

September 18, 2019
3125 Tecumseh River Rd
Lansing, MI 48906

Andi Crawford, Director
Lansing Department of Neighborhoods & Citizen Engagement
200 N. Foster Ave., Rm. 205
Lansing, MI 48912

Dear Andi,

The accusations upon which you've based the removal of Foster Farm and Friends and CityHood from the City of Lansing civic organizations listing appear to be without merit. There seems to be no justification for the groups' removal. In your July 10 email to Michele Ramon, you said

A complaint has been issued to the City of Lansing regarding false and disparaging information sharing by City Hood. City Hood has also represented itself as a media company, therefore is not eligible for inclusion in the City of Lansing civic organizations listings and has been removed.

Further, complaints have been received regarding the formation and origins of the Foster Farm and Foster Farm and Friends civic organizations. The City of Lansing has removed both from our website, event posts, and newsletter. Any reinstatement to these mediums and eligibility for City of Lansing neighborhood programs will require a facilitated mediation with complaining parties.

As you've told me, the complaint regarding false and disparaging information sharing by City Hood was verbal and you took no notes. You have declined to name the accuser. Ms. Ramon denies making any false and disparaging remarks. Even if she had done so, you have in the past defended citizens' right to free speech. When Ms. Ramon complained in an email to you on April 30 that Nancy Mahlow, a member of the Neighborhood Advisory Board and president of the Eastside Neighborhood Association, posted publicly that "It is my understanding that Foster Farms & Friends does not exist anymore. Since Bridget [Doyle] was the one who started this group it doesn't seem fair to continue posting under this name," you told her Ms. Ramon that "The City of Lansing does not restrict the speech of the members of its boards and commissions" and that negative opinions are within the rights of all of the citizens you serve.

In response to a FOIA request, I have been provided a copy of the complaint regarding the formation and origins of the Foster Farm and Foster Farm and Friends civic organizations. It was an email sent July 19 by Bridget Doyle. The accusations she makes are outlandish. She says Michele Ramon has used Foster Farm to post derogatory statements about the city and various council members. Have you verified that those posts were made? Ms. Ramon denies making any such posts. Anyway (if you remember) negative opinions are within the rights of all of the citizens you serve.

Ms. Doyle goes on to claim that Ms. Ramon hacked into the City's page and changed the information for Foster Farm. We know, however, that you yourself or someone in your department made the changes in response to an April 14 email to you from Ms. Ramon. She said

Please update your contact with Foster Farm & Friends with as Michele Ramon 517.719.5755. We will be meeting the third Thursdays of each month and have reorganized. Please remove Bridget Doyle from contact since she has resigned. We are actively working on a variety of projects and want to be a part of the upcoming summit on April 30th. I had sent two requests for this event for Foster Farm to be a part. More information coming out soon after we confirm dates. We fully intend to be active in volunteering into the community and building community.

Maybe Ms. Doyle considers this "hacking."

She goes on to say that she created the group in September 2018, had only one meeting, and Michele Ramon was NEVER involved. That is a lie and Ms. Ramon has plenty of documentation to show otherwise. Since that first meeting, Ms. Doyle says, she has not "utilized or been active with Foster Farm." Should Ms. Ramon be punished for attempting to revive the group? You seemed to be fine with it in April.

Then Ms. Doyle makes the truly unhinged charge that Ms. Ramon told her she was extremely good at hacking and threatened to ruin her life if she ever made her mad. She says she knows for a fact that this is not the only person she said this to. Before you accepted this accusation, did you get the other persons' names so you verify what Ms. Doyle knew for a fact?

I have no doubt that both Ms. Doyle's complaint and the verbal complaint are bogus. You should have investigated further before taking action. I strongly recommend that you restore the good standing of Foster Farm and Friends and CityHood and apologize to Michele Ramon. I would be happy to meet with you and discuss this.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Steven R. Harry". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Steven R. Harry
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