

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

**MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 13, 2021
6:00 P.M.**

VIA TELECONFERENCE

1. **CALL TO ORDER** at 6:00 PM
2. **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE** led by Chair Berger
3. **OATH OF OFFICE** – The Oath of Office was administered to Nika Soon-shiong by Mayor Horvath.
4. **ROLL CALL**

Commissioners Present: Balbone, Berger, Hallman, Oliver, Roman, Roshay, Soon-shiong

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; Megan Currier, Community Services Representative, Los Angeles County Fire Department; Shea Gibson, Block by Block; Kristin Cook, Public Safety Director; Janet Jimenez, Assistant to the City Manager

5. **ADJOURNMENT REQUESTS**

Commissioner Balbone requested a moment of silence and adjourned in the memory of all of the lives lost on September 11, 2001 and in the twenty years since.

6. **APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA**

ACTION: Motion by Vice-Chair Roshay to approve the September 13, 2021 agenda, seconded by Commissioner Balbone and approved.

POSTING OF THE AGENDA

The agenda for the September 13, 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 Balbone to approve the August 9, 2021 minutes as amended, seconded by Commissioner Hallman, and approved with Commissioner Soon-Shiong abstaining.

8. PUBLIC COMMENTS

Staff read comments from Keely Field, West Hollywood Women's Advisory Board Member, regarding a personal experience with sexual assault and the fear in the community regarding the recent incidents regarding drugging and/or assaults in local establishments and spoke in support of real solutions to prevent future incidents.

William West Seegmiller spoke against the Emergency Executive Order implementing COVID-19 Vaccine Verification Requirements.

Michael Wojtkielewicz, resident of West Hollywood, spoke regarding safety issues at the Sierra Bonita building and spoke in support of enhanced resident services.

Victor Omelchenko, resident of West Hollywood, spoke regarding the Emergency Executive Order implementing COVID-19 Vaccine Verification Requirements and spoke in support of increasing public safety.

9. COMMISSIONER COMMENTS AND LIAISON REPORTS

Commissioner Balbone spoke regarding the post pandemic action plan meeting on August 30, 2021 and the Emergency Executive Order implementing COVID-19 Vaccine Verification Requirements. Commissioner Balbone spoke regarding the importance of supporting the businesses, and she requested regular updates to the Public Safety Commission regarding the enforcement of the mandate and any issues that may arise.

Commissioner Oliver welcomed Commissioner Soon-shiong and spoke in support of the Emergency Executive Order implementing COVID-19 Vaccine Verification Requirements. Commissioner Oliver spoke regarding the unique needs of people who have immigrated to the United States and spoke in support of adding the various issues that this community experiences on a future agenda.

10. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

10A. CENTER FOR POLICING EQUITY

Commissioners received a presentation from Sean Eldridge and Janie Schutz, Implementation Managers/Law Enforcement Initiatives, from the Center for Policing Equity (CPE) regarding CPE's work and the study in partnership with the West Hollywood Sheriff's Station, including the National Justice Database.

Chair Berger thanked Mr. Eldridge and Ms. Schutz for their attendance.

Vice-Chair Roshay thanked Mr. Eldridge and Ms. Schutz for their attendance. Vice-Chair Roshay asked for more clarification regarding CPE's community outreach strategy.

Mr. Eldridge said that there is an extensive planning process that occurs with the City and the West Hollywood Sheriff's Station with opportunities for input by the Public Safety Commission.

Vice-Chair Roshay asked for additional information regarding the Racial and Identity Profiling Act (RIPA).

Lieutenant Moulder gave a background on the Racial and Identity Profiling Act (RIPA) formed as part of AB 953. RIPA's Advisory Board is charged with eliminating racial and identity profiling and improving diversity and racial and identity sensitivity among law enforcement.

Vice-Chair Roshay asked if CPE is successful in encouraging change among the police departments they are serving.

Mr. Eldridge said that the data studies and partnerships with law enforcement agencies have helped those departments make significant changes.

