

# CORRESPONDENCE

## McMillan, Acquanette (Netta)

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**From:** Jane Panangaden <[jpanangaden@pasadenacity.org](mailto:jpanangaden@pasadenacity.org)>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 21, 2023 12:51 PM  
**To:** PublicComment-AutoResponse  
**Subject:** Letter to city council re: rental board appointments

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Dear City Council,

I am writing in regard to the candidates for the Pasadena Rental Board.

I have been devoted to the cause of rent control and tenant protections in Pasadena for the past five years, and have been heavily involved with Article 18 of Pasadena's City Charter from its drafting, its qualification on the ballot, and through to its passage. After so much work, outreach, and advocacy by Pasadena residents to protect ourselves and our communities from displacement, it is extremely important to me that the first Rental Board represents the interests of those same residents who voted Yes on Measure H last November.

There are several candidates for the Board who are clearly acting in bad faith. They have taken public actions in the last few months to prevent the passage of Measure H, or have sued to have it struck down by the courts *in its entirety*. These candidates cannot be trusted to implement the tenant protections that have been democratically voted on by the people of Pasadena. There is good reason to think that they would use their positions on the board to slow-roll the implementation of the provisions. I urge the Council NOT to appoint any of the following individuals.

Penny Carter

Penny has applied for both an at-large position and the CD1 tenant position. I have been looking into her background (as I have been doing for all the candidates). Using marriage and property records, I was able to see that she has an address listed at a property on Vista Laguna Terrace. This property is owned by the Raymond L Carter Trust and Rian Barrett. Furthermore, there is a marriage record from June 5th 1976, for the marriage of Penny Carter and Kevin B Barrett, who I assume is a relation of Rian Barrett. Why is this relevant?

Rian Barrett is an employee of the Pasadena Foothills Association of Realtors (PFAR). She is their Member Outreach and Community Development Manager. PFAR is the organization that ran the No on H campaign. I know for a fact (since I attended some of their community update meetings) that Rian was personally involved with running the No on H campaign. Penny Carter is either her tenant, her relative, or both. I do not believe she is able to represent the interests of the majority of tenants in District 1.

I hope that Councilmember Hampton will take this particularly into consideration, since I am a tenant in his district (District 1) and I would feel very uncomfortable being represented by someone with such close ties to PFAR.

Ahni Dodge, Simon Gibbons, and Tyler Werrin

These three individuals are plaintiffs in the lawsuit that is currently underway to strike down Article 18 of Pasadena's Charter in its entirety. They are all landlords, and as such are only eligible for the at-large positions.

I want to emphasize that the lawsuit these individuals have filed, in conjunction with the California Apartment Association, does not only challenge specific provisions of Article 18, but it argues that the entire thing is a charter revision rather than charter amendment, and should therefore be struck down. Ahni, Simon and Tyler are actively trying to destroy *all parts* of the law that they would be responsible for implementing as members of the rental

board. If their lawsuit fails, and they are appointed, they will surely use their positions on the board to sabotage the implementation at every turn.

Daniel Gonzales

I have had the misfortune of interacting with Daniel Gonzales on the Pasadena Politics - Moderated facebook group, and on Nextdoor. He is a recent transplant to Pasadena, and a landlord. Consequently, he is only running for the at-large position. While I don't believe that he is officially connected to the No on H campaign, he certainly took it upon himself to run a one-man social media operation against the measure last fall. He was extremely vocal about his opposition to the measure. He has affirmed his unequivocal opposition in several public fora. In fact he repeatedly posted, sometimes multiple times per day. I am certain that, if appointed, he will use his position to delay the implementation to the greatest extent possible.

Terry Tornek

During his time as Mayor, Terry Tornek was adamant in his opposition to rent regulation. He is part of the reason why we as a Tenants Union had to pursue a ballot initiative in the first place. The results of last November's election revealed that a strong majority of the city disagrees with his position.

I had the opportunity to speak to Terry about his opinion on the measure at an ACT potluck last fall. (The campaign was seeking, and eventually received, their endorsement.) At that time, he expressed that he felt the measure gave too much power to the Rental Board, and suggested he would prefer if it would have had more limitations on its ability to collect a rental fee and set its budget. I suspect his strategy, if appointed, would be to try and hamstring the Board's operations by restricting its sources of funding.

Several weeks later, I found out that Terry had signed his name on the opposition arguments to Measure H. (For those unfamiliar, proponents and opponents of a ballot measure get to write arguments and rebuttals that appear alongside the full text of the measure in the voting guide/ballot handbook that is mailed to all voters.) This was a clear public stance against the implementation of any part of Article 18. It seems he was underplaying the extent of his opposition when we spoke in person.

