

**CITY OF WEST HOLLYWOOD
PUBLIC SAFETY COMMISSION**

**MINUTES
MONDAY, AUGUST 10, 2015**

PLUMMER PARK, FIESTA HALL

1. **CALL TO ORDER** at 6:38 PM
2. **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE** led by Mayor Lindsey Horvath
3. **OATH OF OFFICE** Mayor Lindsey Horvath swore in Estevan Montemayor, Jeffrey Waack, and Ben Coleman
4. **ROLL CALL**

Commissioners Present: Berger*, Coleman, Montemayor, Norton, Waack, Williams

Commissioners Absent: Sol

Others present: Lieutenant Dave Smith, Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department; Sergeant Jon Klaus, Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department; Bonnie Smith, Public Safety Supervisor; Maria Grycan, Community Services Representative, Los Angeles County Fire Department; David Aguilar, Block by Block Security Ambassadors

5. **ADJOURNMENT REQUESTS**

Staff requested that the meeting be adjourned in the memory of the 12 law enforcement officers and firefighters who have passed away since the last meeting.

6. **ELECTION OF CHAIR AND VICE-CHAIR**

ACTION: Motion by Commissioner Montemayor to elect Commissioner Norton as Chair, seconded by Commissioner Williams, and approved.

ACTION: Motion by Commissioner Williams to elect Commissioner Montemayor as Vice-Chair, seconded by Commissioner Coleman, and approved.

7. **APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA**

ACTION: Motion by Commissioner Williams to approve the August 10, 2015 agenda, seconded by Commissioner Waack, and approved.

POSTING OF THE AGENDA

The agenda for the August 10, 2015 Public Safety Commission meeting was posted at City Hall, Plummer Park, the West Hollywood Sheriff's Station, and the West Hollywood Library.

8. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

ACTION: Motion by Commissioner Williams to approve the July 13, 2015 minutes, seconded by Commissioner Norton, and approved as amended with Commissioners Coleman, Montemayor, and Waack abstaining.

*Commissioner Berger arrived: 6:51 p.m.

9. PUBLIC COMMENTS

Lynda Lowy, resident of West Hollywood, spoke concerning the fire on Spaulding Avenue. She spoke of having issues with transients using laundry rooms, garages, and people leaving gates unlocked. Ms. Lowy thanked the Fire and Sheriff's Dept. for their rapid response to the neighborhood.

Stephanie Harker, resident of West Hollywood, welcomed the new Commissioners. Ms. Harker spoke of a broken water fountain in Plummer Park by the playground. Ms. Harker spoke of asking public facilities to fix the fountain. Ms. Harker also spoke of scooters in the park and the dangers to people who are walking. Ms. Harker spoke of the phone app Next Door. Lastly, Ms. Harker spoke of the homeless people in the Gateway and the Dylan Apartment complex and on Detroit Street also.

Larry Block, resident of West Hollywood, congratulated Chairman Norton and welcomed the new Commissioners. Mr. Block spoke of having more subcommittees and outreach. He spoke of crosswalks and needing implementation now. Mr. Block spoke of liking the public safety information sheets that are available.

Fred Coury, resident of West Hollywood, spoke of being robbed on Wetherly Drive on 8/9/15. Mr. Coury expressed the feeling that crime is out of control in the City. He also spoke of the bad music clubs on Sunset Boulevard and the crowd that they draw. Mr. Coury spoke about not seeing enough Sheriff's patrol in his neighborhood.

Suzanne Dietrich, resident of West Hollywood and member of the Women's Advisory Board spoke concerning dog waste on the Eastside of the City. Ms. Dietrich requested a fine for dog owners not cleaning up after their dogs. Ms.

Dietrich spoke of the dirtiness of the bus stops and how they need to be steam cleaned on a regular basis.

Michael Wojtkielewicz, resident of West Hollywood, spoke about the Public Safety Commission and ADA regulations. Mr. Wojtkielewicz spoke of having safety issues in the Sierra Bonita Avenue building. He also spoke of blocked public right away in the building and also drug sales. Mr. Wojtkielewicz spoke about violations of the City and County municipals codes.

Michael King, resident of West Hollywood, spoke concerning the crime rate in West Hollywood. Mr. King spoke of not feeling safe in the City. Mr. King spoke of the negative economic impacts to the City because of the crime rate.

