

LAS VEGAS

# Sentinel Voice

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"THE TRUTH SHALL SET YOU FREE"

## Chairwoman targeted for recall election

By John T. Stephens III  
Special to Sentinel-Voice

Clark County Commissioner Yvonne Atkinson Gates isn't out of the woods yet.

After an Ethics Commission ruling that she violated two ethic laws by inquiring about leasing space for her frozen daiquiri stores in casinos and a pending investigation into the alleged awarding of airport concession to friends, the commission chairwoman now faces a recall effort.

"Citizens for Honest and Responsible Government" has set out to gather the 4,380 signatures it needs to merit a special election to recall Atkinson Gates. Membership numbers are unclear due to the popular response to their campaign.

"They are certainly entitled to file any kind of petition and to do whatever is their right to do," Atkinson Gates said, adding that she thinks it would be a waste of taxpayer time, money and energy and is counter-productive in District D.

"It hurts the community in the sense that it is taken me out of focus of what I was elected to do," she said. "My primary concern is to make District D well represented."

The recall and special election could cost taxpayers more than \$100,000. The signatures would have to be collected within 60 days of filing a notice of intent to recall and the names would have to be verified by the secretary of state before a special election could begin.

Atkinson Gates said the recall effort is motivated by revenge. She opposed an ordinance backed by the group's biggest and most outspoken financial supporter, Sheldon Adelson, CEO for the Las Vegas Sands and the future Venetian hotel, where the old Sands hotel used to be.

In a prepared statement, Adelson applauded the group, calling them courageous enough to tangle with a commissioner who has been "flexing her muscles."

"Why is he funding this? He has nothing at risk in this community (District D)," Gates said. "He (Adelson) is no more interested in government than the people participating in this recall election."

Atkinson Gates thinks Adelson has a vendetta against her for voting down proposals he thought would benefit the Venetian. And to add insult to injury, she said many of the individuals involved

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## Resident council heads speak out

By Deborah Kohlen  
Sentinel-Voice

Give public housing residents more control of their neighborhoods and a greater sense of ownership and watch their lives improve, says one public housing resident.

Patricia Brown, president of the Marble Manor resident council, is doing her part. Brown, with an assist from volunteers, runs the project's learning center, which offers neighborhood children a safe, structured environment and engages them in constructive activities.

Brown, head of the council since 1993, contends that the Las Vegas Housing Authority isn't doing its part. She called some of the project manager's policies insensitive. The "one-strike-you're-out" drug use policy, she believes, is harsh and is sometimes used as an excuse to get rid of tenants.

Brown also said tenants who use drugs shouldn't be evicted, but should be helped because they often have nowhere else to go. Besides, she said, the pushers live outside the projects. She said a rehabilitation program that would help addicts and assist them in finding employment could do wonders.

She blamed the indifference on inexperience.

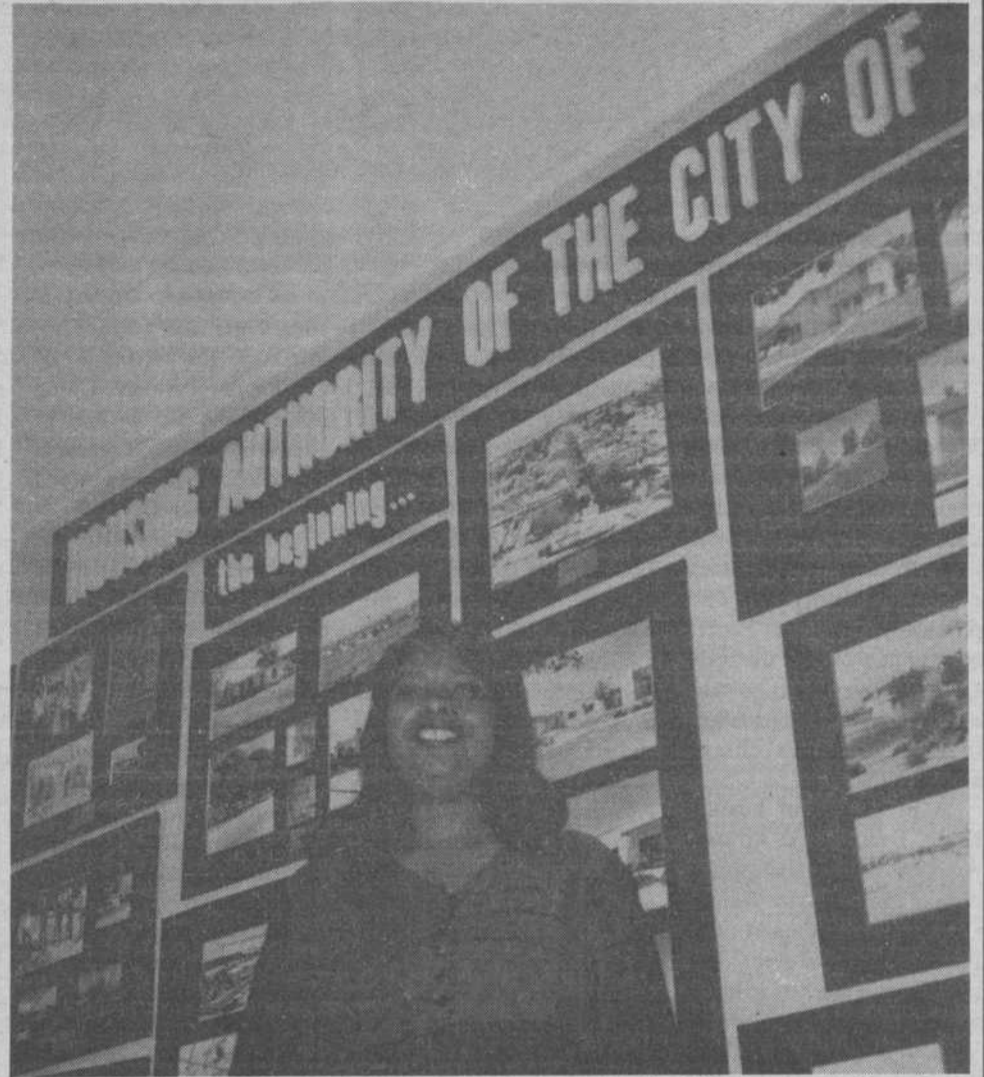
"None of the managers and none of the members of the board of housing commissioners have lived in public housing for even a week," she said, adding that if the board members were only nominated by the mayor rather than appointed, and had to be elected by project residents, they would be more responsive to the residents' needs.