Commissioner Balbone asked how the City of West Hollywood's visitor population, especially in the entertainment districts, will be considered in the analysis.

Mr. Eldridge spoke regarding the regression models and other tools that CPE uses to give a report on "who is being policed" not just a report on a jurisdiction's residential population.

Commissioner Soon-shiong asked if it would be possible for CPE to coordinate with the Countywide Criminal Justice Coordination Committee (CCJCC).

Mr. Eldridge said that CPE is willing to partner with CCJCC.

Commissioner Soon-shiong asked how data is standardized in order to provide quality analysis.

Mr. Eldridge and Ms. Schutz spoke regarding how data is standardized and how their findings lead to recommendations to law enforcement agencies to improve both data collection and policies.

Commissioner Soon-shiong said that a significant number of records are kept on paper by the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department and asked if those paper records will be reviewed.

Mr. Eldridge said that paper records are not being reviewed at this time.

Commissioner Hallman asked if the reports are public and asked for an update on where the West Hollywood study is in its process.

Ms. Schutz spoke regarding the City of San Francisco's project and RIPA.

Mr. Eldridge said that the West Hollywood study is just beginning with the data transfer.

Chair Berger requested that for information to be shared with the Commission as appropriate.

Mr. Eldridge said that CPE meets with City staff and sheriff once a month and will keep the Commission apprised of their progress.

Chair Berger thanked Mr. Eldridge and Ms. Schutz for their attendance.

10B. DEVELOPMENT OF A CITY BEHAVIORAL HEALTH CRISIS RESPONSE UNIT

Corri Planck, Strategic Initiatives Division Manager, gave an overview on the vaccination efforts for people experiencing homeless including multiple clinics and mobile efforts.

Commissioners received a presentation on the development of a City Behavioral Health Crisis Response Unit from Corri Planck and Elizabeth Anderson from the Strategic Initiatives Division. Staff are looking to introduce a behavioral health crisis first responder unit into West Hollywood's emergency service portfolio to broaden expertise and enhance crisis services available to the community.

Michael Wojtkielewicz, resident of West Hollywood, spoke regarding the potential difficulties with using 988.

Victor Omelchenko, resident of West Hollywood, spoke about the recent sub-committee meeting on homelessness and the importance of information sharing across meetings.

Commissioner Soon-Shiong asked about the possibility of integration with 211 and asked if the Los Angeles County Office of Diversion and Reentry is being consulted.

Ms. Planck spoke regarding the various hurdles to using 911 and 988. Ms. Planck said that most of the need in West Hollywood currently is around mental health instead of incarceration. She said that staff are in communication with Dr. Sherin at the Department of Mental Health.

Commissioner Balbone spoke regarding the need to properly integrate dispatch. Commissioner Balbone expressed concern for the difficulties with how community members ask for assistance, how to describe situations to get the appropriate responder, and the importance of dispatcher working with residents.

Ms. Anderson said that the program's goal is that there is no wrong door of entry to get your needs met and to have the proper field team respond.

Commissioner Balbone spoke regarding Measure J and how its funding provides alternatives to policing and spoke in support of extensive support and wrap around services.

Ms. Planck said that staff are looking at the services Commissioner Balbone described, including funding possibilities.

Vice-Chair Roshay spoke regarding her attendance at the recent Council Sub-committee on Homelessness which also discussed the regional challenges.

Commissioner Oliver spoke regarding the people who are in real need on the street. Commissioner Oliver expressed concern that state law will keep this program from being effective.

Ms. Anderson spoke regarding the complexities with 5150 as it suspends someone's right to manage their own affairs. Ms. Anderson said that even some patients released from 5150 holds continue to have multiple frailties.

Ms. Planck emphasized the importance of de-escalation skills and how it can make a significant impact. Ms. Planck spoke regarding the challenges in the county system surrounding conservatorships.

