

**CITY OF WEST HOLLYWOOD
PUBLIC SAFETY COMMISSION
SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES**

**MONDAY, AUGUST 10, 2020
6:30 P.M.**

VIA TELECONFERENCE

- 1. CALL TO ORDER** at 6:30 PM
- 2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE** led by Chair Laflen
- 3. ROLL CALL**

Commissioners Present: Balbone, Berger, Laflen, Norton, Sol, Waack, Williams

Commissioners Absent: None

Others present: Lieutenant Bill Moulder, Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department; Sergeant Fanny Lapkin, Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department; Acting Assistant Chief Drew Smith, Los Angeles County Fire Department; Battalion Chief Leland Delaney, Los Angeles County Fire Department; Megan Currier, Community Services Liaison, Los Angeles County Fire Department; Shea Gibson, Block by Block; Kristin Cook, Public Safety Director; Janet Jimenez, Assistant to the City Manager; Patti Giggans, Los Angeles County Sheriff Civilian Oversight Commission

4. ADJOURNMENT REQUESTS

Commissioner Balbone requested that the meeting be adjourned in the memory of the citizens and first responders affected by the tragedy in Beirut.

Commissioner Sol requested that the meeting be adjourned in the memory of the 27 law enforcement officers and firefighters who passed away in July.

Commissioner Williams adjourned in memory of Mayor of Long Beach Robert Garcia's mother and step-father.

5. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

ACTION: Motion by Commissioner Norton to approve the August 10, 2020 agenda, seconded by Commissioner Williams and approved.

POSTING OF THE AGENDA

The agenda for the August 10, 2020 Public Safety Commission meeting was posted at City Hall, Plummer Park, and the West Hollywood Sheriff's Station.

6. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

ACTION: Motion by Commissioner Sol to approve the July 13, 2020 minutes, seconded by Commissioner Norton, and approved.

7. PUBLIC COMMENTS

John Erickson, resident of West Hollywood, spoke regarding the excellent work of Patti Giggans and Peace over Violence and the challenges of addressing domestic violence during the Safer at Home health order.

Remy Solomon, resident of West Hollywood, spoke in support of examining the purview of the Public Safety Commission and spoke in support of reallocating funding from police to other programs.

Alexander Bazley, Transportation Commission Chair, spoke regarding a continued partnership between the Transportation and Public Safety Commissions and work to address racial injustice.

Karen O'Keefe, Rent Stabilization Commissioner, spoke regarding the work of the City of West Hollywood to assist renters, including the eviction moratorium, legal services, and rental assistance.

8. COMMISSIONER COMMENTS AND LIAISON REPORTS

Commissioner Williams thanked Transportation Commission Chair Bazley for his attendance and congratulated him as the current Chair.

Commissioner Norton thanked Transportation Commission Chair Bazley for his attendance and congratulated him as the current Chair.

Commissioner Balbone thanked Transportation Commission Chair Bazley for his attendance and congratulated him as the current Chair. Commissioner Balbone spoke in support of partnering with the Human Services Commission on overlapping issues.

Commissioner Waack asked for clarification on which Commission and Board meetings are televised.

Commissioner Sol reminded all to check the City's website for news on COVID-19 and spoke regarding the City's park closures.

9. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

9A. SHERIFF CIVILIAN OVERSIGHT COMMISSION PRESENTATION

Commissioner Williams introduced Patti Giggans, Los Angeles County Sheriff Civilian Oversight Commissioner, who gave the Commissioners a presentation on the work of the Sheriff Civilian Oversight Commission (SCOC).

Ms. Giggans spoke regarding the various sub-committees of the SCOC, including the use of force committee. Ms. Giggans spoke regarding the family assistance program which is a model to others. Ms. Giggans spoke regarding the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department's Mental Evaluation Team (MET) and reimagining public safety. Ms. Giggans spoke regarding safe spaces for victims of domestic violence during the Safer at Home health order.

