

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

**MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 14, 2020
6:00 P.M.**

VIA TELECONFERENCE

- 1. CALL TO ORDER** at 6:00 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 Derrick Chapman, 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

4. ADJOURNMENT REQUESTS

Commissioner Balbone requested that the meeting be adjourned in the honor of the two Deputies who were shot over the weekend, in the memory of Deputy Soo H. Kim - West Hollywood Station, and in honor of all first responders currently responding to the brush fires.

Commissioner Sol requested that the meeting be adjourned in the memory of the 33 law enforcement officers and firefighters who passed away since the August meeting.

5. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

ACTION: Motion by Commissioner Sol to approve the September 14, 2020 agenda, seconded by Commissioner Balbone and approved.

POSTING OF THE AGENDA

The agenda for the September 14, 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 Williams to approve the August 10, 2020 minutes, seconded by Commissioner Sol, and approved.

7. PUBLIC COMMENTS

John Erickson, resident of West Hollywood, thanked the first responders for their hard work during the many brush fires across the west and spoke in support of a joint sub-committee between Public Safety and Human Services Commissions and having a more active Neighborhood Watch program.

8. COMMISSIONER COMMENTS AND LIAISON REPORTS

Commissioner Williams spoke in support of reinvigorating Neighborhood Watch.

Commissioner Sol thanked Mr. Erickson for providing potential community collaborators for policing reform.

9. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

9A. REPORT FROM FIRE DEPARTMENT – MONTHLY REPORT

Assistant Chief Drew Smith reviewed both the local and regional response to the many brush fires across the Western United States.

Chief Smith reviewed the Fire Department statistics for August 2020, including suppression, rescue, and fire prevention activities. Chief Smith spoke regarding suspicious rubbish fires during the previous month.

Battalion Chief Derrick Chapman spoke regarding the resources still available to serve West Hollywood while other resources are lent to the broader deployment. Chief Chapman thanked the Sheriff's Department for their support and partnership.

Commissioner Waack thanked the Fire Department personnel for their service and asked for additional information regarding the recent rubbish fires.

Chief Smith said that while there were more than normal rubbish fires, most of the time they are accidental.

Chief Chapman explained how quickly Fire personnel respond to rubbish fires in order to prevent them from getting bigger and extending to structures.

Commissioner Waack asked if there were less rubbish and/or suspicious fires this month.

Chief Chapman confirmed that there were less rubbish and/or suspicious fires so far this month.

Commissioner Sol asked for more information regarding the Governor's proposal to allow inmates to transition to professional firefighting when appropriate.

Chief Smith said that there are organizations that are already assisting people with felonies in their past to transition to professional service with firefighter agencies and departments. Chief Smith said that currently one cannot have a felony and work for the Los Angeles County Fire Department.

Commissioner Williams asked for more information regarding a palm tree fire near La Brea.

Chief Chapman gave additional information regarding the palm tree fire.

Vice-Chair Berger asked if Chief Smith had more information regarding the automatic sprinkler requirement.

Chief Smith said that the request is still being reviewed by Fire Prevention personnel.

Commissioner Balbone said that overdose rates initially decreased during the health order and are now increasing and asked if it is a concerning trend.

Chief Smith said that the Fire Department watches the statistics closely and that overdoses have increased across the nation.

Commissioner Balbone asked for additional information regarding the types of drugs that paramedics are seeing.

Chief Smith said that paramedics make an initial patient assessment and do not always have that information.

Commissioner Norton asked for additional information regarding the recent downed power lines.

Chief Smith said that issues with power lines are common and can be due to the heat, tree limbs, or fatigue.

Commissioner Norton asked if there is a listing of calls that are domestic violence related, especially since most are staying at home.

Chief Smith said that treating the patient is their primary mission and that if paramedics suspect that domestic violence was involved, they immediately notify the Sheriff's Department if they are not already on scene.

Commissioner Sol spoke about the upcoming Los Angeles Overdose Prevention Task Force Meeting on September 18th.

9B. SHERIFF'S REPORT: MONTHLY REPORT; POLICING REFORM UPDATE

Lieutenant Bill Moulder thanked all for their kind words and support during this difficult time. Lieutenant Moulder said that both Deputies are doing better and will survive their injuries.

