

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

**MONDAY, MAY 10, 2021
6:00 P.M.**

VIA TELECONFERENCE

1. **CALL TO ORDER** at 6:00 PM
2. **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE** led by Chair Laflen
3. **OATH OF OFFICE**

The Oath of Office was administered to Robert Oliver by Councilmember Erickson.

4. **ROLL CALL**

Commissioners Present: Balbone, Berger, Laflen, Norton, Oliver, Norton, Roshay

Commissioners Absent: None

Others present: Lieutenant Bill Moulder, Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department; Sergeant Fanny Lapkin, Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department; Assistant Chief Drew Smith, Los Angeles County Fire Department; Battalion Chief Leland Delaney, Los Angeles County Fire Department; Shea Gibson, Block by Block; Kristin Cook, Public Safety Director; Janet Jimenez, Assistant to the City Manager; Danny Rivas, Code Compliance Manager; David Giugni, Social Services Manager

5. **ADJOURNMENT REQUESTS**

None.

6. **APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA**

ACTION: Motion by Commissioner Norton to amend the May 10, 2021 agenda by moving item 10G to 10C, seconded by Commissioner Roshay, and approved.

POSTING OF THE AGENDA

The agenda for the May 10, 2021 Public Safety Commission meeting was posted at City Hall, Plummer Park, and the West Hollywood Sheriff's Station.

7. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

ACTION: Motion by Commissioner Norton to approve the April 12, 2021 minutes, seconded by Commissioner Balbone, and approved with Commissioner Oliver abstaining.

8. PUBLIC COMMENTS

None.

9. COMMISSIONER COMMENTS AND LIAISON REPORTS

Vice-Chair Berger welcomed Commissioner Oliver and spoke regarding National Police Week.

Commissioner Norton welcomed Commissioner Oliver.

Commissioner Balbone welcomed Commissioner Oliver and thanked Chair Laflen. Commissioner Balbone spoke regarding her attendance at a community listening session hosted by the Sheriff Civilian Oversight Commission, the level of recommended education for officers, and the important of engagement with the community. Commissioner Balbone spoke regarding her attendance at a Measure J meeting. Commissioner Balbone spoke regarding public safety issues at Bikes and Hikes in West Hollywood and thanked the Sheriff's Department for using the decoy car at the location.

Commissioner Oliver thanked all for the welcome and encouraged all to get vaccinated.

Commissioner Roshay welcomed Commissioner Oliver. Commissioner Roshay spoke regarding her attendance at a recent Civilian Oversight Commission on the use of force in law enforcement. Commissioner Roshay thanked staff for sending the social services guide and thanked Shea Gibson from Block by Block for sending information. Commissioner Roshay spoke regarding a recent incident involving a friend at the Abbey.

Commissioner Balbone spoke regarding crowd control and aggressive actions by people not being used to being out of their homes.

Staff spoke regarding weekly meetings with the Chamber, West Hollywood businesses, staff, and Sheriff's personnel.

10. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

10A. REPORT ON DOMESTIC VIOLENCE/INTIMATE PARTNER VIOLENCE PROGRAMMING

The Public Safety Commission received a report on Domestic Violence/Intimate Partner Violence programming from Noah Castro and Majid Alsharif of the Los Angeles LGBT Center.

Commissioner Balbone asked how referrals are made.

Mr. Castro explained how the Center reaches clients.

Vice-Chair Berger asked about under-reporting and strategies to address it.

Mr. Castro and Mr. Alsharif spoke regarding strategies, including safety planning, to reach people who may be afraid to report it.

Commissioner Roshay asked for additional information on the “warm line” and spoke regarding the resources listed on the City’s website.

Mr. Giugni spoke regarding the City’s website and said that 911 should be the first call in an immediate crisis.

Commissioner Roshay thanked the Center for their work and for acknowledging the issue with underreporting.

Commissioner Balbone asked if there are any recommendations the Center has for the Commission.

Mr. Castro spoke in support of training with law enforcement and advertising the resources available.

Commissioner Oliver thanked the Center’s staff for their presentation.

10B. CODE COMPLIANCE UPDATE

Commissioners received a report from Danny Rivas, Code Compliance Manager.