Chair Laflen asked Ms. Giggans to give an example of the current work of the SCOC and to describe the makeup of the SCOC.

Ms. Giggans said that recent meetings have discussed COVID-19 and the impact to the population in the jails, defunding the police, and community organizing. Ms. Giggans said that there are 9 members on SCOC from various backgrounds.

Commissioner Sol spoke regarding the Victims of Crime program and asked for clarification on how it relates to the work of the SCOC.

Ms. Giggans said that she is familiar with the state's Victims of Crime program and that the work of the SCOC goes beyond the scope of the state program.

Commissioner Sol asked for clarification regarding law enforcement deaths and MET. Commissioner Sol spoke regarding a volatile incident in Santa Clarita that did not involve MET and the need for better messaging on MET's resources.

Ms. Giggans said that in situations where MET has responded, there have been no fatalities.

Commissioner Williams spoke regarding Sheriff Villanueva's refusal to come before the SCOC and the complicated issues with improving policing. Commissioner Williams also commented that the OIG Max Huntsman commented on the Sheriff's refusal to earmark the funding received.

Ms. Giggans spoke regarding the research and recommendations that the SCOC does with Los Angeles County Department heads, including the Sheriff, in order to collaborate across departments.

Commissioner Williams spoke regarding the good work that the West Hollywood Sheriff's Station does but stated she realizes we do not have access to personnel records but issues should be brought to our attention to be able to suggest and improve law enforcement service.

Vice-Chair Berger asked for additional information regarding the subpoena power of the SCOC.

Ms. Giggans spoke regarding the existing subpoena power of the SCOC.

Vice-Chair Berger spoke regarding SB-1421 Peace Officers: Release of Records and the difficulty that some have had accessing records from Los Angeles County.

Ms. Giggans spoke regarding the Office of the Inspector General's work on public records and transparency.

Vice-Chair Berger asked when body worn cameras will be implemented.

Ms. Giggans said that in the fall, the body worn camera program will be up and running.

Commissioner Waack asked for more information regarding the process of the SCOC.

Ms. Giggans said that the SCOC makes recommendations and requests to the Sheriff and also to the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors.

Commissioner Waack asked if recommendations are implemented.

Ms. Giggans said that it depends on the recommendation and that the recent focus has been on the response to COVID-19.

Commissioner Norton thanked Ms. Giggans for her attendance.

Commissioner Balbone spoke regarding AB-767 Victim Compensation: Use of Excessive Force by a Peace Officer and asked if there is anything the City or Commission can do to support the work to change state law to assist people.

Ms. Giggans spoke in support of the family assistance program and the need for the victim assistance program to be more inclusive to get beyond “us and them”.

ACTION: Motion by Commissioner Balbone to direct staff to research and return with information for consideration by the Public Safety Commission on AB-767, seconded by Commissioner Williams and approved.

Commissioner Norton spoke regarding dismantling systemic racism and the reallocation of funding and asked if the SCOC is discussing or holding meetings to make any recommendations to alter the Sheriff’s Department structure and funding.

Ms. Giggans said that the SCOC is hearing from the community on issues of injustice and will continue to engage in conversation about the issues. Ms. Giggans spoke regarding the importance of violence prevention.

Commissioners and staff thanked Ms. Giggans for attending the Public Safety Commission.

9B. REPORT FROM FIRE DEPARTMENT – MONTHLY REPORT

Assistant Chief Smith reviewed the Fire Department statistics for July 2020, including suppression, rescue, and fire prevention activities.

Commissioner Williams asked for more information regarding an electrical pole fire at Genesee and Santa Monica Boulevard.

Chief Smith said that the electrical pole fire is still being investigated, but that an initial review shows that it is not likely to be deemed as arson.

Chair Laflen asked for more information regarding a recent fire at Fairfax and Fountain inside a vacant property.

Chief Smith said that the fire is still being investigated, but that it may be accidental.