Lieutenant Moulder reviewed the crime statistics for August, which was the third lowest month this year. Fifty per cent of the activity was in the west side of the City. Almost all crimes are down except for the types of burglaries that occur in out buildings and garages. Lieutenant Moulder said that Deputies are conducting operations to mitigate these issues. Lieutenant Moulder spoke regarding the weekly homeless outreach every Thursday and the support from the Tarzana Treatment Center to treat patients who are arrested. Lieutenant Moulder spoke regarding the recent shooting on Melrose near Huntley and said that Deputies patrolling the area responded quickly and arrested four suspects.

Sergeant Fanny Lapkin spoke regarding calls, traffic reports, and DUI statistics.

Chair Laflen asked if there is any additional information on the suspects.

Lieutenant Moulder said that the suspects were from out of the area.

Chair Laflen asked for additional information regarding DUI statistics and asked if they are from the recent checkpoint.

Sergeant Lapkin said that the August statistics do not include the September checkpoint.

Commissioner Sol asked Sheriff's personnel to update the pickpocket theft report by removing closed businesses.

Lieutenant Moulder said that they will update the report.

Commissioner Balbone asked if Sheriff's Deputies are seeing an increase in speeding.

Lieutenant Moulder said that with reduced traffic due to the safer at home health order, there have been a lot more issues with speeding. Lieutenant Moulder said that the City has taken traffic calming measures, and that the station has taken enforcement measures.

Commissioner Williams spoke regarding pedestrians walking in the streets instead of on the sidewalks.

Commissioner Laflen agreed and said that many pedestrians are walking in the street instead of on the sidewalks.

Commissioner Sol spoke regarding the need to space out during the pandemic and not encounter someone without a mask on a crowded sidewalk.

Commissioner Balbone asked for additional information regarding face coverings citations

Staff and Lieutenant Moulder spoke regarding education and citations regarding face coverings.

Commissioner Waack asked if the Sheriff's Deputies are doing proactive work to enforce the health order.

Lieutenant Moulder said that Deputies are doing proactive outreach

Commissioner Williams asked if Block by Block is warning people who are not wearing face coverings.

Mr. Shea Gibson, Block by Block, said that Security Ambassadors are warning people who are not wearing face coverings. Mr. Gibson spoke regarding neighborhood patrols.

Commissioner Balbone asked for additional information regarding the impacts from Cookies in the City of Los Angeles.

Lieutenant Moulder spoke regarding the many nuisance activities caused by Cookies personnel and the efforts by the City of West Hollywood and the City of Los Angeles to address the various issues.

Adam Darvish, resident of West Hollywood, spoke regarding the recent traffic collision where a car crashed into his garage near Cynthia and Larrabee and spoke in support of speed bumps and traffic calming measures

for his neighborhood. Mr. Darvish spoke in support of more enforcement regarding the health order.

Chair Laflen asked if Mr. Darvish is in touch with City staff on the traffic calming requests, and staff confirmed.

Commissioner Laflen spoke regarding the work the Commissioners have done since the last meeting to compile potential community collaborators for policing reform activities.

Public Safety and Human Services staff reviewed the areas of focus during policing reform efforts including potential data studies, community engagement, supplementing and/or partnering civilian positions with sworn officers, supporting and/or expanding the MET team, and supporting broader Los Angeles County and National efforts.

Commissioner Balbone spoke regarding the importance of metrics while looking at data.

Staff said that the Center for Policing Equity looks at three areas including, use of force, pedestrian stops, and vehicle stops.

Commissioner Balbone spoke in support of tracking instances where the County does not provide information on cases, such as the shooting on Palm and the vehicle accident on Santa Monica Boulevard.

Commissioner Williams said that it is important to go through the public information office and that the County releases what they can.

Commissioner Sol asked how cases and payments due to settlements are tracked.

Staff gave a brief overview of the Liability Trust Fund and said that they would check to see if slides recently shared with contract cities are available to share with Commissioners.

Commissioner Williams spoke in support of partnering with the Center for Policing Equity.

Staff reminded that Councilmember Meister recommended the Center for Policing Equity.

Chair Laflen spoke in support of increasing foot patrols.

Commissioner Williams spoke in support of increasing foot patrols.

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

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

Commissioner Williams thanked Block by Block for their service and for their personal attention and community outreach.

Commissioner Norton thanked Block by Block for their service and asked for additional information on the “park violations”.

Mr. Gibson said that park violations include lack of face coverings, lack of adherence to the health order, or lack of adherence to park rules.

