

CITY OF WEST HOLLYWOOD
LESBIAN AND GAY ADVISORY BOARD
MINUTES – JULY 11, 2013
COMMUNITY CONFERENCE ROOM

I. **CALL TO ORDER**

A. **ROLL CALL**

The West Hollywood Lesbian and Gay Advisory Board was called to order by Co-Chair Sue Sexton at 7:05 p.m., Thursday, July 11, 2013, in the Community Conference Room at City Hall, 8300 Santa Monica Boulevard, West Hollywood.

Present: Ivy Bottini, Paul Chavez, Robert Gamboa, Matt Palazzolo,
Enrique Reveles, Amy Ruskin, Elisabeth Sandberg, Sue Sexton,
Ruth Tittle

Not Present: None

A quorum was present at all times. Jeff Book, staff liaison, and Council Deputy Michelle Rex were also present.

B. **REPORT ON POSTING OF AGENDA**

Staff reported that the agenda had been posted at City Hall and other locations as required.

C. **APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

The agenda was approved on a motion by Robert Gamboa, seconded by Enrique Reveles.

D. **MINUTES**

1. **MEETING OF JUNE 13, 2013**

The minutes of the meeting of June 13, 2013, were approved on a motion by Elisabeth Sandberg, seconded by Enrique Reveles, with Amy Ruskin abstaining.

E. **ADJOURNMENT REQUESTS**

Elisabeth Sandberg asked that the meeting be adjourned in memory of Arline Godfried Land, mother of Mayor Abbe Land. Robert Gamboa asked that the meeting be adjourned in celebration of the U.S. Supreme Court rulings in *Hollingsworth v. Perry*, upholding the Federal District Court's invalidation of California's Proposition 8, and *United States v. Windsor*, finding Section 3 of the Defense of Marriage Act (DOMA) to be unconstitutional as a violation of the Fifth Amendment.

II. ITEMS FROM THE PUBLIC

A. Lee Walkup, chair of Senior Advisory Board, spoke about performances of the Gay Men's Chorus of Los Angeles, including the It Gets Better tour and the upcoming 2014 production of "I Am Harvey Milk," an oratorio by Andrew Lipka.

Valentina Matidzhi, member of Russian Advisory Board, congratulated the Advisory Board on the court rulings on Proposition 8 and DOMA, and said that as an attorney she is available to help with matters of family law, immigration, wills and trusts.

Rick Watts, member of Disabilities Advisory Board, spoke about "This Way Out," a radio program heard locally on KPFK, 90.7 FM, and at the show's website, thiswayout.org.

Larry Block spoke about a need for the rainbow flag on Santa Monica Boulevard near the rainbow crosswalks, and said that the Sheriff's Station had declined the gift of a rainbow flag because they were not authorized to accept it. He asked the Advisory Board to help create conditions where the intersection of San Vicente and Santa Monica Boulevards could be named as a historic site.

III. SUBCOMMITTEES AND LIAISONS

Robert Gamboa said the Video Project group is making progress and is doing market research on how other LGBT-related cities have approached similar opportunities.

Elisabeth Sandberg said she continues to work with Andrew Campbell regarding decorating utility boxes, and will be meeting this week. She said The Lesbian Center is continuing and doing well.

Matt Palazzolo reminded board members that the Advisory Board is the community collaborator for the 7:15 p.m., July 17, 2013, Outfest screening of "Two: The Story of Roman & Nyro," at the DGA. Paul Chavez and Robert Gamboa will look into tabling.

Sue Sexton said the Transgender Advisory Board is moving forward with plans for the Day of Remembrance, and considering a month of activities for transgender awareness.

IV. NEW BUSINESS

A. RAINBOW KEY AWARDS

At the City Council meeting of May 6, 2013, Councilmembers asked the Advisory Board to discuss several aspects of the procedure and focus of the Rainbow Key Awards, and return to the City Council with recommendations. Staff presented an item summarizing Councilmembers' ideas on the number of awards, the requirement that an honoree must be present, increasing the focus on West Hollywood impact as a criterion for the award, establishing categories for the awards, expanding outreach through the use of social media, and presenting the recommendations to City Council earlier in the year.

In public comment, Dan Berkowitz said that he has produced the Rainbow Key events for six of the last seven years. He spoke favorably about getting started

earlier, improving communications, and emphasizing local impact, but expressed concerns about changing the requirement that honorees must be present, establishing categories, or limiting awards by age. He said that when it wanted to encourage new talent, the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences created the Nicholl Fellowship for that purpose; it didn't limit eligibility for the Academy Awards themselves.

Ivy Bottini moved to accept the staff report for the purpose of discussion. This was seconded by Matt Palazzolo.

The Advisory Board discussed the various aspects of the awards, and the pros and cons of the possible changes. Enrique Reveles moved to continue the item to the next meeting. This was seconded by Amy Ruskin and approved, with Ruth Tittle abstaining.

Sue Sexton asked whether the City Council approves other awards given by the City, and staff said it would gather that information.

