

February 12, 2021

**El Dorado County Board of Supervisors
330 Fair Lane
Placerville, CA 95667**

**District I-John Hidahl
District II-George Turnboo
District III-Wendy Thomas
District IV-Lori Parlin
District V-Sue Novasel**

Submission of request for inquiry regarding incidents of libel, prejudice, discrimination, harassment, and hate speech against county resident Mandi Rodriguez on the part of local community groups, and individuals including an elected official:

On December 5, 2020 a holiday Christmas celebration was organized to bring much needed relief and Christmas cheer to El Dorado County citizens. Toys for tots was going to be present in downtown Placerville collecting toys during this celebration. I used my social media presence to encourage people to come and donate. I, Mandi Rodriguez, was present for the entire event and was reporting with Foothill 7 TV. The celebration was a great success with a large turnout and the number of toys collected far exceeded years past. Many different individuals and organizations donated.

The following evening, Sunday December 6, I was contacted by the organizer of toys for tots who informed me that the police department was receiving complaints that an organization (The Proud Boys) had donated toys. Within the next 48 hours I received multiple hate messages on my Facebook campaign page & private messages. At this point I realized that my Facebook live feed video had been stolen, edited, and distributed publicly by Black Zebra Productions, Black Lives Matter Sacramento, Black Lives Matter El Dorado County, El Dorado Progressives, and the Rural Resistance Placerville. The title that these groups used when posting my edited video was:

“White supremacist Placerville City Council candidate that lost 2020 and is running again 2022, Mandi Rodriguez, is seen in these videos being supportive of Proud Boys and the group called State of Jefferson. She apparently took these down but someone saved them and they need to be shared. She also needs to hear from community regarding her racist lil heart.” (see attachment A)

They then proceeded to post my Facebook business and private pages for the purpose of public harassment, detriment to my livelihood, and future interests in an elected public position of serving my community. They finished by saying “Black folks, I say we start buying up land and properties in Placerville. It needs to change!” This was the beginning of a smear campaign against me and other members of the community who participated in what was simply a community celebration and event of charity.

During the following weeks I was slandered, libeled, and harassed to extremes which no person should be subjected. On December 7, 2020 El Dorado County Black Lives Matter Facebook page had a post by an unknown person of an email screenshot from Placerville City Councilman Mark Acuna. (attachment B) It stated:

"Yours is the second email regarding this picture of the local "proud boys" very clearly dropping their gang sign. I believe the woman with her back to the camera is the orchestrator of this photo, Mandi Rodriguez. Mandi was on the November 3 ballot for Placerville City Council, receiving 1200 votes. While she didn't win the election, her far right, and government agenda has been boosted by the support she received.

I forwarded this photo to our City Manager and Police Chief yesterday asking for information. Like you, I am concerned with the implied support and recognition by the Placerville Police Department. In today's unregulated social media world, this picture can be edited and used in ways never intended by our police department.

I find it alarming and unfortunate that the national political arena has reached our town politics, causing the same division, misinformation and anger we see across the country.

My term on the Council ends tomorrow night, but I will continue to address this issue.

Thank you for sharing your concern. Let's work together to keep Placerville safe and welcoming."

Mr. Acuna's statement was not only egregiously inappropriate in his description of me but also served to further the harassing actions by any and all who shared his views.

On December 7th, the city of Placerville released a statement on their Facebook page regarding the accusations that the Placerville police department and the city were partnering with the Proud Boys. In the comments section of the post Placerville City Council member Mark Acuna responded by saying "Thank you for posting this statement. The community needs to question those responsible for the photo. It should be noted that Mandi Rodriguez, recent candidate for city council is one of the major players supporting the Proud Boys and arranging the photos. She is not the Placerville I support and respect." (attachment C) I petitioned all of the City Council members and the city manager, Cleve Morris to remove the appalling slanderous statement (attachment D) Mr. Morris stated he could not without the city council's permission. I also received a reply from council member, Kara Taylor, and as a result of these communications Mr. Acuna's egregious misrepresentation of my character was subsequently removed from the Facebook post (attachment E)

At the City Council Meeting on December 8, 2020 I was the first caller during public comment regarding the public perception and city's public statement regarding the Christmas celebration and toy drive. Since I was being publicly attacked I made my statement as brief as possible asking for a little more time considering the extenuating circumstances and yet was cut off right at the 3 minute mark without an opportunity to wrap up. (See attachment F for full statement) In a show of preferential treatment, the council proceeded to allow other public comments from callers to far exceed the 3-minute mark. One caller, Tracy Bunch, was even given the opportunity to comment twice and far exceeding the 3 minutes allotted even to the extent of allowing him to join the zoom meeting via video. Other callers were repeatedly treated with graciousness and extended time to comment that

was not granted to me. It was clear that the city council was treating me with contempt and dehumanized me with their sharp tones and overt disdain for my truthful and transparent input.