Vice-Chair Berger asked for clarification regarding the amendment to the code regarding fire sprinklers required in buildings.

Chief Smith said that he would check with Los Angeles County Fire Prevention staff to get more information.

Commissioner Berger spoke regarding the fire at Fairfax and Fountain.

Commissioner Norton acknowledged the prediction for a long, hot summer and asked how the Los Angeles County Fire Department is preparing to fight large brush fires during COVID-19.

Chief Smith spoke regarding the daily fire behavior analysis that is conducted by the Los Angeles County Fire Department. Chief Smith spoke regarding the robust changes the Fire Department has made to protect its personnel from COVID-19.

9C. SHERIFF'S REPORT: MONTHLY REPORT; MENTAL EVALUATION TEAM (MET) PRESENTATION; POLICING REFORM; 2019-2024 MUNICIPAL LAW ENFORCEMENT AGREEMENT

Lieutenant Moulder introduced Lieutenant Gannon from the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department's MET team who gave a brief history of MET.

Lieutenant John Gannon spoke regarding the calls in West Hollywood including 176 total calls, 130 patients served, and 88 patients hospitalized; about 2% of the total County's calls. Lieutenant Gannon spoke regarding the shorter response time since West Hollywood Sheriff's Station has its own teams. Lieutenant Gannon spoke regarding the sharp increase in calls county wide. Lieutenant Gannon introduced Sanjay Shah from the Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health.

Mr. Shah said that the West Hollywood MET team gave 67 briefings to West Hollywood Deputies and also referred 10 cases to risk management for further resources.

Deputy Sergio Venegas, West Hollywood MET team, spoke regarding the homeless outreach conducted by MET.

Jacqueline Eyerly, West Hollywood MET team, spoke regarding a recent success story with a West Hollywood resident in need of services. Ms. Eyerly spoke regarding the multiple people who received housing through the MET / City of West Hollywood partnership.

Lieutenant Gannon thanked the West Hollywood MET team for their service to the City of West Hollywood and the many patients that they have been able to assist.

Chair Laflen spoke in support of expanding the MET team and the difficulty she has experienced with dispatching MET.

Corri Planck, Acting Human Services Director, thanked the MET team members for the many services they provide to the West Hollywood community. Ms. Planck spoke regarding the lobbying efforts of the City of

West Hollywood at the state level to assist field teams' efforts. Ms. Planck spoke regarding Step Up on Second who provides an additional field team to the West Hollywood community.

Lieutenant Moulder said that patrol Deputies respond first and then call out the MET team when necessary.

Lieutenant Gannon said that the MET team also proactively responds to calls that may have mental health needs. Lieutenant Gannon said that the goal is to have 64 MET teams county-wide, and that the current number is at 33. Lieutenant Gannon said that he hopes to add a third team to West Hollywood Station.

Chair Laflen spoke regarding the reliance on the dispatcher to send a patrol deputy in a timely fashion who then notifies MET.

Deputy Venegas said that he monitors the radio traffic in order to proactively respond.

Commissioner Balbone spoke regarding the triage process done at the dispatch desk and the importance of tracking missed opportunities. Commissioner Balbone asked for clarification on Block by Block's role. Commissioner Balbone said she would like to reflect the specific on the MET demographic opportunities. The 2018/2019 report documented that while 52% of our West Hollywood homeless population is black/African American, MET for black/African American contacts were 11%. In looking at the 2019/2020 report, Commissioner Balbone said that it would be good to understand if we still see that deviation and if we need to address any cultural or other gaps in reaching this population more effectively.

Mr. Shah spoke regarding the ways that the MET team communicates with the Sheriff's Station dispatch and City staff.

Lieutenant Gannon said that the City of West Hollywood is second to none in proactive outreach.

Chair Laflen spoke regarding Block by Block's role in responding to incidents and spoke in support of improving the process of dispatching MET.

Ms. Planck spoke regarding the Jail In-Reach Program with the Tarzana Treatment Center. Ms. Planck spoke regarding the importance to keep civilian responders safe in the field.