Commissioner Oliver spoke regarding the potential difficulties, the need for 24 hour coverage, and the possibility of including plain clothes officers.

Ms. Anderson said staff are looking at multiple staffing configurations for all hours.

Commissioner Hallman thanked staff for the presentation and asked if the new program will replace MET or work in tandem with MET.

Ms. Planck said that the goal is for the new program to work in tandem with existing MET and social services teams.

Commissioner Hallman spoke regarding the difficulty in determining which team responds.

Ms. Anderson and Ms. Planck said that onboarding and training for dispatch and ongoing briefings will be key to the program's success.

Vice-Chair Roshay spoke regarding the challenges with mental health professionals not choosing graveyard shifts and the need to move to a 24 hour model.

Ms. Planck spoke regarding the importance of cultural competency and finding the right fit for the community.

Commissioner Roman expressed concern for the possibility of the program's success while saying that he wants to remain positive. Commissioner Roman spoke regarding the lack of housing and receiving centers and said that the program will not work without changing legislation. Commissioner Roman said that the 911 dispatchers do not know who Block by Block is and that layering another responder team as an option will not work.

Chair Berger spoke regarding his attendance at the Sheriff Civilian Oversight Commission which also discussed the potential 988 system of regional call centers which would triage the right team to send out. Chair Berger spoke about the possibility of federal funding.

Commissioner Balbone asked if there will be future efforts for vaccinations among people experiencing homelessness.

Ms. Planck said that the effort to support vaccinations for people experiencing homelessness is ongoing.

Commissioner Balbone asked if the City is assisting businesses with vaccinations in light of the new Emergency Executive Order.

Staff described the ongoing collaboration with the business community on COVID-19 related issues, testing, and vaccinations.

Commissioner Oliver spoke regarding the hurdles at the county and state system that the program will face and asked how the system can be improved.

Ms. Planck said it is impossible to keep up with the inflow of new people experiencing homelessness county wide. She spoke regarding West Hollywood continuing to serve as a beacon for many and that the goal is that experiences in homelessness are rare, brief, and non-recurring. Ms. Planck said that the contracted service providers and staff know people by name and the focus to help them is intense.

Chair Berger spoke regarding the end of the eviction moratoriums across the county. Chair Berger spoke regarding upcoming meetings on homelessness issues.

10C. REPORT FROM FIRE DEPARTMENT – MONTHLY REPORT

Assistant Chief Drew Smith said that fire personnel are doing well. Chief Smith said that Engine 8 has been assigned to a strike team since July 20th and that personnel are on 14 day rotations to staff the mutual aid engine. Chief Smith said that over 150 Los Angeles County personnel and 30 pieces of equipment are currently serving in Northern California.

Chief Smith spoke regarding the pilot program for available mental health receiving centers for paramedics and said that at this time, there is not an approved location close enough to West Hollywood to be in the pilot. Chief Smith said that the County is working on finding a location closer to Stations 7 and 8.

Chief Smith said that staff are ready to reengage on CERT when County guidelines allow for in person trainings.

10D. REPORT FROM BLOCK BY BLOCK SECURITY AMBASSADORS – MONTHLY REPORT

Shea Gibson provided a report on Block by Block Security Ambassador activity for the month of August 2021.

Vice-Chair Roshay thanked Mr. Gibson for breaking down the statistics by geographic area.

Commissioner Balbone asked if calls for service include all calls, whether a response was sent or not.

Mr. Gibson said the statistics cover all calls for service.

Michael Wojtkielewicz, resident of West Hollywood, spoke regarding the importance of neighbors helping neighbors and Block by Block.

Mr. Gibson spoke regarding how Block by Block tracks Ambassadors' response times.

10E. SHERIFF'S REPORT – MONTHLY REPORT

Lieutenant Moulder said that Part I crimes were up over 60 per cent when comparing August 2021 to August 2020 but to remember that last year the city experienced historic lows due to the pandemic. Lieutenant Moulder spoke regarding the 10 armed robberies which included 3 Estes and 7 street robberies. Lieutenant Moulder spoke regarding a current mortgage scam circulating and thanked Yola Dore for alerting the station.

