



Venice Neighborhood Council

P. O. Box 550, Venice, CA 90294

www.VeniceNC.org



APPLICATION FOR PRESIDENT

Deadline: Thursday February 12, 2026

Instructions:

Stakeholders interested in applying for President of the Venice Neighborhood Council (VNC) are requested to complete the following application and: (1) Email it to the VNC Secretary (Secretary@VeniceNC.org), and Rules & Elections Committee (Rules@VeniceNC.org) prior to midnight on February 12, 2026.

Your application will be forwarded to the VNC Board for review. The position will be decided by board vote at the Venice Neighborhood Council February 17, 2026 board meeting, held at Westminster Elementary School, 1010 Abbot Kinney Blvd. Applicants are encouraged to attend to introduce themselves and speak before the board (representatives may not speak for you). Proof of stakeholder status must be presented prior to the VNC Board meeting. Please see the valid credentials accepted at the bottom of this page.

First Name: David Last Name: Feige Phone: [REDACTED]

Street Address: [REDACTED]

City: Venice State: CA Zip: 90291

I hereby certify that I wish to serve as President of the Venice Neighborhood Council, and I am a Stakeholder within the boundaries of the VNC area.

Stakeholder Signature: [REDACTED]

Date: 02/08/2026

Valid Credentials – choose one of the following:

- CA Driver's License, CA Residency Card, Passport, imprinted check, recent utility bill, or property tax bill, with an address within the VNC boundaries
- School ID Card or Report Card, for a school within the VNC boundaries
- Business license, business check, or pay stub, from a business within the VNC boundaries

See VNC boundaries in VNC Bylaws at: <https://www.venicenc.org/assets/documents/5/committee681e8e0ac8e9b.pdf>

**APPLICATION OF DAVID FEIGE
FOR PRESIDENT OF THE VNC
(Questionnaire Answers)**

Questions:

1. Motivation

Please explain why you wish to serve as President of the VNC.

The VNC is a gift. It is the gift of a voice. Enshrined in the city charter is this incredible chance for each of us to be heard by the city we are part of. I believe it is a precious thing to be able to speak directly to those who make the rules that govern all of us—and to do so on behalf of a community as diverse, intense and vibrant as Venice is. I spent the first part of my life as a public defender in the South Bronx. That job, like this one, is about giving voice to people—in that case, to the unhoused and the unheard, to people for whom every other social structure and social service had failed—so much so that only a public defender—paid for by the city, stood between them and a cold night of incarceration. I honed my skills there, learning to listen across difference, while demanding that skeptical judges and prosecutors, actually see the humanity of the people I had the privilege of standing next to. It was the best job I ever had. The hardest for sure, but also, at the end of the day the most meaningful. I believed then and I believe now, in the power of voice, in the need to be heard, and in the importance of meeting people where they are, and of seeing humanity everywhere. I left New York almost 20 years ago, and have been in Venice ever since, but what I learned there is what I bring now--a commitment to decency, diversity, and humanity and an unflagging commitment to finding a reasonable way forward even when there are two vociferous sides irreparably committed to opposing one another.

I don't seek this job to fill something empty inside me, nor do I covet it as a ratification of my-self worth or see it as an opportunity to advance a larger political agenda, rather I want this job for the simple reason that I believe in its promise. I believe we can be better at talking and better at listening, and in so doing be better at using our collective gift to make the voices of Venice heard—about small things and large ones—on broad policy matters, sure, but also on the local block by block concerns that make up the rich tapestry of our collective experience. I want to be president because I want to try again at this stage of my life to make things better.

2. Prior Service

Have you previously served on the Venice Neighborhood Council board or any committee? If so, please list the position(s), role(s), and dates of service.

I have served as a board member of the Land Use Planning Committee (LUPC) for the better part of a year now. In that time I have focused on the transition from the temporary outdoor (al fresco) dining system which grew up under COVID to a more permanent system of permitted spaces. In that role I have evaluated multiple applications for the committee and the board, seeking in each to fairly balance the interests of business owners, the surrounding neighborhood and the community.

That is the spirit I want to bring to the VNC itself—a spirit of fairness, a belief in balancing interests, a concern for all, and a willingness to work hard—to find those difficult solutions whenever they are possible, and to accept that in very

rare instances they may not be—in which case we accept that a system of laws and rules, when applied even-handedly will ultimately show us the way to a resolution.

3. Related Experience

Please describe your professional qualifications, training, or other related experience.