Commissioner Balbone spoke regarding the upcoming dispatcher training and recommended sharing it with Block by Block.

Lieutenant Gannon said that he can make the dispatcher training available to Block by Block.

Commissioner Williams spoke regarding the large number of mental health related calls that Block by Block responds to also. Commissioner Williams spoke in support of having a monthly report from MET.

Lieutenant Gannon said that he can provide a written report and at times can send someone in person.

Ms. Planck said that the annual MET report is currently in progress.

Vice-Chair Berger spoke in support of sharing this information with other Boards and Commissions.

Lieutenant Gannon said that one of the intended consequences of having MET on duty is to reduce the number of crisis negotiators needed to respond from home. Lieutenant Gannon spoke regarding the Los Angeles County's RAMP team which assists MET.

Vice-Chair Berger asked what is slowing the expansion of MET.

Lieutenant Gannon said that funding is an issue.

Commissioner Waack thanked MET for their work and attendance and for examining the possibility to improve the partnership with Block by Block.

Commissioner Balbone thanked MET for their work and attendance and spoke regarding the demographics in the MET report and identifying missed opportunities for improvement.

Lieutenant Moulder said that crime was down 41% this past July as compared to July 2019. Lieutenant Moulder spoke regarding burglaries and mail theft. Lieutenant Moulder spoke regarding face covering education and enforcement, including issuing citations. Lieutenant Moulder spoke regarding the partnership with the City and the Tarzana Treatment Center to assist those arrested in West Hollywood.

Commissioner Williams asked if there is any additional information on the suspicious death on Olive.

Lieutenant Moulder said that no information is available currently.

Commissioner Waack asked for clarification on face covering enforcement.

Lieutenant Moulder said that citations are the last resort and that the primary objective is compliance.

Commissioner Waack spoke regarding the park closures and the need for more enforcement to be able to keep the parks open. Commissioner Waack asked for additional information regarding mail thefts. Commissioner Waack spoke regarding speeding and the danger to pedestrians and requested more enforcement.

Ms. Jimenez spoke regarding the new park reservation system.

Commissioner Balbone asked how the morale is at the West Hollywood Sheriff's Station.

Lieutenant Moulder said that there have been COVID-19 cases at West Hollywood Station, but that the morale is good.

Commissioners discussed the 2019-2024 Municipal Law Enforcement Services Agreement with Los Angeles County.

Commissioner Norton said that the current 2019-2024 agreement is weighted heavily on liability and how items are paid for and does not include how West Hollywood wants to be policed.

Chair Laflen suggested focusing on the items that West Hollywood would like to see going forward.

Commissioner Williams agreed with Commissioner Berger's comments and said that changes can be made within the parameters of the contract as it fits with the goals of the city. Commissioner Williams gave the example of previous programs established, such as sensitivity training, community outreach, COPPS team, and others.

Commissioner Sol spoke in support of reaching out to community based organizations and being proactive in soliciting recommendations. Commissioner Sol said that cities like Compton are considering canceling its contract with the Sheriff's Department.

Chair Laflen spoke in support of getting input from the community.

Commissioner Williams said that in the past the Public Safety Commission has had joint meetings with the Human Services and Transportation Commissions and suggested that the Commission explore the possibility. Commissioner Williams also reminded everyone that Commissioners Berger & Balbone are the Public Safety Commission's liaisons to the Human

Services Commission and can share Public Safety Commissioners' comments with them.

Public Safety and Human Services Staff spoke regarding research into policing reform efforts including participation in sessions and policing reform working groups sponsored by the California Contract Cities Association, the Government Alliance on Race and Equity, and the Obama Foundation. The City is also pursuing possible studies with the Center for Policing Equity and the Vera Institute and supports the Alternatives to Incarceration Plan. The City is examining the CAHOOTS model at the White Bird Clinic in Oregon as well as examining civilian programs at St. Petersburg, Florida and Berkeley, California. West Hollywood Sheriff's Station will be conducting sensitivity training and is participating in a Jail In-Reach Program with the Tarzana Treatment Center.