I know that several people on the Council have worked with Terry, and might be tempted to nominate him as a colleague. I want to remind the Council how profoundly undemocratic this would be. The voters have clearly rejected the former Mayor's stance on rent control and eviction protections.

The Rental Board was designed to be a place where ordinary Pasadenans can participate in the political process. When writing the Article, we made many choices to encourage participation from those whose voices aren't usually heard at City Hall. Work on the Board is fairly compensated. Non-citizens can sit on the Board. Non-citizens can sign candidates' petitions. This is an opportunity to let people who have been historically excluded participate more fully in our city, in a way that directly affects their communities. It would be disappointing if this opportunity was lost, and instead a former Mayor, who has already had ample chance to enact rent stabilization policy and failed (indeed refused) to do so, was given a position.

I hope that all the Council members will reflect on this letter. Passing measure H, now Article 18 of the Pasadena City Charter, is the most important project I have ever participated in. It is a historic achievement. The way the community came together to improve the city ourselves, without the help of most of our political leaders, makes me proud to be a Pasadenan. I hope you will do your part in realizing our shared vision, and appoint a strong Rental Board committed to implementing the law as approved by the voters.

Sincerely,  
Dr. Jane Panangaden

## McMillan, Acquanette (Netta)

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**From:** Robert Escobedo  
**Sent:** Friday, April 7, 2023 7:48 AM  
**To:** PublicComment-AutoResponse  
**Subject:** Opposition to the searing of Ahni Dodge, Simon Gibbons, Tyler Werrin & Terry Tornek on the Pasadena Rental Board

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Dear Pasadena City Council Members,

As a tenant & resident of Pasadena, I'm writing today to ask City Council members not to seat Ahni Dodge, Simon Gibbons, Tyler Werrin, and Terry Tornek on the Pasadena Rental Board.

Though it may currently seem litigation over voter approved Measure H has come to a close with the Honorable Judge Mary Strobel's ruling upholding the will of the people, the plaintiff's attorneys have issued a statement stating they are considering their options including an appeal of Judge Strobel's decision. Ms. Dodge, Mr. Gibbons and Mr. Werrin are petitioners in this lawsuit and should not be seated on the board as they actively sue the city.

The lawsuit they are apart of has created confusion and fear among many tenants in Pasadena. Some landlords have used the lawsuit to deny tenants their rights to the city's Rent Control provisions. Seating any of these plaintiffs on the board would be a conflict of interest. If they are appointed it could create a hostile environment within the board if they continue with litigation as they seek to defeat the board they could sit on. It would also be a distraction to the board as it conducts the important work it is tasked with of implementing Rent Control within the city.

Mr. Tornek also should not be seated on the Rental Board. He has actively campaigned against Measure H including co-authoring the argument against the measure and the rebuttal to the argument in favor of Measure H in the voter ballot handbook. Mr. Tornek has in the past taken campaign contributions from those who have funded the lawsuit.

I appreciate your time and hope you take these valid concerns from the from me and others in the community that feel the same into consideration when appointing the board.

Regards,  
Robert Escobedo

## McMillan, Acquanette (Netta)

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**From:** Ashay Patel  
**Sent:** Sunday, April 16, 2023 10:00 AM  
**To:** PublicComment-AutoResponse  
**Subject:** Rental Housing Board Nomination Process

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The following was emailed to all city council members on March 21, but I wanted to submit it here so it is in the public record.

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Dear Councilmembers,

My name is Ashay and I am a resident of District 1. I am a renter, an advocate for renters, and a researcher at Caltech who has lived here for five years.

I volunteered my time to talk to my neighbors about Measure H, now Article XVIII, and I am invested in its smooth implementation, in line with the wishes of the Pasadenans who put the law on the ballot and the majority that approved it in last November's election. The Rental Board is a crucial part of the implementation of Article XVIII, and we all expect that the City will do its best to make sure the citizens' will is put into practice. If the Rental Board is not able to effectively do the work to administer this law, thousands of tenants will be in jeopardy.

There are a few people applying for positions on the Rental Board that I have serious reservations about, and I urge the City to not appoint the following people because of the high risk they try to derail the implementation of the law.

### **Ahni Dodge, Simon Gibbons, Tyler Werrin**

Ahni Dodge, Tyler Werrin, Simon Gibbons are two of the people suing the City of Pasadena, along with the California Apartment Association (CAA), because they believe that Article XVIII is entirely illegal because it was passed through a charter amendment process rather than a charter revision. They are suing the city in the hopes of striking down the entire law. They surely cannot both implement the law faithfully while trying to get it struck down in court. The City should avoid nominating people who are opposed to the existence of the very law. Tyler Werrin in particular has been extremely vocal on Nextdoor about his opposition to the law, continuing to troll volunteers on the H campaign. He felt the need to call me a "smooth-brained socialist" among other pejoratives for my support of the law that over half of Pasadena voters also supported. Is this the kind of person we need in this important city role?