"People who've never had the problem can't solve it," she said. "They have the dollars, but not the experience."

They haven't had to wait five days for a plumber or wait nearly a week for maintenance or repairs. Brown said residents could do the work faster for less money if they were taught the skills. Participating in neighborhood upkeep, she said, would boost self-esteem and spark initiative.

"We want holistic approaches," she said. "Originally, public housing was supposed to be temporary, allowing people to save money while working so they could afford to get out and make room for someone else who might be homeless. That concept got lost somewhere along the way."

Though Marble Manor has recently been renovated, Brown complained that work was



Sentinel-Voice photo by Ramon Savoy

Leading the fight for tenants rights at Marble Manor, Patricia Brown resident council president frequently visits the Housing Authority of Las Vegas.

shoddy.

"The fence wasn't painted properly; there are indoor fixtures that don't work; the closet doors don't fit so they keep coming off the tracks; the floors aren't leveled, so the washing machines start rocking during the spin cycle, tearing up the new tile; and the lawns and sprinkler systems are uneven, creating puddles of stagnant water that become putrid and attract flies."

Brown said some of the money allotted to educating children living in the projects could be siphoned off to create programs that help their parents, relatives and friends so that they can become role models.

Doc Broadus, president of the resident council at Vera Johnson "A," said the youth

should come first.

"The top priority in my life has been kids," he said. Working with troubled youth extensively had hardened him a bit to their parents' plight.

"A lot of these parents don't care about their children at all," he said, adding that many children run outside unsupervised all day long.

Broadus tackles this problem head-on and has gotten results.

First, he successfully pushed for the installation of speed bumps on the side streets around the property, then, he championed the construction of a wall forming a barrier between the subdivision and the major avenues

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## Citizen group pushes ethics, steps up Brown recall effort

By John Stephens III  
Sentinel-Voice

Planting "Say No to Drugs. Recall Paula Brown," signs around North Las Vegas, a citizen's group hopes to round up enough votes to gauge the North Las Vegas City Councilwoman out of office.

"Paula has disgraced the community," said Glen Easter, a member of Citizens for Higher Ethics, the 14-member nonprofit corporation behind the Brown recall. He said the group

wants to test Brown's claim that, despite the legal travails of her husband, North Las Vegas still support her.

Methamphetamine found in labs throughout the city were traced to two businesses Brown's husband, James Brown, owns: J.B. Chemical Co., and Lab-Kem Supplies. Easter, a 49-year-old property manager in North Las Vegas, said the businesses put millions of dollars worth of drugs on the street and that the Browns owe thousands of dollars in back taxes.

The group must collect, 1930 signatures in 60 days to recall Brown; Easter boasted that 800 have been amassed to date. If he gets the mandatory amount of signatures, the recall petition will be submitted to the election department to verify if the proponents are registered voters. Pending verification, a special election would be held on Brown's fate.

The embattled councilwoman dismissed all the accusations as "unfounded" but conceded the group had the right to push for a recall. But

she questioned their urgency of the recall since her term ends next year.

Brown also dismissed accusations that her campaign was financed by drug money, adding that donor lists are public records and lists her contributors.

Easter said the community should rally against the spread of drugs.

Brown urged her constituents to call her before signing any petition. She said she plans to seek re-election no matter the outcome.