Vice-Chair Berger asked for clarification regarding equipment assigned to Deputies and how that is contracted, especially for non-lethal weapons.

Lieutenant Moulder said that the contracted price of a Deputy includes salary, benefits, training, equipment, and other overhead expenses. He said that less lethal weapons are provided to Deputies.

Vice-Chair Berger spoke in support of ensuring that Deputies have the equipment that they need.

Commissioner Balbone spoke in support of instituting a regular cycle to review the annual 575 staffing plan and to set goals and give direction as per item 3.2 in the 2019-2024 agreement.

Vice-Chair Berger spoke in support of input from the public, such as hosting a town hall.

Chair Laflen suggested that Commissioners bring ideas to staff to be discussed at the September meeting.

Staff asked Commissioners to share any recommendations on organizations that may be helpful to West Hollywood.

Commissioners agreed to begin the September meeting at 6:00 PM and to discuss policing reform as the primary item on the agenda.

Commissioner Sol recommended that Commissioners streamline and organize their ideas and provide three or more ideas and names of groups that could be helpful.

Chair Laflen asked for additional information regarding ways the Public Safety Commission can work with the Human Services Commission.

Commissioner Balbone suggested using the City's community survey as a guide.

Ms. Planck spoke in support of collaboration between the Commissions and referred to the both the community survey and the public safety survey.

Chair Laflen asked what the procedures would be to form a sub-committee with the Human Services Commission.

Staff said that they will check with the City Clerk. Staff encouraged Vice-Chair Berger and Commissioner Balbone to speak during public comment at tomorrow's Human Services Commission.

9D. REPORT FROM BLOCK BY BLOCK SECURITY AMBASSADORS – MONTHLY REPORT

Mr. Gibson reviewed the monthly reports from July 2020, including pedestrian assistance, crosswalk assistance, homeless issues, and park patrols.

Commissioner Sol thanked Block by Block for all their hard work.

Commissioner Norton asked for clarification regarding an increase in contacts.

Mr. Gibson said that Security Ambassadors are being more proactive in contacting businesses while following COVID-19 restraints.

10. ITEMS FROM SUBCOMMITTEES

None.

11. ITEMS FROM STAFF

None.

13. PUBLIC COMMENTS

None.

14. ITEMS FROM THE COMMISSION/COMMISSIONER COMMENTS

Commissioner Sol asked regarding the status of the bollard installation.

Staff will follow-up with the Department of Public Works.

Vice-Chair Berger spoke regarding the public process to give feedback for policing reform.

Staff said that they are researching resources and ideas for community feedback to recommend to the Commission and then to City Council.

Commissioner Norton spoke in support of having code compliance under the Public Safety Commission’s purview.

Commissioner Williams reminded Commissioner Norton that a few years back this issue was brought up at the Public Safety Commission by a former Commissioner, and it was decided that Code Enforcement would give regular reports on issues within the Public Safety Commission’s purview. Danny Rivas, Code Compliance Manager, has attended Public Safety Commission meetings to update Commissioners on any concerns and will continue to do so as needed.

Chair Laflen suggested asking Code Compliance to provide regular statistics to the Public Safety Commission, especially for nuisance issues like vacant properties.

15. ADJOURNMENT

The Public Safety Commission adjourned at 10:22 PM in memory of the citizens and first responders affected by the tragedy in Beirut, Mayor of Long Beach Robert Garcia’s mother and step-father, and the 27 law enforcement officers and firefighters who have passed away since the July meeting. The next meeting is scheduled for September 14, 2020 at 6:00 PM via teleconference.

DocuSigned by:

70E108BE7F9643D
Public Safety Commission Chair

DocuSigned by:

EFE67965F7174F0...
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.)