

**From:** Brian A Jobst JOBSTB@EARTHLINK.NET  
**Subject:** The Latest Controversy at City Hall - the "City Council Code of Conduct" Part 1  
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**To:** Brian Jobst jobstb@earthlink.net

**Cc:** Ollie Cantos ollie.cantos@westcovina.org, Rosario Diaz rosario.diaz@westcovina.org, Letty Lopez llopez-viado@westcovina.org, brian.gutierrez@westcovina.org, Tony Wu tony.wu@westcovina.org, Milan Mrakich mmrakich@westcovina.org, kogawa@westcovina.org, Cunderwood@westcovina.org, Mike Browne Mbrowne@westcovina.org, tcortina@wcpd.org, Jo-Anne Burns JBurns@westcovina.org, Roxanne E. Lerma RLERma@westcovina.org, Raul Alvarado ralvarado@westcovina.org, MOlea@westcovina.org, Lisa Sherrick lsherrick@westcovina.org, Thomas P. Duarte tpd@jones-mayer.com, bcervantes@westcovina.org, g.hamilton@wcfa3226.org, mdelarosa@westcovina.org, mmachado@westcovina.org, nvillalobos@westcovina.org, mramirez-intern@westcovina.org, Lydia de Zara ldezara@westcovina.org, building@westcovina.org, buildingofficial@westcovina.org, inspector@westcovina.org, sgarcia@westcovina.org, rortega@westcovina.org, sperez@westcovina.org, Vibanez@westcovina.org, Kalbert@westcovina.org, Lbravo@westcovina.org, LGodinez@westcovina.org, CRomero@westcovina.org, Mquijada@westcovina.org, SGonzalez@westcovina.org, mike.cresap@westcovina.org, rchavez@westcovina.org, djohnston@westcovina.org, Jaguilar@westcovina.org, DBranconier@westcovina.org, BLewis@westcovina.org, vgonzales@westcovina.org, jhernandez@westcovina.org, KRichard@westcovina.org, Mthomas@westcovina.org

Greetings fellow Residents. **Below are images of Town Hall Meeting flyers. One by Councilman Ollie Cantos. The other by Councilman Brian Gutierrez. The flyers, these Town Hall Meetings, are what the so called "City Council Code of Conduct" controversy is all about.**

Councilman Tony Wu's initial position was to try to entirely prevent other Councilmembers from having Town Hall Meetings. You read that correctly. Wu quickly found out that trying to entirely prevent Town Hall Meetings would be unlawful.

So now Wu, along with Councilwomen Letty Lopez-Viado are trying to have a "City Council Code of Conduct" written that would include a provision preventing City Staff from attending and participating in Town Hall Meetings, so that the Meetings are less meaningful and effective, thereby reducing on-going pressure on Wu and Lopez Viado to conduct their own Town Hall Meetings.

**Please read beyond the images of the Town Hall Meeting flyers below for the details of the latest saga unfolding at City Hall in West Covina. *There's much more to this controversy.***



Like many residents I am following with interest this so called "City Council Code of Conduct."

So let's break down what is actually going on:

1. For **Councilman Tony Wu** this is about maintaining control and avoiding transparency - these are the hallmark pillars of Wu's approach to elected office since he's been on the Council. Councilman Wu does not want City Staff to attend Town Hall Meetings because he does not want City Staff answering questions outside of Council meetings. Inside of Council meetings Wu can summon Staff to the podium and, through his presence, ensure a matter is addressed in a manner consistent with what he wants to hear. If that does not occur, then in a Council meeting Wu can override the Staff or spin it.

For his part Wu says he does not want City Staff to attend Councilmembers' Town Hall Meetings because of the added expense. The truth is Wu's reason has nothing to do with cost. The cost of City Staff attending an occasional Town Hall Meeting is trivial. Also, Wu himself has been leading a deficit spending rampage for years. He's ok with that, as long as money is being spent on what he wants. Money being spent on City Staff talking to residents, without Wu present, is NOT what Tony Wu wants.

2. **Councilwomen Letty Lopez-Viado** also does not want City Staff to attend Town Hall Meetings, but for a different reason. Lopez-Viado knows having City Staff in these meetings makes them more valuable and effective. The more valuable Town Hall Meetings are, the more pressure is put on her to actually have a Town Hall Meeting of her own, which she has zero interest in doing.

Lopez-Viado's multi year track record is quite clear. She is interested in doing nothing more than attending Council meetings, and promoting the Film It West Covina Film Festival (that is her baby).

3. As for **Councilwomen Diaz**, frankly I don't know where she stands on this matter yet. She may or may not be in favor of City Staff attending Town Hall Meetings. However, if she chooses to not conduct Town Hall Meetings herself, I think she will have the courage to own that decision...and that's completely OK.

Please Councilwomen Diaz, do what the residents want. If any Councilmember chooses to have a Town Hall Meeting, allow such meetings to be as effective and meaningful as possible. That means having key City Staff present at Town Hall Meetings.

4. **Councilman Cantos** regularly conducts Town Hall Meetings and **Councilman Brian Gutierrez** is now following suit. Thank you to both of them. Few things are more representative of thriving democracy than the willingness of the elected to directly engage with residents in Town Hall Meetings. As Councilman Cantos has repeatedly pointed out, having City Staff present at his Town Hall Meetings has significantly increased the value of those meetings, for the residents. Councilman Cantos has heard that repeatedly from resident after resident after resident. We residents have said that to each other as well.

5. **City Staff** - Please know that the vast majority of residents really do support you. The City collapses without you. Residents also recognize that the work you do, is too often under highly adverse circumstances, such as funding constraints or unreasonable demands from a certain elected person.

**Any Councilmember: Please feel free to read this letter into the Council meeting record next time this matter comes up. I can't do that because it takes more than 180 seconds to read this letter...and that is all the time which Councilman Wu allows for Public Comment during Council meetings...because Tony Wu is all about control, control, control...**

The foregoing is my opinion. Also it does not necessarily reflect the views of any civic group I am involved in. I urge each reader to come to own conclusions regarding the "City Council Code of Conduct".

Sincerely,

Brian Jobst  
A 36-year resident of West Covina

cc:  
City Staff  
San Gabriel Valley Tribune  
San Gabriel Valley Examiner

