

# Ernest P. Stein

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1965 Falkner Place  
Oxnard, CA 93033

February 11, 2014

Hons. Mayor Tim Flynn; Mayor Pro Tem Carmen Ramirez; Councilman Bryan MacDonald;  
Councilmember Dorina Padilla; Councilmember Bert Perello  
300 West Third Street, Fourth Floor  
Oxnard, California 93030

RE: Letter from Kenneth Robinson

Dear Councilmembers:

It has come to my attention that Ken Robinson has submitted a letter to you stating his concerns about my conduct on the Community Relations Commission. Although this letter has not been presented to me formally and his concerns have not been voiced in a Commission meeting, I feel that a response is warranted as I believe this has caused great harm to my reputation and effectiveness.

It is unfortunate that Mr. Robinson chose not to speak to me about his issues prior to the distribution of his letter, because I believe that we could have sat down and worked out any concerns he may have had. To this day, I still have not received a phone call, email, or a copy of the letter from him regarding the accusations stated in the letter that had been presented to you. I found out about his letter through a resident and subsequently I filed a Public Records Request.

Mr. Robinson's letter raises several issues that I would like to respond to.

The first involves accusations that I have "slandered members of city government, specifically the City Manager, Chief of Police, members of our staff and others." I have in no way slandered or acted inappropriately towards any staff member. In fact, it was mentioned at the January 2014 Commission meeting that I was appointed by the Chief of Police to the Chief's Community Advisory Board.

The second involves accusations that I have "misused my position as a Community Relations Commissioner to garner support for my festival" and have "sabotaged" the Multicultural Festival by "disrupting meetings." I do not know what festival I own, but I assume Mr. Robinson is talking about the Oxnard Tamale Festival. I do not think it is fair to compare the Multicultural Festival to the Oxnard Tamale Festival because they have two different purposes and designs. The Multicultural Festival is designed to promote community relations and the Oxnard Tamale Festival is a fundraiser. As such, the Multicultural Festival is currently designed just to cover expenses and the Oxnard Tamale Festival is designed to make a profit so those funds can be used to expand recreational activities that support our youth. My involvement with the Multicultural Festival is meant to assist staff so it can be more successful.

The third involves accusations that I have "harassed to no end a staff member via email and verbal accosting." I have in no way behaved inappropriately and have acted in accordance to the Community Relations Commission bylaws. To my knowledge, I only sent one email to the Commissioners and that was the minutes from a bylaws subcommittee meeting. It was pointed out by Assistant City Attorney Rahsaan Tilford that sending emails to all the Commissioners could be a Brown Act violation. As a result, Mr. Tilford conducted a Brown Act training for the Commission.

The fourth involves accusations that I have "shown disregard for the rules that govern the CRC." I have in no way behaved inappropriately and have acted in accordance to the Community Relations Commission bylaws. If I had shown any disregard for the bylaws, either the Commission and/or Assistant City Attorney Rahsaan Tilford would have said something in a Commission meeting. The record will show that this has not happened.

As I have previously stated, if Mr. Robinson would have asked to talk to me about his concerns before he circulated this letter, this could have been avoided. Also, I don't understand why Mr. Robinson did not present his concerns before the Community Relations Commission especially since he was Chair. There has not been any concerns raised or actions taken by the Commission regarding any of Mr. Robinson's accusations.

I believe that Mr. Robinson wrote this letter in a malicious attempt to harm my reputation in order to block my possible election to Chair of the Community Relations Commission. The fact that Mr. Robinson made every effort to bring a fellow Commissioner to the January 2014 meeting strengthens this point. This particular Commissioner has not attended the past six months due to illness and had been excused by Mr. Robinson for years. The vote was 2-2 and ended with 3-2 in favor of another commissioner with Mr. Robinson casting the tie breaking vote. Had the ill commissioner not attended, the outcome could have been different. I am not sure whether there may have been a Brown Act violation committed, but I do believe that Mr. Robinson compromised the integrity of the election, the Community Relations Commission, and the City of Oxnard by his conduct with regard to the concerns raised in his letter and the way the January 2014 election of Commission officers was conducted.

For the reasons stated, I respectfully request that the City Council ask the City Attorney's Office look into whether or not a Brown Act violation has been committed relative to the actions of Mr. Robinson, bringing another Commissioner to the January 2014 meeting, and whether the ensuing election was handled appropriately. Also, I request that the City Council consider other sanctions, including removal, of Mr. Robinson from the Community Relations Commission for causing this unethical breach of the Commission's rules of conduct through his poor handling of the election, its tainted circumstances, and the distribution of his letter which was never presented to me or the Commission and therefore drafted and circulated without the Commission's authority as he signed the letter in his capacity as Chair of the Community Relations Commission.

I hope the concerns I have expressed in this letter as they relate to ethical conduct and serious participation in the affairs of this community are shared by you as manifested by your own service to the city we all love.

Respectfully,

Ernest Stein

cc: Mayor Tim Flynn  
Mayor Pro Tem Carmen Ramirez, Esq  
Councilman Bryan MacDonald  
Councilmember Dorina Padilla  
Councilmember Bert Perello  
Interim City Manager Karen Burnham  
Interim City Attorney Steven Fischer  
Kenneth Robinson  
Richard L. Francis, Esq