

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

**MONDAY, AUGUST 9, 2021
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, Hallman, Laflen, Oliver, Roman, Roshay

Commissioners Absent: None

Others present: Lieutenant Bill Moulder, Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department; Sergeant Fanny Lapkin, Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department; Battalion Chief Jason Ghorbani, 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 adjourned in the memory of her grandmother, Jean Henry, on what would have been her birthday.

5. **APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA**

ACTION: Motion by Commissioner Roshay to approve the August 9, 2021 agenda, seconded by Commissioner Oliver and approved.

POSTING OF THE AGENDA

The agenda for the August 9, 2021 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 Balbone to approve the July 12, 2021 minutes as amended, seconded by Commissioner Laflen, and approved.

7. PUBLIC COMMENTS

Michael Wojtkielewicz, resident of West Hollywood, spoke regarding tourism related negative impact on climate change.

8. COMMISSIONER COMMENTS AND LIAISON REPORTS

Commissioner Roshay congratulated Commissioner Hallman on a successful National Night Out event. Commissioner Roshay spoke regarding her recent attendance at the Social Justice Taskforce meeting.

Commissioner Balbone congratulated Commissioner Hallman and Jasmine Duckworth on a successful National Night Out event. Commissioner Balbone thanked the City for hosting the educational session on racial justice presented by Dr. Robin DiAngelo.

Commissioner Hallman thanked his fellow Commissioners, Block by Block, Sheriff's Deputies, and Fire personnel for attending his neighborhood's National Night Out event.

Chair Laflen thanked Jasmine Duckworth for producing a successful National Night Out event.

9. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

9A. ELECTION OF CHAIR AND VICE-CHAIR

Melissa Crowder, City Clerk, opened nominations for Chair.

Commissioner Balbone nominated Vice-Chair Berger for Chair.

Commissioner Roshay nominated Commissioner Hallman for Chair.

Motion by Chair Laflen to close the nominations for Chair, seconded by Commissioner Roshay.

Ms. Crowder conducted a roll call vote for Chair:

Commissioner Balbone – Berger
Commissioner Berger – Berger
Commissioner Hallman – Berger
Chair Laflen – Berger
Commissioner Oliver – Berger
Commissioner Roman – abstained
Commissioner Roshay – Berger

Vice-Chair Berger was selected as the next Chair.

Ms. Crowder opened nominations for Vice-Chair.

Commissioner Balbone nominated Commissioner Roshay for Vice-Chair.

Commissioner Hallman nominated Commissioner Roshay for Vice-Chair.

Commissioner Roshay nominated Commissioner Balbone for Vice-Chair.

Motion by Commissioner Roshay to close the nominations for Vice-Chair, seconded by Commissioner Balbone.

Ms. Crowder conducted a roll call vote for Vice-Chair:

Commissioner Balbone – Roshay
Commissioner Berger – Roshay
Commissioner Hallman – Roshay
Chair Laflen – Roshay
Commissioner Oliver – Roshay
Commissioner Roman – abstained
Commissioner Roshay – Balbone

Commissioner Roshay was selected as the next Vice-Chair.

9B. PUBLIC SAFETY COMMISSION PURVIEW

Michael Wojtkielewicz, resident of West Hollywood, spoke regarding emergency preparedness and spoke in support of building and safety falling under the purview of public safety.

Commissioners received a presentation from Melissa Crowder, City Clerk, on the Public Safety Commission's recently updated purview as outlined in the West Hollywood Municipal Code Section 2.60.

Vice-Chair Berger asked how recommendations from the Public Safety Commission should be forwarded to the City Council.

Ms. Crowder said that the Mayor and the Mayor Pro Tempore serve as the sub-committee to consider requests from Commissions and Advisory Boards. Ms. Crowder said that staff would forward the Commissioners' recommendations to her for her to share with the Mayor and the Mayor Pro Tempore for consideration.