### **Ex-Mayor Terry Tornek**

Terry Tornek, a landlord, CAA member, and vocal opponent of Measure H, signed the opposition ballot arguments. Tornek was not only rejected by the voters in the last election, but during his term, he upheld the stagnation in Pasadena housing policy that forced Pasadena residents to amend the City Charter in the first place. The voters rejected Terry and his stance on rent control and eviction protections. Despite the fact that present Councilmembers may feel a sense of camaraderie with Tornek, I believe that nominating Tornek on the basis of that relationship would disrespect the will of voters as well as promote a kind of buddy-buddy insider politics that Pasadena citizens would not appreciate.

### **Daniel Gonzalez**

Daniel Gonzalez is a landlord who popped up on the local Facebook politics page to spam with anti-H talking points taken directly from the opposition campaign. He antagonized people on that Facebook page until the election, posting repeatedly every day, after which he deleted his social media, and disappeared. He expressed to me that the City Council should skew in favor of property owners, but that the Rental Board existing to help tenants is a bad thing. He repeatedly decried the

compensation of Rental Board appointees, designed to give ordinary people the opportunity to participate in city policy implementation without being independently wealthy, a position that Daniel has seemed to forgo at this point. It was quite obvious to me that Daniel is a vocal opponent of the Measure and not invested in its implementation.

The City Council has a responsibility to choose appointees that will do a good job implementing the law that voters put in place. This means it is fair game to exclude people who are clearly opposed to the law, as well as those who are literally suing the city to erase it. If Pasadenans see the City Council play political games with the Rental Board appointment process, the voters will remember, and it will harm tenants who are relying on this law to stay in their homes. Let's avoid that problem altogether.

Thank you for your time,  
Ashay Patel

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Ashay Naren Patel ([audio here](#))  
(He/Him/His)

Atomic, Molecular, and Optical Physics  
High Energy Physics

**McMillan, Acquanette (Netta)**

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**From:** Charlie Leathers  
**Sent:** Sunday, April 16, 2023 11:36 PM  
**To:** PublicComment-AutoResponse  
**Subject:** Rental housing board comments

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As a local renting resident I'd be disappointed if any landlords were placed on the rental board. Rental prices are already insanely high and corporate landlords are only going to do whatever they can to ensure they maximize profits. They raise rent as much as they possibly can every year even though they never improve facilities or security. Please make sure they don't gain control of this board or local renters will be the ones who lose out.

**McMillan, Acquanette (Netta)**

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**From:** Gloria Newton  
**Sent:** Monday, April 17, 2023 8:56 AM  
**To:** PublicComment-AutoResponse  
**Subject:** rental board applicant concerns

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Dear City Council:

I am a 35-year resident of Pasadena and have been a homeowner for 20 of those years. I currently reside in District 5.

I am writing to express concerns about three applicants to the Rental Board. Simon Gibbons, Tyler Werrin and Ahni Dodge are all landlords who sided with the California Apartment Association in a lawsuit against the City over Measure H. I have no problem with the city appointing fair-minded landlords to the Board, but I feel that these applicants should not be selected since they have demonstrated their belief that Measure H is not legal. The Rental Board is not a referendum on Measure H, it is a mechanism to insure that tenants and landlords have a fair opportunity to have their cases reviewed under the LAW created by Measure H.

In your consideration of appointees, please look for people who understand the law and will give a fair hearing to all parties.

Thank you for your attention to this critical matter.

Sincerely,  
Gloria Newton

Pasadena, CA 91106

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"Start where you are.  
Use what you have.  
Do what you can."  
--Arthur Ashe

## McMillan, Acquanette (Netta)

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**From:** Nicole Hodgson  
**Sent:** Monday, April 17, 2023 11:12 AM  
**To:** Jones, Justin; PublicComment-AutoResponse  
**Cc:** Barrios, Lisa  
**Subject:** Rental Board Appointments

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As a Pasadena resident in District 3 for the past 10 years I support the following appointment of Brandon Lamar and Paulette Brown to represent District 3. The rental housing board is an important component of implementing Measure H which was overwhelmingly supported by our district and the city.

For the at large appointments please nominate Peter Dreier, Thea Orozco, Arnold Siegel and Ira West.