B. RESOLUTION ON PORTERVILLE

Robert Gamboa moved that the Advisory Board recommend that the City Council issue a proclamation or resolution in support of Mayor Virginia Gurrola and the LGBT community of Porterville, CA, where the mayor has been under criticism for having proclaimed Pride Month. This was seconded by Ivy Bottini and approved.

V. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

There was no unfinished business.

VI. ELECTION OF OFFICERS

The floor was opened for nominations for female co-chair. Ruth Tittle nominated Amy Ruskin. Elisabeth Sandberg nominated Ruth Tittle, who declined. In the absence of further nominations, Robert Gamboa moved to close nominations and declare Amy Ruskin elected. This was seconded by Enrique Reveles and approved.

The floor was opened for nominations for male co-chair. Enrique Reveles nominated Robert Gamboa. Elisabeth Sandberg nominated Enrique Reveles, who declined. In the absence of further nominations, Enrique Reveles moved to close nominations and declare Robert Gamboa elected. This was seconded by Ivy Bottini and approved.

VII. ITEMS FROM THE ADVISORY BOARD

A. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

Chaz Bono: Amy Ruskin moved to place on the next agenda an apology to Chaz Bono for his introduction and other aspects of the Rainbow Key Awards program. This was seconded by Robert Gamboa and approved. Matt Palazzolo moved to appoint a subcommittee to draft a letter of apology, consisting of Amy

Ruskin, Robert Gamboa, and Sue Sexton. This was seconded by Robert Gamboa and approved.

Intersection: Robert Gamboa moved to place on the next agenda the topic of naming the intersection of Santa Monica and San Vicente Boulevards, and to designate a subcommittee of Robert Gamboa, Matt Palazzolo, Sue Sexton, Paul Chavez, and Larry Block to look into how to pursue the idea. This was seconded by Amy Ruskin and approved. Staff said there is a mandatory city policy on naming things, setting out procedures to be followed to request such actions, and that the subcommittee would be provided with copies of it.

Community Study: Enrique Reveles moved to ask for City staff to provide a report on the recent Community Study. This was seconded by Robert Gamboa and approved.

Additional items from the Advisory Board:

Amy Ruskin invited people to attend a screening of "Second Shot," a sitcom being presented as part of Outfest, at 7 pm on Monday, July 15, at the Harmony Gold screening room.

Ruth Tittle spoke about the Buff 'n Cut event. She said her grandson has become engaged to marry. She also thanked Sue Sexton and Andrew Oldershaw for their service as co-chairs during 2012-2013.

Robert Gamboa spoke about the National Gay Blood Drive.

Sue Sexton thanked board members for having been co-chair for the last year, and said she looks forward to working with the new co-chairs.

Ivy Bottini said she wishes it had been called the National Gay and Lesbian Blood Drive, because lesbians conducted the Sisters For Brothers blood drive during the AIDS crisis.

VIII. ITEMS FROM STAFF

There were no additional items from staff.

IX. ITEMS FROM THE PUBLIC

Jimmy Palmieri, Human Services Commissioner, said he spoke to Chaz Bono the day after the Rainbow Key Awards, and that Chaz had been seriously offended by the introduction he was provided at the program. He said biographical information provided by Chaz Bono had not been used, and that it was really those who love Chaz who were hurt on his behalf, with regard to the remarks used in his introduction.

Heidi Shink, Human Services Commissioner, congratulated Amy Ruskin and Robert Gamboa on their election as co-chairs. She expressed concern that the presentation of the Rainbow Key Award to Chaz Bono had not gone the way it should have, that steps should be taken to correct this, and that perhaps this could be a teachable moment. She hoped people would grow and learn from this.

A. Lee Walkup spoke with regard to Ivy Bottini's comment about lesbians and the blood drive, and expressed great appreciation to the women who have helped men throughout the AIDS crisis. With regard to the intersection of San Vicente and Santa Monica, he said if it is named it should be in a way that recognizes all people, not just people of a particular community.

Dan Berkowitz commented on how the presenters for the Rainbow Key Awards were chosen, and said the process with regard to Chaz Bono was complicated because he had not been able to personally be in touch with him before the program. He said he felt that Ivy Bottini's remarks introducing Chaz Bono had been heartfelt and sincere, and that the program had been as well-thought-out as possible under the circumstances.

X. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 8:55 pm in memory of Arline Godfried Land, mother of Mayor Abbe Land; in celebration of the U.S. Supreme Court rulings in *Hollingsworth v. Perry*, upholding the Federal District Court's invalidation of California's Proposition 8, and *United States v. Windsor*, finding Section 3 of the Defense of Marriage Act (DOMA) to be unconstitutional as a violation of the Fifth Amendment; and at the request of Ivy Bottini, in appreciation of Texas State Senator Wendy Davis (D-Fort Worth), who staged a 10-hour filibuster against SB 5 (2013), a bill to create new restrictions on abortion in Texas; and in disapproval of the actions of Texas leaders to take away rights of women to control their own bodies.

Signed,

Sue Sexton, Co-Chair