9D. JOINT SUBCOMMITTEE OF THE HUMAN SERVICES AND PUBLIC SAFETY COMMISSIONS TO REVIEW AREAS OF INTERSECTION BETWEEN PUBLIC SAFETY AND SOCIAL SERVICES IN ADDRESSING COMMUNITY NEED

David Giugni, Social Services Manager, informed the Commissioners that the Human Services Commission tabled this item and asked that the Public Safety Commission focus the request to a specific shared topic.

Commissioner Balbone spoke regarding a shared concern between the Commissions regarding homelessness.

Chair Laflen said that many members of the public ask Public Safety Commissioners what is being done to address homelessness.

Commissioner Balbone asked Corri Planck, Human Services Director, for ideas to collaborate.

Ms. Planck spoke in support of Public Safety Commissioners attending the Homeless Collaborative as a good starting point. Ms. Planck also said that Social Services staff can attend a future Public Safety Commission meeting to speak about data and available social services, including homelessness, substance abuse, and street mental health. Ms. Planck spoke in support of the existing partnership between law enforcement and social services partners, including the success seen with the MET team which is also proactive in its outreach.

Chair Laflen spoke regarding frequent homeless issues and how Block by Block assists.

Vice-Chair Berger said while maybe a sub-committee is not the best fit at this time, he would like to know how to be able to ask more questions when information is being presented to the Human Services Commission.

Commissioner Sol asked if there has been an increase in funding for the homeless initiative.

Mr. Giugni said that an update on social services contracts is being presented to City Council on Monday which includes a funding chart. He said that while the City has consistently increased funding over the years, budget reductions necessary due to COVID-19 impacts kept 2020-2021 funding at the same level as 2019-2020. Mr. Giugni offered to come and present the information at a future Public Safety Commission meeting.

Commissioner Sol suggested partnering social services workers with Sheriff's Deputies instead of just Sheriff's Deputies conducting outreach.

Lieutenant Moulder and Ms. Planck said that while COVID-19 has limited some of the group effort, the Deputies do partner with social services outreach teams.

Mr. Gibson spoke regarding the recent training received by the MET team and the pilot project where Block by Block will be able to contact MET directly.

Commissioner Williams spoke in support of a sub-committee with Human Services Commission. Commissioner Williams spoke regarding homelessness impacts on businesses.

Commissioner Balbone spoke regarding the difficulties with aggressive homeless individuals and would like more finite reporting on how many times someone encounters an individual having a mental health episode. Commissioner Balbone requested sharing information from public speakers at Public Safety Commission with the Human Services Commission. Commissioners Balbone spoke in support of being more creative.

Ms. Planck spoke regarding how the policy and advocacy issues affect the City's ability to assist those who are service resistant including, the current definition of gravely disabled and 5150. Ms. Planck spoke regarding housing issues, service issues, public safety issues, and policy issues.

Commissioner Williams spoke regarding the history of homelessness in West Hollywood and how PATH assisted individuals.

Commissioner Balbone and Berger said that they would attend a future homeless collaborative.

Staff reminded that the City Council packets include synopses of recent commission and board meetings.

10. ITEMS FROM SUBCOMMITTEES

None.

11. ITEMS FROM STAFF

Staff gave an update on safety bollards and temporary out zones.

Commissioners agreed to begin the October meeting at 6:00 PM.

13. PUBLIC COMMENTS

None.

14. ITEMS FROM THE COMMISSION/COMMISSIONER COMMENTS

Commissioner Berger said that getting the perspective from the service providers on how rare the window is to accept help for persons experiencing homelessness.

Commissioner Balbone thanked Human Services staff and public safety personnel. Commissioner Balbone spoke regarding trash bins overflowing on the street.

Commissioner Williams wished all a healthy happy new year.

Commissioner Waack spoke regarding crowded sidewalks due to the outdoor expansions and said that A frame advertisements are blocking pathways.

Staff gave a history of emergency executive orders and will follow-up with code compliance regarding businesses impeding pedestrian travel.

15. ADJOURNMENT

The Public Safety Commission adjourned at 8:25 PM in the memory of Deputy Soo H. Kim - West Hollywood Station and the 33 law enforcement officers and firefighters who have passed away since the August meeting, and in honor of the two Deputies who were shot over the weekend and all first responders currently responding to the brush fires. The next meeting is scheduled for October 12, 2020 at 6:00 PM via teleconference.

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Public Safety Commission Chair

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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.)