12B. COMMISSION TRACKING SYSTEM

Staff Michelle Bell, Public Works Department, reported that the 2013 Customer Response System is now called Public Stuff. Ms. Bell spoke of how to use the system.

Commissioner Berger asked if there is any tracking system to see if people are satisfied with the system. Ms. Bell spoke about how the system is monitored.

Commissioner Berger stated that the system should be able to be viewed in its entirety and to be able to see who the complainant is and how it is being handled to its completion.

Commissioner Montemayor stated that the tracking system is not under the purview of the Public Safety Commission.

Commissioner Berger asked to meet with Michelle Bell.

10. COMMISSIONER COMMENTS AND LIAISON REPORTS

Commissioner Williams thanked the public speakers for their attendance and spoke regarding the various portions of the agenda available for public comment.

Commissioner Berger apologized for being late to the meeting. Commissioner Berger thanked former Commissioner Hoffman. Commissioner Berger asked to meet Ms. Lowy about the fire on Spaulding Avenue. Commissioner Berger thanked Ms. Harker for her comments and asked to meet with her and to meet with Larry Block and Fred Coury. Commissioner Berger also spoke about the dangers of dog waste.

Commissioner Coleman spoke about his Facebook page Keep WeHo Safe. He shared his concerns about robbery and homeless issues in the City. He spoke about the homeless hanging out at Spaulding Avenue and Santa Monica Boulevard

at the bus stop and urinating in the alleys. He spoke about issues at The Gateway. Commissioner Coleman spoke of a ride along with the Sheriff's on Friday night, August 7, 2015. Commissioner Coleman asked the Sheriff's to provide information on the east side foot patrol. Commissioner Coleman spoke of the robbery on Wetherly on August 9, 2015. He talked about expanding the Neighborhood Watch Program. He spoke of wanting more Block by Block ambassadors in the neighborhood. Commissioner Coleman spoke about crosswalk operations and when a crosswalk operation is conducted if multiple locations are used. Commissioner Coleman asked Lt. Smith to speak about the robberies and update the Commission. Commissioner Coleman spoke concerning an article on Drones for Terrorism. Commissioner Coleman asked for feedback on the drones. Commissioner Coleman thanked everyone for being here.

Commissioner Waack spoke about living in the City for the last 28 years. He expressed how excited he was to be on the Commission. Commissioner Waack spoke about NNO and what a great event it was.

Commissioner Montemayor thanked Mayor Horvath for appointing him. He spoke about being accessible to the public. He gave out his cell phone and email address: (760) 402-3017, estevan91@gmail.com. Commissioner Montemayor expressed to Mr. Coury that he was sorry and understood the issues he raised. Commissioner Montemayor thanked everyone for coming.

Commissioner Williams spoke about attending a meeting with the Formosa Avenue Neighborhood Watch group. She spoke of the Formosa neighborhood having issues with the homeless. She spoke about the commissioners being available to all residents. She spoke to Mr. Coury and stated how upset she was for him. She asked for an update on the armed robbery. She thanked staff for a wonderful NNO. She reminded the Commission to take a ride along with Sheriff's and Fire. She implored the audience to continue coming and sharing their issues.

Commissioner Norton spoke regarding Mr. Coury and Ms. Lowy's issues. She spoke of how the neighborhoods are changing. She spoke about a Sheriff's Report Card survey initiated by Councilmember D'Amico and facilitated by the PSC. She spoke about meeting with the vendor who will be conducting the study. She asked that all residents participate in the study and emphasized the valuable information that can come out of the study. She thanked the audience for coming to talk to the Commission. She spoke about the community being the eyes and ears of the Commission. She spoke about having more meetings held on the Eastside of the City. Commissioner Norton spoke about attending the Senior Advisory Board. She spoke of the issues of aging in the community and aging in place.

Commissioner Williams asked for an update on aging in place.

11. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

11A. REPORT FROM FIRE DEPARTMENT

Ms. Grycan reviewed the suppression, rescue, and fire prevention activities during the month of July 2015 including inspections, fires, and emergency medical calls. There were three fires in the month of July, including two electrical fires, a gas leak, and a vehicle fire. Ms. Grycan spoke about the flooding incident on West Knoll Avenue. She spoke about the 135 units being displaced. She spoke about the Red Cross Shelter.

Ms. Grycan stated that the Fire Department responded to 7 traffic collisions involving pedestrians in the month of July.