I share my concerns of the following individuals being appointed to the at large appointments due to filing a legal law suit against Measure H and vested interest in ignoring Pasadena voters decision in supporting Measure H.

- Ahni Dodge
- Simon Gibbons
- Tyler Werrin

Additionally, former Mayor Terry Tornek has a vested interest in opposing Measure H and ignored countless tenants speaking at city hall regarding displacement and voiced his opposition to any rent stabilization/just cause initiatives. Mr. Tornek's history includes co-authoring arguments against Measure H in the ballot handbook, actively campaigned against Measure H and received campaign money from those who funded the lawsuit against Measure H.

Thank You,  
Nicole Hodgson

-  
Pasadena, CA 91101

## McMillan, Acquanette (Netta)

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**From:** Bin Lee  
**Sent:** Monday, April 17, 2023 1:43 PM  
**To:** PublicComment-AutoResponse; Hampton, Tyron; Bell, Cushon; Gordo, Victor  
**Subject:** Rental Housing Board Candidates

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Dear city council,

As a resident and homeowner in District 1, I want to voice my support for certain candidates for the Rental Housing Board for this week's meeting.

At large, I support the following candidates:

- Peter Dreier
- Thea Orozco
- Arnold Siegel
- Ira West

At large, I OPPOSE the following:

- Ahni Dodge, who is a Landlord who is a plaintiff in California Apartment Association's lawsuit against Measure H
- Simon Gibbons, Landlord and plaintiff in California Apartment Association's lawsuit against Measure H
- Tyler Werrin, Landlord and plaintiff in California Apartment Association's lawsuit against Measure H
- Former Mayor Terry Tornek, who co-authored the Argument Against Measure H and (during his mayoral campaign) accepted financial contributions from the group that brought the previously mentioned lawsuit.
- Having any of these four on the board is a conflict of interest to protecting Pasadenans!

Last but not least, for District 1, I support Aaron Markowitz. He's a wonderful neighbor down the street, and I've seen up close his dedication to protecting tenants.

We need people with proven track records of protecting Pasadena renters (more than half of the city's residents) on the Rental Housing Board. I have personally seen the stress and trauma caused by corporate landlords unjustly evicting and intimidating people like my partner on Los Robles and my neighbors across my house on Penn.

Please appoint Peter, Thea, Arnold, Ira, and Aaron and show that you stand with Pasadena residents.

Thanks for your time,

--

Bin Lee

Pronouns: he | him | his

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- [Office Ninja](#) the movie is now on [Amazon](#), [YouTube](#), [Google Play](#), and [TubiTv](#)!
- [ImagineBin.com](#)

**McMillan, Acquanette (Netta)**

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**From:** Dan Huynh  
**Sent:** Monday, April 17, 2023 9:49 PM  
**To:** PublicComment-AutoResponse  
**Subject:** Letter in Support of Pasadena Rental Housing Board

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Dear Pasadena city council,

I have been a tenant in Pasadena's District 3 for eight years and I am so grateful for the opportunity that is currently in front of our city to keep and protect working families who rent in our city. As someone who has lived through housing displacement and lost all of my neighbors to unjust evictions, I strongly urge you to appoint candidates to the Pasadena Rental Housing Board who are tenants and advocates committed to upholding Measure H.

For District 3 these individuals are:

- **Paulette Brown**
- **James Edward Creely**
- **Brandon Lamar**
- **Adela Torres**
- **Simon Ybarra**

At-large these individuals are:

- **Peter Dreier**
- **Thea Orozco**
- **Arnold Siegel**
- **Ira West**

Thank you,  
Dan Huynh

## McMillan, Acquanette (Netta)

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**From:** ML Clark PhD  
**Sent:** Tuesday, April 18, 2023 11:12 AM  
**To:** PublicComment-AutoResponse  
**Subject:** City of Pasadena Rental Board

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Why are the following Pasadena City Rental Board applicants (At-Large) being considered:

Ahni Dodge  
Simon Gibbons  
Tyler Werrin

These individuals were plaintiffs in a lawsuit opposing Measure H. To place these individuals in an At-Large position on the Pasadena City Rental Board is a clear conflict of interest.

Furthermore, Terry Tornek should NOT be considered for an At-Large position on the same Board. He has taken campaign money from those who funded the lawsuit against Measure H, has actively campaigned against Measure H, and co-authored the Argument Against Measure H and the Rebuttal to Argument in Favor of Measure H in the Ballot Handbook.

I consider the efforts of the above individuals to be self-serving rather than working for the benefit of Pasadena City.

I forecast Measure H will promote a reduction in the outflow of residents and an increase in the stability and community spirit of Pasadena City.

M. Louise Clark, Ph.D.