

SUBJECT: **ESTABLISH FRAMEWORK AND GUIDELINES FOR SOCIAL JUSTICE TASK FORCE**

INITIATED BY: **COMMUNITY & LEGISLATIVE AFFAIRS DIVISION**
(John Leonard, Manager)
(Andi Lovano, Supervisor)
(Jasmine Duckworth, Community Affairs Coordinator)

STATEMENT ON THE SUBJECT:

The City Council will receive an update from staff regarding the framework and guidelines for the Social Justice Task Force.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 1) Establish the Social Justice Task Force consisting of nine (9) members – one direct appointment from each Councilmember and four at-large appointments – who are intended to reflect the Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) community members who live, work, or own businesses in the City of West Hollywood.
- 2) Approve the proposed framework and guidelines for the Social Justice Task Force, as described in this staff report.
- 3) Direct the City Clerk to notice and accept applications for the Social Justice Task Force starting on February 8, 2021, and lasting for fourteen days.
- 4) Return to a City Council meeting within 60 days for Council to make appointments to the Task Force.

BACKGROUND / ANALYSIS:

On December 7, 2020, the City Council approved the creation of a Social Justice Task Force to advise on social and racial equity issues and provide policy recommendations to the City Council to address systemic racism for the City of West Hollywood. The Task Force will consist of members that reflect the Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) community members who live, work, or own businesses in the City of West Hollywood.

In an effort to increase community engagement and amplify the voices of BIPOC in the West Hollywood community, this item proposes the establishment of a Social Justice Task Force. The Social Justice Task Force will serve to identify social and racial inequities and provide recommendations to the City Council regarding policies and reforms to address inequities and systemic racism that exist in our community. The Task Force will serve to engage BIPOC in providing advice to the community as well as policy

recommendations to the City Council to advance equity, inclusion, and diversity in West Hollywood.

Task Force Structure/Framework

The Task Force will consist of nine members – one direct appointee from each Councilmember and four at-large appointees. On February 8, 2021, interested community members will be encouraged to submit an application to the City Clerk’s office to be considered for the Task Force. Applicants will be encouraged to submit their applications by February 22nd to be considered to an appointment. This deadline represents a fourteen day application period. Applications will be reviewed by staff and City Council through the month of February and staff will return to City Council within 60 days for Council to make appointments. Once live, the application can be accessed on the City’s website at www.weho.org.

After Council makes appointments, the Social Justice Task Force will convene its first meeting and adopt a work plan for approximately the next twelve months, with opportunities for extensions or adaptations as necessary. The Task Force will convene once a month, at a date and time to be determined. In order to protect the public health and prevent the spread of COVID-19 (Coronavirus), Task Force meetings will take place via videoconference until the public health emergency period ends.

Staff proposes the following outline for the Task Force structure:

Meetings 1-3: Introductions, outline of City protocols, outline of policy the City has purview over, presentations from staff on relevant City programs, and development of Task Force goals and work plan.

Meetings 4-6: Identification of actionable items within work plan and presentations from key community partners including educators, activists, and organizers.

Meetings 7-12: Formulate policy reforms and recommendations that advance equity, inclusion and diversity in West Hollywood and present final report to City Council.

The number of meetings in each group listed above, as well as the frequency of meetings, are staff’s initial suggestions and they may be adjusted based on the needs of the Task Force. The Task Force may determine that more or less meetings are required in order to fulfill the desired outcomes in each group.

Staff is recommending that the first few meetings of the Task Force be led by a facilitator who will assist the members in outlining the goals and objectives of the Task Force, and developing a work plan. Staff is currently researching potential facilitators and will return with a recommended facilitator and budget allocation at the same meeting that Task

Force appointments are made. Members will be asked to identify topics and priorities that seek to address and advance the Task Force's goals. Examples of such topics can include, but are not limited to: 1) Community-wide participation in racial and social equity workshops; 2) Ensuring equitable distribution of City services; 3) Focus on providing incentives for minority led businesses in West Hollywood; and 4) Enhanced public safety advocacy and increase in community policing. The staff will report back to the Council quarterly to provide a status on workplan, objectives and engagement efforts. There will be joint collaboration with the Transgender Advisory Board and the Lesbian and Gay Advisory Board, as well as the Public Safety Commission to provide input and feedback to the Task Force. As a part of the staff report for the appointment of task force members, staff will provide further detail on the logistics and collaboration with appropriate advisory boards and commissions. Residents and community members are welcome to attend the meetings and provide public comment.

During the December 7, 2020 City Council meeting, there was discussion surrounding the proposal of stipends. Historically, the City of West Hollywood has not given stipends to Task Force members. Stipends of \$75 per meeting are given to members of Advisory Boards and Commissions. Because of the proposed duration of the Task Force, number of meetings, and type of work required, staff is recommending that the Social Justice Task Force Members receive stipends of \$75 per meeting. The Social Justice Task Force is a Brown Act body and the members will be required to participate in an orientation session with the City Clerk's Office prior to the first meeting, and attend annual City trainings, including AB1234 Ethics Training and Sexual Harassment Training.

CONFORMANCE WITH VISION 2020 AND THE GOALS OF THE WEST HOLLYWOOD GENERAL PLAN:

This item is consistent with the Primary Strategic Goal(s) (PSG) and/or Ongoing Strategic Program(s) (OSP) of:

- OSP-5: Support People through Social Services.
- OSP-6: Value and Encourage our Broad Diversity of Cultures.

In addition, this item is compliant with the following goal(s) of the West Hollywood General Plan:

- HS-1: Maintain and pursue humane social policies and social services that address the needs of the community.
- HS-3: Promote a community with strong social networks and cross-cultural interaction.

EVALUATION PROCESSES:

N/A

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY AND HEALTH:

N/A

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT:

The Social Justice Task Force will include a diverse group of residents, business owners, and community members in West Hollywood. Staff will ensure information about Task Force meetings is posted on the City's website and promoted through social media channels. The Task Force meetings will be open to the public and individuals are encouraged to make public comment during the meetings.

OFFICE OF PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY:

CITY MANAGER'S DEPARTMENT / COMMUNITY & LEGISLATIVE AFFAIRS
DIVISION

FISCAL IMPACT:

Staff is recommending Task Force members receive a stipend of \$75 per meeting. The estimated budget for the first 12 months is \$8,100. Staff is currently meeting with potential facilitators and developing a proposed budget for their services. Staff will return to Council with a request for funding from the Special Council Programs account to cover the costs of the stipends and facilitator at the same meeting that Task Force member appointments are made.