Ms. Grycan spoke regarding the community activities in the month of July including offering Sidewalk CPR, participating in the Special Olympics Torch Run, and the Fire Dept. filming of a trauma video to be used through out the county for training.

Staff gave an update on the displaced residents from the West Knoll Avenue flooding.

Commissioner Coleman asked Maria Grycan what she did for the Fire Department and the City. Commissioner Coleman asked for a deeper look into the pedestrian vs vehicle stats. Ms. Grycan replied she had no additional information on the accidents.

Commissioner Norton thanked Sheriff's and Fire for their work on West Knoll Avenue.

Ms. Grycan also spoke about National Night Out and how much fun it was.

11B. REPORT FROM SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT

Sergeant Klaus reviewed the Sheriff's Department statistics for July 2015, including crimes, calls for service, and arrests. In July, there were 2042 calls for service, 2700 observations, 37 felony arrests, and 224 misdemeanor arrests.

Sergeant Klaus stated that there were 13 DUI arrests and 5 DUI traffic collisions in the month of July. Sergeant Klaus stated that there was 3 vehicle vs. pedestrian accidents that the Sheriff's responded to and 3 vehicle vs. bicyclist accidents in the month of July.

Commissioner Coleman asked for additional information. Ms. Grycan explained that the calls to Fire and Sheriff's for vehicle vs pedestrian

accidents do not match due to the fact that Fire and Sheriff's are not called to each incident.

Commissioner Williams spoke about not receiving a full report due to the top sheet not being provided. She also requested that "east end" be changed to "eastside" on the reports.

Lt. Smith spoke about petty theft.

Commissioner Williams spoke about the increase in rapes in the City. She spoke of wanting additional information on the rapes.

Lt. Smith spoke of the alleged assault that took place during CSW.

Commissioner Williams asked about the three rapes that were listed this month. Lt. Smith discussed that one was a consensual encounter that was alleged to have turned nonconsensual. A second took place at the bar Rockin Reilly in the bathroom. The third was in West Hollywood Park.

Commissioner Norton asked that the audience's questions be answered to the extent that Sheriff's are able to do so.

Lt. Smith stated that overall crime is up 1.25 percent. Petty theft has gone up throughout the City.

Lt. Smith spoke about the active investigation into the Spaulding Avenue fire. He stated that the location was in a pack rat state. He spoke about the work the Fire Department did for the victim from the fire.

Lt. Smith spoke about the three armed robberies. He spoke of there being a good chance of all three crimes being committed by the same group of people. He spoke about the good information given by Mr. Coury.

Lt. Smith spoke about the new foot patrol. The foot patrol is available six nights a week staffed by three Deputies and one Sergeant. Two nights a week the foot patrol will be available on the east side of the city on Monday and Thursday nights. Lt. Smith talked about working with the owner of McDonalds on their transient issues.

Lt. Smith spoke stated that Block by Block Street Ambassadors are also working on the quality of life issues.

Commissioner Coleman spoke about Ralphs Market and how Ralphs has received some helpful information from the Sheriff's Department that they still have not implemented.

Commissioner Williams spoke about the history with Ralphs Market and their participation in a recent meeting with Formosa residents where they expressed willingness to work with the neighbors. Commissioner Williams asked staff to invite Ralphs Market to come to a PSC meeting again.

Lt. Smith spoke about cross walk operations throughout the City. Cathy Blavis, resident of West Hollywood, spoke about would it be advisable to work your dogs as a group. She also spoke of Vista Street Neighborhood watch. She questioned is it more powerful to be in numbers.

Lt. Smith recommended traveling in numbers when possible.

Ms. Grycan explained that the Sheriff's does not always respond to the incidents Fire responds to and vice versa so the numbers will always be different.

Commissioner Williams spoke concerning her frustration with Neighborhood Watch groups not being involved unless there are issues. She spoke of revising the Neighborhood Watch program to make it more active. She spoke of the crime being committed by people coming into the City.

Commissioner Coleman asked about the drones and the robbery/press.

Lt. Smith did not speak on the description of the suspects. Lt. Smith stated he does not have a lot of information on drones.

Ms. Grycan spoke about the good and bad side to drones.

Commissioner Coleman thought the Sheriff's should look into owning a drone.

Ms. Grycan spoke about the Fire Department looking for drones anytime there is a large gathering of people.

11C. REPORT FROM BLOCK BY BLOCK SECURITY AMBASSADORS

Mr. Aguilar reviewed the Block by Block Security Ambassadors statistics for July 2015.