Commissioner Balbone spoke in support of looking at data and needs by age bands.

Ms. Crowder suggested using the liaison to the Human Services Commission to convey some of these questions and to determine needs by age.

Commissioner Oliver said that the updated purview includes “all” and that the Commission can support various groups.

Staff spoke regarding liaison assignments which will be included on September’s agenda for the Commission’s consideration.

9C. REPORT FROM FIRE DEPARTMENT – MONTHLY REPORT

Battalion Chief Jason Ghorbani spoke regarding the COVID-19 pandemic and said that there were no significant fire related incidents in July.

Vice-Chair Berger spoke regarding the possibility of urgent care centers as receiving centers and asked if transports are allowed to go to urgent cares yet.

Chief Ghorbani said that West Hollywood patients are transported to nearby receiving hospitals like UCLA and Cedars and that urgent care centers are not approved yet as receiving centers by the County. Chief Ghorbani thanked all for a successful National Night Out event and said that the firefighters really enjoyed seeing everyone.

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

Michael Wojtkielewicz, resident of West Hollywood, spoke regarding patrols in the alleys and an incident where a person experiencing homelessness was not assisted.

Mr. Gibson said that he would look into the incident and follow-up.

Mr. Gibson thanked Commissioner Hallman for a successful National Night Out event. Mr. Gibson provided a report on Block by Block Security Ambassador activity for the month of July 2021.

Commissioner Roshay requested that language be added to the City’s website so people know they can text the hot line number.

Commissioner Roshay asked if the data can be broken up by geographic area for the next month’s report.

Commissioner Balbone spoke in support of seeing both month to month and year to year comparisons.

Vice-Chair Berger asked if splitting up the teams is going well.

Mr. Gibson said that splitting up the teams on the east end has made a difference but that during the nighttime hours, his teams pair up.

Vice-Chair Berger spoke regarding the hotline and asked if someone can respond to calls 24 hours.

Mr. Gibson said that teams are available.

Commissioner Oliver asked for clarification regarding business contacts.

Mr. Gibson said that business contacts are generally proactive where the teams stop in to say hello and discuss any concerns. Mr. Gibson said that calls for service are responses.

9E. SHERIFF'S REPORT – MONTHLY REPORT AND GUEST SPEAKER (SHERIFF'S VOLUNTEER DIMITRI KERMANI)

Michael Wojtkielewicz, resident of West Hollywood, spoke regarding the data study with the Center for Policing Equity.

Sheriff's Volunteer, Dimitri Kermani, gave a presentation on his family's history in Europe during World War II. Mr. Kermani spoke regarding hate crimes and anti-Semitism in present day. Mr. Kermani spoke regarding the commitment and the contribution to humanity by the Jewish community.

Chair Laflen thanked Mr. Kermani for sharing his story.

Commissioner Oliver thanked Mr. Kermani for sharing his story. Commissioner Oliver spoke regarding his family members who survived war and ongoing stereotypes of the Jewish community.

Vice-Chair Berger thanked Mr. Kermani for sharing his story and expressed the need to keep in touch.

Vice-Chair Berger asked for clarification on the role of Sheriff's volunteers.

Mr. Kermani spoke regarding the various ways that Sheriff's volunteers can assist the Sheriff's Station.

Commissioner Balbone thanked Mr. Kermani for his service and for sharing his story.

Chair Laflen thanked Mr. Kermani for sharing his story and asked if he could say hello to his parents whom she knows.

Lieutenant Moulder thanked Mr. Kermani for sharing his story. Lieutenant Moulder thanked the Sheriff's Volunteers for all the ways they support the Station.

