is the amount of money in \$25 dollar gift cards. Please free to discuss any of this with Semi Park the Valley Mg for DONE.

I hope this answers your questions

Sent from my iPhone

On Aug 18, 2020, at 5:37 PM, Melvin Canas <melvin.canas@lacity.org> wrote:

Hello Don,

I hope this email finds you well and that you are staying cool and hydrated in this heat, especially in the Valley.

The reason for my communication is that our Program accounting staff was finally able to consider and review the information and documentation you had previously provided involving the NPGs from the NWNC. Again, thank you for your cooperation and diligence in responding to our request.

Per accounting review, we'd like to follow up for further information regarding the aggregated expense report you provided, detailing the breakdown of the expenditures for the two NPGs dealing with the Clean Streets Clean Starts project.

Per statements included in the NPG applications submitted to and approved by the NWNC for the project funds, "The grant money will be used for a 6 week program designed for 10 to 15 people. Items include Food (Breakfast, water) during a morning pre-homeless navigation meeting on each morning before work begins. Other items include Tools , Garden Materials and Paint."

In reviewing the aggregated report, a line item appears for \$6,500 for "Walmart, 99cents Store and Gasoline":

<image.png>

The applications submitted to the NWNC did not reference funds to be used for these particular expenses. Please provide an explanation on how this expenditure was related to the project.

Thank you, Don,

Melvin A. Cañas
Neighborhood Council Funding Program Manager
Office of the City Clerk
Administrative Services Division
200 N. Spring Street, Suite 224, Los Angeles, CA 90012
Phone: (213)978-1058 Fax: (213)978-1040
Email: Melvin.Canas@lacity.org
Website: Clerk.LACity.org
General Email: Clerk.NCFunding@lacity.org

On Thu, Jun 25, 2020 at 2:28 PM don larson [REDACTED] wrote:
I will try.

Sent from my iPhone

On Jun 25, 2020, at 2:28 PM, Melvin Canas <melvin.canas@lacity.org> wrote:

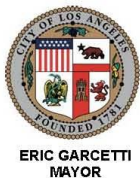
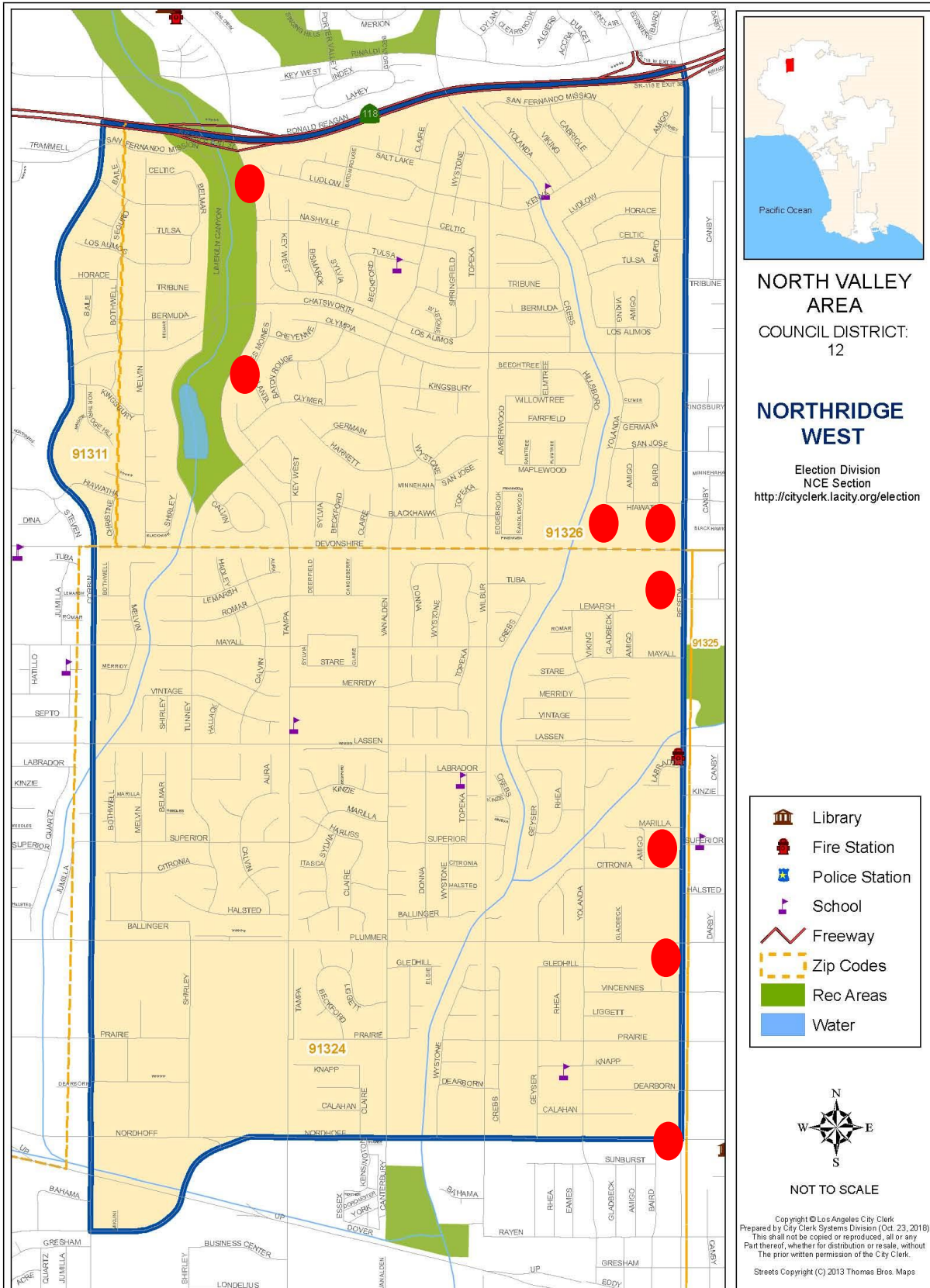
Thank you, Don. Over the weekend will be fine.

Melvin A. Cañas
Neighborhood Council Funding Program Manager
Office of the City Clerk
Administrative Services Division
200 N. Spring Street, Suite 224, Los Angeles, CA 90012
Phone: (213)978-1058 Fax: (213)978-1040
Email: Melvin.Canas@lacity.org
Website: Clerk.LACity.org
General Email: Clerk.NCFunding@lacity.org

On Thu, Jun 25, 2020 at 2:07 PM don larson <don8819@gmail.com> wrote:
I will send new photos soon and sort this out.

Sent from my iPhone

Geographic areas identified per photographs provided where work was performed



NORTHRIDGE WEST NEIGHBORHOOD COUNCIL

OFFICE OF THE CITY CLERK
CITY OF LOS ANGELES



Office of the City Clerk
Election Division



Office of the City Clerk
Systems Division