Imagine my shock and disbelief to see an elected official describing me in such a twisted and inaccurate way that was not only dehumanizing but attempting to lay a moral argument for my destruction. These statements only proved to feed further unsubstantiated hate messages targeting me in comments & private messages on social media. During subsequent city council meetings if I called in to comment I was quickly cut off and disconnected. The continued biased treatment towards me only furthered the bullying. (attachment G)

In January of 2021 the incidents of tension and conflict worsened as I was subject to further prejudice, harassment, discrimination, and defamation of character. It was at this time that I had been considered for an appointment by a newly elected county supervisor for the El Dorado County Human Rights Commission. Fueled and emboldened by the libelous smears that had gone unchecked by local government, community members once again banded together for a new smear campaign with the intent of disparaging my character for the sole purpose of annihilating my ability to serve my community or to prosper in any personal or professional capacity. (attachment H – a small fraction of the bullying I received online)

In early January a post on the El Dorado County Black Lives Matter Facebook page Michelle Greene, owner of the EDCBLM business license and administrator of the EDCBLM Facebook page, stated “Mandi Rodriguez has made public comments and committed actions that directly contradict the charter of the Human Rights Commission. Her association with the PB in Placerville and other neighboring communities shows that her affiliation is not isolated to the recent toys for Tots event. The Human Right Commission objective to “promote tolerance and mutual respect among all persons” is a far cry from the alt-right groups consistent actions of intolerance towards marginalized communities. Her personal position that racism should be tolerated is unacceptable for some hold any position on the El Dorado County Humans Rights Commission. 3.) The Human Right Commission is a non-political commission. Mandi Rodriguez was a right-wing political candidate in the last election. Her extreme views and associations would challenge the intended non-political standing of this commission.”

She goes on to then libel another potential appointee whose sole purpose at the Christmas celebration was to play Santa for the toy drive defaming this generous member of the community by describing him using verbiage such as “violent, and extremist nature”. A “call to action” went out from local community groups such as The Rural Resistance, El Dorado County BLM, Sacramento BLM, and Black Zebra productions on their Facebooks pages providing a cut and paste template for people to use in order to oppose my appointment (and that of another candidate) to local Commissions. (attachment I)

It was later found to be that I was not eligible for the appointment to the commission due to the residency requirement. However, this did not stop the ongoing harassment, defamation, or libel on the part of some community members despite our county having a Human Rights Commission established and in place to address and detour these atrocious actions that continue even to this day.

On January 5, 2021 I called in to the Board of Supervisors' meeting in regards to the new commission appointments and gave a statement. (see attachment J) where I informed the Board of the egregious behaviors on the part of certain county citizens and elected officials targeted at violating my civil rights.

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I am requesting remedy in the form of an inquiry into the actions of community groups and members listed below who have blatantly demonstrated hate behaviors and unwarranted targeted harassment towards me. The actions of many persons listed in this letter resulted in the violation of my human rights, and have gravely affected my future prospects for employment and potential elected service to my community. I am calling on the Board of Supervisors to recognize the terrorist actions of the groups and individuals who have singled me out, harassed, slandered, and libeled me and acknowledge their actions as those of a hate group. In addition, I am including elected officials whom I reached out to with my concerns and received no response. I am also requesting an investigation into why the Human Rights commission would not have intervened prior to my request considering that it was common public knowledge that the stated individuals were not just openly slandering, harassing, and libeling me but egregiously violating my civil rights.

Former Placerville City Council member: Mark Acuna

Current Placerville City Council members: Dennis Thomas, Michael Saragosa, Patty Borelli

El Dorado County Black Lives Matter - Michelle Greene: Business owner & admin of EDCBLM Facebook group

El Dorado County Progressives Facebook page admin

Rural Resistance Placerville

I look forward to your timely response and the opportunity to address this very important issue that has caused me great financial, mental and emotional distress.

Sincerely,

Mandi Rodriguez

To the BOS,

On Friday, February 12th 2021. I delivered to the El Dorado County Board of Supervisors a plea and a stack of screenshots and Facebook posts of human rights violations and racism that were directed at me. As of today, March 1, 2021. I have not received one response from any supervisor or Human rights commission member. I would like to know as a citizen of El Dorado County why the human rights commission and BOS have not made any attempt to address my grievance? Didn't the BOS put the human rights commission in place for instances such as mine? Have any of you made the commission aware of the human rights violations and racism made against me? Recently, it has come to my attention that individuals from the group El Dorado Progressives and two of the human rights commission members are collecting information and asking for incidences of racism within the county. This demonstrates their active pursuit of these types of incidences. This disregard for violations of my humans rights appears to demonstrate bias on the part of the human rights commission.

(See attached link and screen shots). I am asking once again for your quick response so that my case may be addressed by the Board of Supervisors and El Dorado Human Rights Commission.

Thank you,

Mandi Rodriguez

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https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1BqjO1hn3ot7skYkUeC-T6rB62kgbgiG-pE0yVKE-T-o/viewform?fbclid=IwAR3e5-MJRDkHalalzmL0y4fSle_eYMvqDOyWxorOFt3Zo58EX6Qx0GqOETI&edit_requested=true