Commissioner Hallman asked for additional information regarding response times.

Mr. Rivas said that the system flags issues for staff and that any life safety or serious requests are assigned by the supervisor on duty the same day.

Commissioner Hallman spoke regarding issues with construction sites on the eastside and for clarification regarding citations for those sites.

Mr. Rivas explained how code responds to and enforces various issues at construction sites.

Commissioner Balbone spoke regarding an increase in “sewer problems” in the code enforcement report and asked for additional information.

Mr. Rivas said that with many people at home during the health order, plumbing is more utilized and there have been more issues in some buildings than normal.

Commissioner Roshay asked for clarification on the City’s noise ordinance and loud parties especially as more people are vaccinated and hosting parties at home.

Mr. Rivas explained how Code Enforcement Officers and Sheriff’s Deputies respond to noise and loud party complaints and said that there is not a specific decibel level used in the field, but that the officer uses their judgement.

Commissioner Oliver spoke regarding an increase in disputes between neighbors during the pandemic and asked how people talking loudly is addressed. Commissioner Oliver asked if there has been an increase in noise complaints during the pandemic.

Mr. Rivas said that the code provides flexibility for the Code Enforcement Officer to be able to assess the situation. Mr. Rivas said that the complaints during the pandemic have increased substantially since more people have been home.

Commissioner Norton spoke regarding the various increases of complaint categories during the pandemic and asked for clarification on the officers’ work. Commissioner Norton thanked Mr. Rivas for his hard work.

Chair Laflen asked if the short-term rental issues are in newer or existing buildings.

Mr. Rivas said that with people being home during the pandemic, more issues are being noticed.

Vice-Chair Berger thanked Mr. Rivas for his hard work. Vice-Chair Berger asked what code is doing to prepare for enforcing the smoking ordinance and asked what issue is the most relevant to public safety.

Mr. Rivas said that the most pressing public safety issue that code compliance addresses is related to reopening. Mr. Rivas spoke regarding

enforcing the smoking ordinance, which will include sending a city-wide mailer.

Commissioner Hallman asked for clarification regarding animals off leash laws.

Mr. Rivas said that there is a code that addresses dogs off leash. Mr. Rivas said that the City is exploring a possible partnership with the City of Los Angeles regarding animal control services.

10C. REPORT FROM BLOCK BY BLOCK SECURITY AMBASSADORS – MONTHLY REPORT AND PROPOSED STAFFING FOR 2021-2022

Staff spoke regarding possible funding increases being discussed during the City's budget process which may include additional funding for MET and non-sworn public safety services.

Commissioner Hallman spoke in support of an eastside kiosk for Block by Block.

Chair Laflen spoke in support of an eastside kiosk, but also in support of adding resources in the center of the City.

Commissioner Balbone spoke in support of adding resources in the center of the City.

Mr. Shea Gibson highlighted key incidents from the previous month, including efforts to assist people experiencing homelessness.

Commissioner Roshay asked if future Block by Block reports could be broken up by east, center, and west.

Vice-Chair Berger spoke regarding new bathrooms and asked if their design would include the modifications made at Plummer Park.

Commissioner Roshay asked for additional information on business contacts and asked if the businesses were treating the Security Ambassadors well.

Mr. Gibson said that their business interactions are positive.

10D. REPORT FROM FIRE DEPARTMENT – MONTHLY REPORT

Assistant Chief Drew Smith said that the firefighters serving West Hollywood are doing well. Chief Smith spoke regarding a successful "mayday" drill held at the Comedy Store in partnership with the City of Los Angeles Fire Department and the Beverly Hills Fire Department.

Megan Currier, Community Services Liaison, said that CERT classes will be offered again during the summer.

Battalion Chief Leland Delaney spoke regarding the Out on Robertson program.

Chief Smith thanked the residents of the City of West Hollywood who reach out the Fire Department.

Staff thanked the Fire Department for their care of West Hollywood COVID patients and their support of the hospitals during the winter surge.

Vice-Chair Berger asked if Chief Ghorbani was able to provide more information regarding the definition of “psychological” calls.

Chief Smith gave an explanation on how calls are coded as “psychological”, but he said that it would be extremely difficult to narrow the data down easily.