Commissioner Williams spoke about the 133 homeless contacts and asked if Path provided any services. Mr. Aguilar stated the homeless do not want the services of Path. Commissioner Williams asked if residential streets would be included for the new morning schedule and if Block by Block could be present between 6 AM to 8 AM to deter individuals from rummaging through the dumpsters.

Mr. Aguilar discussed the new morning shift that starts next month. Mr. Aguilar stated he would review the schedule of staffing to be available on trash days on the eastside of the City.

Mr. Aguilar spoke regarding the different services that Block by Block Security Ambassadors provides. He provided a phone number: (323) 821-8604.

Mr. Aguilar introduced the new manager for Block by Block Security Ambassadors on Sunset Avenue:
Steve Salisbury,
ssalisbury@blockbyblock.com
Cell:323-533-6992
Mobile Hotline: 310-210-7622

Commissioner Montemayor asked what type of incidents happen during the month that made Block by Block Security Ambassadors call the Sheriff's Department. Mr. Aguilar said he would get back to him.

Commissioner Berger spoke concerning Path not being on scene when needed. He asked if Block by Block Security Ambassadors had a way to share information with the Sheriff's.

Mr. Aguilar stated they share all information gathered with the Sheriff's. He said the interaction with homeless and Path is difficult due to the homeless not wanting to interact.

Commissioner Norton thanked Block by Block Security Ambassadors for their help.

12. ITEMS FROM STAFF

12A. ELECTRONIC VS PAPER AGENDA PACKETS

Commissioner Williams spoke about wanting to get the packets emailed instead of printed and sent through the mail. Commissioner Coleman made a motion to stop mailing packets. Commissioner Montemayor seconded the motion. Commissioner Berger made a friendly amendment to the motion that if paper is asked for that it is provided. Friendly amendment accepted. Motion passes.

12C. NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH ENHANCEMENTS

Commissioner Williams asked that it be tabled. Commissioner Williams withdrew the idea to table.

Commissioner Coleman spoke of former Commissioner Hoffman's idea for enhancing Neighborhood Watch.

Shawn Hoffman, resident of West Hollywood, spoke about an idea for improving the Neighborhood Watch Program by forming a subcommittee. The subcommittee would have four basic functions. Share and discuss basic training for Neighborhood Watch Captains, serve as a tool to find new Block Captains, be the venue for training captains, and groom people for the position of Block Captain. He suggested that Laura Manukian meet with two Public Safety Commissioners and all Neighborhood Watch Captains on a quarterly basis.

Commissioner Williams asked this item be placed on the agenda and also have Laura Manukian attend the next meeting.

Commissioner Montemayor stated that he liked the idea, but added that there needs to be more staff input.

Michael Wojtkielewicz spoke about asking Public Safety Staff for a Neighborhood Watch sign. He spoke about holding a community meeting at his location. He spoke about public safety/building code violations at his building.

Commissioner Williams suggested that Mr. Wojtkielewicz contact The Gateway for a meeting room.

13. ITEMS FROM STAFF

13A. NEWS FROM STAFF

None.

13B. SELECTION OF LIAISONS TO BOARDS/COMMISSIONS

Tabled.

14. PUBLIC COMMENT

Michael Wojtkielewicz spoke about the tracking system. He also spoke about issues on the eastside of the City. He spoke about the fencing for the Detroit Street garden. He also spoke on the condition of the bus stops.

15. ITEMS FROM THE COMMISSION/COMMISSIONER COMMENTS

Commissioner Montemayor asked that staff check with Council about the taping of meetings. He also asked for an update on the crosswalks for the next meeting. He asked for the clarification as to what department is in charge of the City bus stops.

Commissioner Coleman thanked the Sheriff's for their attendance and comments.

Commissioner Berger spoke regarding the fire on Spaulding Avenue.

15. ADJOURNMENT

The Public Safety Commission adjourned at 9:18 PM in the memory of the 12 law enforcement officers and firefighters who have passed away since the last meeting. The next meeting is scheduled for September 14, 2015 at 6:30 PM at Plummer Park in Fiesta Hall.


Public Safety Commission Chair


Staff Liaison

A copy of the audio recording of this meeting can be obtained from the City Clerk's office upon request.

(Disclaimer: Staff records the meetings for the sole purpose of composing the official meeting minutes; therefore the recordings are not of commercial quality.)