



**Office of the Mayor  
City of Los Angeles**

## **ANTONIO R. VILLARAIGOSA**

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### **MAYOR VILLARAIGOSA APPOINTS NEW COMMISSIONERS**

LOS ANGELES - Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa today announced new commission appointments: Karen Mack to the Board of Neighborhood Commissioners; Ruthanne Secunda to the Board of Animal Services; Marsha Hirano-Nakanishi to the Board of Library Commissioners; Thomas Donovan to the West Los Angeles Area Planning Commission; and Shirley Friedman to the Relocation Appeals Board.

#### **Karen Mack - Board of Neighborhood Commissioners**

Karen Mack has been appointed to the Board of Neighborhood Commissioners. Mack, a veteran of educational reform, community building and nonprofit management, is founder and Executive Director of LA Commons, an organization dedicated to promoting Los Angeles' diverse neighborhoods through locally based, interactive, artistic and cultural programming.

Prior to work with LA Commons, Mack served as a Public Service Fellow at the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University and was the Vice President of Program Development and Planning at Community Partners, an organization that provides developmental support to start-up nonprofits throughout Los Angeles County. As vice president, Mack developed a wide-range of initiatives, including the incubator services program and organizational partnerships with institutions such as the California Wellness Foundation and the California Endowment. Mack also initiated the Motherhead program in Los Angeles under the auspices of the California Council for the Humanities. Motherhead continues to assist thousands of parents throughout LA County in bringing the joy of reading to their children.

Karen Mack holds an MPA from Harvard University and an MBA from the Anderson School of Management at UCLA.

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### **Ruthanne Secunda – Board of Animal Services**

Ruthanne Secunda was appointed to the Board of Animal Services. Secunda will serve as a Commissioner on the Board of Animal Services, where she will make policy recommendations on the City's animal shelters, spay and neuter education programs, and other animal-related issues.

Secunda is co-head of the television talent department at United Talent Agency (UTA), one of Hollywood's major talent and literary agencies, where she supervises all agents in the TV Talent area. Secunda also represents many established actors and writers as a Talent and Literary Agent.

Active in the animal rescue community, since 1999, Secunda has been a board member of Much Love Animal Rescue, a West L.A.-based organization that rescues at-risk animals from City and County shelters and finds them permanent homes. At Much Love Animal Rescue, Secunda supervises veterinarians, trainers, and volunteers in all aspects of rescue and rehabilitation. The organization, a volunteer-run, 501(c)3 non-profit, is also involved in spay and neuter education.

### **Dr. Marsha Hirano-Nakanishi – Board of Library Commissioners**

Dr. Marsha Hirano-Nakanishi has been appointed to the Board of Library Commissioners. Hirano-Nakanishi brings more than 30 years of experience in higher educational administration, policy consulting and civic leadership.

Hirano-Nakanishi currently serves as the Assistant Vice Chancellor of Academic Research and Resources in Academic Affairs at California State University Long Beach where she addresses issues of accountability. Recently, she coordinated the development of the Early Assessment of Readiness for College English and Mathematics, a joint project of California K-12 and the California State University. Hirano-Nakanishi also concurrently serves as the elected chair of the Higher Education Data Policy Committee at the Association for Institutional Research

Before entering higher educational administration, Hirano-Nakanishi was co-editor-in-chief of the *Harvard Educational Review* as well as a policy consultant and analyst on issues regarding educational finance reform, desegregation, language policy and K-12 attrition on projects financed by the National Institute of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, and the Carnegie Foundation.

Hirano-Nakanishi is a graduate of Stanford University and holds a doctorate from Harvard University in social policy analysis. Hirano-Nakanishi is involved in many civic activities ranging from the State Bar of California's Committee of Bar Examiners and Commission on Judicial Nominees Evaluation to the City of Los Angeles' Strategic Planning Committee.

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**Thomas Donovan - West Los Angeles Area Planning Commission**

Thomas Donovan was appointed to the West Los Angeles Area Planning Commission. Donovan brings more than 20 years of experience in litigation and legal affairs, including cases regarding employer liability, wrongful termination, professional liability, real estate matters, and land use and zoning.

Since 1994, Donovan has handled all areas of management of his law firm, The Law Offices of Donovan & Sapienza. Prior to starting his own firm, Donovan was a partner to the King & Williams Law Corporation, where he was responsible for hiring all attorneys and staff as well as the preparation of compensation budgets. Donovan also provides general counsel for homeowners associations and other community organizations.

Donovan has been actively involved in his West Los Angeles community for many years. He is currently the Vice-Chair of the West Los Angeles Neighborhood Council as well as the Chair of Planning & Land Use Management Committee. Donovan is also the founder and former president of the Westside Residents Association, where he currently serves as general counsel. Donovan also serves with the West Los Angeles Community-Police Advisory Board, the West Los Angeles Community Advisory Committees, and the West L.A. Cultural Association.

**Shirley Friedman – Relocation Appeals Board**

Shirley Friedman has been appointed to the Relocation Appeals Board where she brings more than 20 years of experience in real estate and civic leadership. Friedman is the founder and CEO of the Encino-based real estate management and marketing firm, The Attentive Group.

Friedman previously worked as an administrator at the Aish Institute of North Hollywood and also served as the director of development of Ozar Hatorah in Encino. In addition, Friedman is the founder and operating partner of Galeck-Manko Real Estate Development Co. in Encino.

Friedman serves as senior chaplain on the Orthodox Jewish Chaplaincy Board of the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department and as a member of the Woman's Alliance for Israel. Friedman is also a member of the National Council of the Orthodox Union and of the Apartment Association of Greater Los Angeles.

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