Commissioner Balbone said that additional clarification would be helpful with properly linking services. Commissioner Balbone asked for additional information regarding fire season.

Chief Smith spoke regarding how the Fire Department assesses vulnerability and prepares for wildfires, including repositioning resources to anticipate issues. Chief Smith said that the Fire Department uses the best science for operational readiness. Chief Smith spoke regarding the County’s “Ready, Set, Go” program.

10E. SHERIFF’S REPORT: MONTHLY REPORT

Lieutenant Moulder said that year to date Part I crimes are down, and that some of the recent months are some of the lowest in the City’s history. Lieutenant Moulder spoke regarding various patrols and efforts to address crime. Lieutenant Moulder spoke regarding the weekly CARE operations to assist persons experiencing homelessness. Lieutenant Moulder spoke regarding reopening and efforts to address the various venues and assisting them to comply with the health order, including staffing the Out on Robertson closure. Lieutenant Moulder said that County Counsel has reviewed and approved the MOU with the Center for Policing Equity and that the City Attorney is now reviewing the MOU.

Lieutenant Moulder spoke regarding upcoming events including a business safety meeting with the Chamber on June 11th and a virtual hate crimes summit on May 19th.

Chair Laflen asked for clarification on statistics by geographic area of the City.

Lieutenant Moulder said that the westside has 44% of the Part I crimes, the Center has 33% of the Part I crimes, and the eastside has 23% of the Part I crimes.

Chair Laflen spoke in support of managing resources and spreading them out throughout the City.

Commissioner Balbone asked for additional information regarding an increase in aggravated assaults.

Lieutenant Moulder gave detailed information regarding assaults.

Vice-Chair Berger asked for an update on mail thefts.

Lieutenant Moulder said that although there were eight mail room thefts, they have made a couple of arrests so hopefully the issue is subsiding.

Vice-Chair Berger spoke regarding vehicle burglaries and asked if the same people are getting arrested. Vice-Chair Berger spoke regarding comments from Dr. Johnathan Sherin at the Department of Mental Health about bottlenecks in the system as there are not enough mental health facilities to house people.

Lieutenant Moulder said that it varies, but that there are some individuals who are repeat offenders. Lieutenant Moulder and staff spoke regarding mental health resources and MET.

10F. UPDATE ON IMPACTS FROM COOKIES

Lieutenant Moulder spoke regarding mitigation efforts and coordination with the City of Los Angeles to address nuisance impacts.

Commissioner Hallman asked for the most recent update from the City of Los Angeles.

Lieutenant Moulder said that we are waiting to see if the Los Angeles City Department of Cannabis will review the various issues at Cookies. Lieutenant Moulder said that he and LAPD have asked the Cookies Security team for an additional meeting.

Commissioner Oliver asked if the City of Los Angeles, City Attorney's office is involved.

Lieutenant Moulder said that West Hollywood Sheriff's personnel, City Attorney, and staff are in regular communication with the City of Los Angeles, including their City Attorney's office.

10G. REIMAGINING POLICING, PROMOTING EQUITY, AND MEASURE J

Staff spoke about the upcoming joint meeting with the Sheriff Civilian Oversight Commission in June and a possible community conversation in July followed by the regular Public Safety Commission meeting.

Commissioner Roshay asked for a written update on equity measures at the next meeting.

Commissioner Balbone requested that monthly reports still be available in June.

11. ITEMS FROM SUBCOMMITTEES

None.

12. ITEMS FROM STAFF

Commissioners reviewed the remainder of the 2021 schedule: June 14, 2021 *** community conversation with Sheriff Civilian Oversight Commission in lieu of the regular meeting, July 12, 2021, August 9, 2021, September 13, 2021, October 11, 2021, November 8, 2021, and December 13, 2021.

13. PUBLIC COMMENTS

None.

14. ITEMS FROM THE COMMISSION/COMMISSIONER COMMENTS

Commissioner Balbone spoke in support of honoring National Night Out, even if it is virtual.

15. ADJOURNMENT

The Public Safety Commission adjourned at 8:55 PM. The next meeting is scheduled for July 12, 2021 at 7:00 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.

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