



SENT VIA CERTIFIED MAIL, RETURN RECEIPT REQUESTED

June 29, 2023

Stephen LaPorte, General Counsel
Wikimedia Foundation
140 New Montgomery Street
San Francisco, CA 94105

*Re: Request for Information and Request to Prohibit Specified Information on
Wikipedia Pages*

Dear Mr. LaPorte:

I am the City Attorney for the City of Durham, North Carolina, and I write at the express request of three of the seven elected officials on the Durham City Council in their official capacities. Each of these elected officials has a Wikipedia page that was created by a third party.

The Wikipedia page for Mayor Elaine O'Neal was, according to the revision history, originally created on November 3, 2021 by a user with the handle "Novemberjazz". The timing of the creation of the page coincides with the North Carolina municipal elections that were held that year and is a day after she was elected to the position of Mayor of Durham. Her concern about the page, however, has to do with a recent upload of an image of her signature, which first occurred on April 6, 2023. The Mayor believes that having her official signature available on the page is problematic for her professionally and personally. An unidentified user of the site removed the signature image from the page on May 6, 2023. A user with the handle "Bamyers99" undid the removal on May 26, 2023. I began looking into the Mayor's concerns this week, and I removed the signature on June 28, 2023. A user with the handle "Red-tailed hawk" undid that removal this morning. I have corresponded with the user who originally added the upload of the signature image, a user with the handle "Johnson524", who agreed to permanently delete the signature image; however, the image remains on the Mayor's Wikipedia page. The Mayor has expressed great concern about the source and purpose of the upload of her signature and has asked that I formally request Wikimedia Foundation to provide the following:

- The identity and real name of user "Johnson524";
- That Wikimedia Foundation prohibit the uploading and/or display of images of the signature of Elaine M. O'Neal to Wikipedia and other publicly-available sites within the control of Wikimedia Foundation.

The Wikipedia page for Durham City Councilmember Monique Holsey-Hyman was, according to site analytics, created on February 3, 2023 by a user with the handle "Willthacheerleader18". On March 28, 2023 that same user began adding content to the Wikipedia page regarding allegations that Councilmember Holsey-Hyman had attempted to extort a land developer. Councilmember Holsey-Hyman contends that the allegations are fabricated and there is an active investigation into the veracity and source of the accusations. Councilmember Holsey-Hyman has asked that I formally request Wikimedia Foundation to provide the following:

- The identity and real name of user "Willthacheerleader18";
- The identity and real name of "Mako001", who insisted on preserving a link to Durham City Councilmember Jillian Johnson on the Wikipedia page for Durham City Councilmember Monique Holsey-Hyman.

The Wikipedia page for Durham City Councilmember DeDreana Freeman was, according to the revision history, initially created on April 7, 2023 by user "Willthacheerleader18". Councilmember Freeman has been on the Durham City Council for six years and was an active and influential volunteer and activist in the Durham community for many years prior to her election to the City Council. Councilmember Freeman has expressed deep unease that the user who created the page regarding her colleague, Councilmember Holsey-Hyman, is the same user who has very recently created a page about her and posted unflattering information about Councilmember Freeman in the wake of her defense of Councilmember Holsey-Hyman. In light of the foregoing, and Councilmember Freeman's concern that Wiki pages are being used to engage in cyber-harassment/bullying, Councilmember Freeman has asked that I formally request Wikimedia Foundation to provide the following:

- The identity and real name of user "Willthacheerleader18".

Thank you in advance for your consideration of and response to the requests listed above. If you need to correspond with me directly regarding this letter or the stated requests, I can be reached at (919) 560-4158 ext. 13246 or at kimberly.rehberg@durhamnc.gov.

Very truly yours,


Kimberly M. Rehberg
City Attorney

cc: Mayor Elaine O'Neal
Councilmember Monique Holsey-Hyman
Councilmember DeDreana Freeman
Durham City Council