I am a trial lawyer by training, and spent almost 15 years in New York City working as a public defender in Brooklyn, Harlem and The South Bronx, ultimately serving as the Trial Chief of The Bronx Defenders. I also had a brief stint as the General Counsel of the Civilian Complaint Review Board in New York City—at the time the largest civilian police oversight agency in the country. I have also been a law professor and the director of Advocacy Programs at Seton Hall Law School. I have served as the Chair of the Board of the Bronx Freedom Fund, the first licensed charitable bail organization in New York, as well as an advisory board member of The Bail Project—the largest national not-for-profit organization devoted to bail reform.

I have also been lucky enough to have had a second career as a professional writer, producer and director, having written for the *New York Times*, the *Washington Post*, the *LA Times*, and various magazines including *The New Yorker*. I also wrote a memoir: *Indefensible: One Lawyer's Journey into the Inferno of American Justice* which was published by Little, Brown & Co. That book propelled me into Hollywood where I have served as a writer/producer on over 150 hours of network and cable television as well as written, produced and directed an award-winning documentary feature that premiered at the TriBeCa Film festival. Basically, I believe my experience as a lawyer can help me navigate the complex legal and rule-bound frameworks that govern the Board, and that the time I've spent as a writer can help me craft clear-eyed motions, passionate and pointed Community Impact Statements and thoughtful but entertaining updates which may help to engage our larger community.

4. Time Commitment & Responsibilities

Please confirm your understanding of these responsibilities and describe your availability to commit the necessary time to this volunteer position.

I understand the work required and I am willing to do it. I believe that a review of my work on LUPC will demonstrate that I take work seriously, and that I will put in whatever time is necessary to not merely fulfill but fully realize the civic duties I undertake. I feel comfortable assuring the entire board, that first and foremost, not only will I work hard, but that I will actually do the work.

5. Community Involvement

Please describe your past or current involvement in neighborhood, community, civic, or volunteer organizations—especially within the Venice area.

I have lived in Venice for nearly 20 years and my wife and I have been homeowners in Venice for nearly 15 years. My son and daughter in law live here too—just a few blocks away. So it's no surprise that I feel both a deep sense of belonging and a profound sense of obligation to our Venice community. I love the artistry and the craziness, the joy and the diversity. I love the beach and the commerce, but most of all I love the people who surround me in the wonderful experiment of Venice.

At the most local level, I am very active in our neighborhood and even more so on our block. I know literally every person on our block and have taken on an organizing role when we have community or block-based concerns. I have been the person to interface with CD 11 in trying to get our sidewalk repaired so that one of the elderly residents who is dependent on a scooter can get down our walk street more easily, and have carried many of the neighbors' concerns about the noise and disruptions on Washington Blvd. I also have organized a group of my neighbors to form the Speedway/Washington Action Committee (SWAC). That group has over 100 members and was the force behind the issue that initially led me to the VNC.

On a Venice wide scale, I am, as many of you know, active in the VNC and LUPC, having now written many reports and evaluations for the committee and the board. Beyond Venice, I remain active in national charitable organizations including The Bail Project, and the Bronx Freedom Fund (where I remain chair of the board).

6. Key Issues Facing Venice

From your perspective, what are the three most critical issues currently facing the Venice community?

I believe that the underperformance of the VNC is actually one of the most important issues facing our community—we have right in our front yard—an official organ of the state—created by charter, and empowered by legislation to weigh in on the issues that affect us—we are standing on a megaphone which has the power to let our voices be heard on a large variety of issues we care about—issues that affect us and issues that affect our city. I genuinely believe we can—indeed we must—do more to be heard. But in order to do that, we need to work together to push forward our passions and concerns rather than allow ourselves to be mired in our disagreements, and we must expand the reach of the VNC. Our meetings should be packed with passionate and engaged stakeholders. To get there we need to bring in more of the community by demonstrating to them that we can deliver for them, that we can focus not on ourselves and our disagreements, but on them and their needs.

Yes, we have the perennial and important Venice problems: The unhoused, the wild-west transition to a permanent al fresco scheme, the problems with parking and scooters and safety, and the need to protect our quirky glory from overdevelopment, while still honoring the legitimate needs of owners to renovate, innovate and expand.

But these issues, as critical as they may be, don't compass the variety of what's important-- because while weighing in on these is deeply valuable, so are the needs of residents to be free of dangerous dogs in their neighborhood parks, so are the desires of our elder historians and preservationists to see our important landmarks preserved, so are the repairs to our sidewalks that threaten to trip up our kids and our elders, and so is creating and supporting the passions of all of our local groups. It's only by looking at issues both small and large, while creating a functioning system that can actually hear and address those issues, that we're going to realize the promise of what the VNC can be.