Lieutenant Moulder said that crime was up in July, but he said to remember that crime was at some of its lowest levels during the pandemic prior to re-opening the economy. Lieutenant Moulder said that the crime analyst at the Station will contact Mr. Gibson at Block by Block to share the geographical borders they use to produce the monthly reports. Lieutenant Moulder spoke regarding vehicle burglaries, mail thefts, and special operations to address these crimes. Lieutenant Moulder spoke regarding their partnership with Cedars and service providers to serve both the senior population and people experiencing homelessness. Lieutenant Moulder spoke regarding the Station's crime prevention efforts on social media. Lieutenant Moulder spoke regarding an incident on July 22, 2021 where Deputy Herrera was able to rescue an unconscious female from a driver of a van who was arrested. Lieutenant Moulder spoke regarding the various anti-masking and anti-vaccination protests. Lieutenant Moulder spoke regarding a successful National Night Out event.

Commissioner Hallman spoke regarding the recent protests at Harlowe and asked Lieutenant Moulder for clarification on the Sheriff's role and response.

Lieutenant Moulder spoke regarding how Sheriff's personnel respond to protests to protect public safety and to ensure everyone's right to peaceful protest.

Commissioner Balbone asked if there is a need to include other locations on the pickpocket chart since most listed are on the west side.

Lieutenant Moulder encourages all to report pickpocket thefts and said that many are on the west side.

Commissioner Balbone spoke regarding the social media posts regarding the allegations regarding patrons being drugged while at the Abbey.

Lieutenant Moulder said that Deputies are aware of an individual's post who alleges being drugged while at the Abbey. Deputies followed up with the individual who came in and made a report. Lieutenant Moulder spoke

regarding a second post where Deputies contacted the individual to come in and make a report.

Commissioner Balbone asked how the Sheriff's Department monitors social media and responds.

Lieutenant Moulder spoke regarding the various ways that the Sheriff's Department and the City monitor social media and contact individuals to assist.

Commissioner Roshay asked if there is a timeframe that victims should follow to make a report, and she asked what type of evidence is helpful and what services are available to victims.

Lieutenant Moulder said he understands that these situations are traumatic for victims and said that he encourages all to come forward as soon as possible. Lieutenant Moulder said that Deputies offer services to the victim. Lieutenant Moulder said that evidence collection depends on what type of substance was used.

9F. UPDATE ON IMPACTS FROM COOKIES

Lieutenant Moulder spoke regarding mitigation efforts and coordination with the City of Los Angeles to address nuisance impacts and said that they are still getting complaints from the neighbors, including regarding cars parking illegally.

9G. REIMAGINING POLICING, PROMOTING EQUITY, MEASURE J, COLLABORATION WITH THE LOS ANGELES COUNTY SHERIFF CIVILIAN OVERSIGHT COMMISSION, AND THE CENTER FOR POLICING EQUITY STUDY

Lieutenant Moulder spoke regarding a recent meeting with County data staff and the Center for Policing Equity staff to discuss the data transfer for the study. Staff said that Sean Eldridge, from the Center for Policing Equity, will attend the September Public Safety Commission meeting.

10. ITEMS FROM SUBCOMMITTEES

None.

11. ITEMS FROM STAFF

Staff said that the September meeting agenda will include selecting liaison assignments and that the October agenda will include the work plan.

Staff spoke regarding upcoming meeting schedule, including September 13, 2021, October 11, 2021, November 8, 2021, and December 13, 2021.

12. PUBLIC COMMENTS

None.

13. ITEMS FROM THE COMMISSION/COMMISSIONER COMMENTS

Commissioner Balbone thanked Chair Laflen for her leadership as Chair.

Commissioner Roshay thanked Chair Laflen for her leadership as Chair. Commissioner Roshay spoke in support of devoting an entire meeting to developing the work plan.

Commissioner Hallman thanked his fellow Commissioners and spoke in support of working together this next year.

Vice-Chair Berger thanked his fellow Commissioners and spoke in support of working together this next year.

Chair Laflen thanked her fellow Commissioners for their support over this past year.

14. ADJOURNMENT

The Public Safety Commission adjourned at 8:28 PM in the memory of Jean Henry. The next meeting is scheduled for September 13, 2021 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.)