Lesa Slaughter, a representative of Cookies, said that Cookies' personnel have been following up on complaints referred to them by Lieutenant Moulder.

Victor Omelchenko, resident of West Hollywood, spoke regarding an incident on August 27, 2021 where four people were shot.

Lieutenant Moulder spoke regarding the robbery and shooting on August 27, 2021 where one suspect robbed three victims and all four victims were shot. The suspect was arrested.

Commissioner Hallman asked if hate crime statistics could be added to the monthly reports. Commissioner Hallman spoke regarding response times and noted that they have increased.

Lieutenant Moulder said that there is more traffic on the road since the loosening of health order restrictions.

Commissioner Balbone noted an article she read about grand theft auto crime involving Kia and Hyundai cars due to a design flaw that allows for easy entry.

Lieutenant Moulder said that of the 13 grand theft autos in August, there were a variety of vehicles stolen without a pattern.

Commissioner Balbone asked for more information regarding the 3 sexual assaults.

Lieutenant Moulder said that one involved meeting on a dating app, one involved meeting the person at a bar, and the third involved date rape.

Commissioner Oliver asked if there has been increased enforcement by parking enforcement near Cookies.

Lieutenant Moulder said that parking enforcement is aware and has been an excellent partner.

10F. UPDATE ON IMPACTS FROM COOKIES

This item was discussed during the Sheriff's report.

10G. REIMAGINING POLICING, PROMOTING EQUITY, MEASURE J, COLLABORATION WITH THE LOS ANGELES COUNTY SHERIFF CIVILIAN OVERSIGHT COMMISSION, AND THE CENTER FOR POLICING EQUITY STUDY

This item was discussed during the report from CPE.

11. ITEMS FROM STAFF

Staff said that the October agenda will include a discussion on the work plan and that Danny Rivas, Code Compliance Manager, will attend in November.

12. PUBLIC COMMENTS

Victor Omelchenko, resident of West Hollywood, thanked Commissioners for their work on public safety and spoke in support of using humanizing language. Mr. Omelchenko spoke regarding the long time it will take to identify a potential site for services to address homelessness.

Stephanie Harker, resident of West Hollywood, spoke regarding the various safety issues with the scooters and asked for assistance from the City.

13. ITEMS FROM THE COMMISSION/COMMISSIONER COMMENTS

Vice-Chair Roshay spoke regarding Keely Field's letter and thanked her for her courage and willingness to share her story with the Public Safety Commission. Vice-Chair Roshay spoke regarding the ongoing issues at businesses, and in particular at The Abbey. Vice-Chair Roshay spoke in support of adding this issue to the Public Safety Commission's work plan. Vice-Chair Roshay spoke regarding

her recent attendance at the Social Justice Taskforce and spoke in support of collaboration opportunities.

Commissioner Balbone spoke in support of a sub-committee between the Public Safety Commission and the Women's Advisory Board and thanked Keely Field for her letter. Commissioner Balbone welcomed Commissioner Soon-shiong and congratulated Chair Berger and Vice-Chair Roshay on their first official meeting.

Commissioner Oliver asked his fellow Commissioners to consider how to be advocates for immigration issues.

Vice-Chair Roshay welcomed Commissioner Soon-shiong. Vice-Chair Roshay spoke in support of developing a work plan at the next meeting.

Chair Berger suggested linking written comments to the agenda, and staff said that they will check with the City Clerk's office.

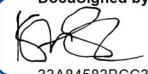
Chair Berger thanked the public speakers for their attendance and spoke in support of developing an effective work plan.

14. ADJOURNMENT

The Public Safety Commission adjourned at 9:34 PM in the memory of those lives lost on 9/11/2001 and in the years following. The next meeting is scheduled for October 11, 2021 at 6:00 PM via teleconference.

DocuSigned by:

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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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