

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

**MONDAY, JANUARY 10, 2022  
6:00 P.M.**

**VIA TELECONFERENCE**

1. **CALL TO ORDER** at 6:00 PM
2. **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE** led by Vice-Chair Roshay
3. **ROLL CALL**

**Commissioners Present:** Balbone, Berger, Hallman, Oliver, Roshay, Soon-Shiong

**Commissioners Absent:** Roman

**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; Megan Currier, Community Services Liaison, Los Angeles County Fire Department; David Aguilar, Block by Block; Kristin Cook, Public Safety Director

4. **ADJOURNMENT REQUESTS**

Commissioner Balbone requested that the meeting be adjourned in the memory of Los Angeles County Firefighter Jonathan Flagler and the 17 victims of the recent fire in the Bronx, New York. Commissioner Balbone asked that the meeting be adjourned in honor of health care workers continuing to care for patients during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Commissioner Oliver requested that the meeting be adjourned in the memory of the 17 victims of the recent fire in the Bronx, New York.

5. **APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA**

**ACTION:** Motion by Vice-Chair Roshay to approve the January 10, 2022 agenda, seconded by Commissioner Hallman and approved.

**POSTING OF THE AGENDA**

The agenda for the January 10, 2022 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 December 13, 2021 minutes, seconded by Vice-Chair Roshay and approved.

**7. PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Michael Wojtkielewicz, resident of West Hollywood spoke regarding the COVID-19 pandemic and ongoing safety issues experienced by vulnerable residents.

**8. COMMISSIONER COMMENTS**

Commissioner Hallman suggested setting a time limit of ten minutes on future presentations to assist the Commissioners with managing their time.

Commissioner Oliver spoke in support of a ten minute time limit.

Vice-Chair Roshay suggested that within the ten minutes, two minutes should be reserved for questions.

Commissioner Balbone reminded all that in rare times, there may be unique topics that will require more than the ten minute time limit.

**9. UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

**9A. REPORT FROM FIRE DEPARTMENT – MONTHLY REPORT**

Assistant Chief Drew Smith thanked all for their support during this time of tragedy for the Fire Department. Chief Smith said that December 2021 was an extremely busy month for West Hollywood, but that the skilled fire personnel serving the City were able to keep the incidents small.

Megan Currier, Community Services Liaison, said that all in person community programs are on hold for now.

**9B. REPORT FROM BLOCK BY BLOCK SECURITY AMBASSADORS – MONTHLY REPORT AND DISCUSSION OF STAFFING FOR FY 2022-2023 BUDGET**

Staff said that Shea Gibson is out of town and will be at the next meeting to answer any questions, including any questions regarding the December 2021 report.

Michael Wojtkielewicz, resident of West Hollywood, spoke in support of Security Ambassadors patrolling within development areas.

Vice-Chair Roshay spoke regarding the eastside kiosk and asked for an update.

Commissioner Hallman said that the presence of the Security Ambassadors at the eastside kiosk has improved the intersection. Commissioner Hallman said that it has made a significant difference in a short amount of time.

Chair Berger asked his fellow Commissioners if they support a kiosk location near the Ramada.

Commissioner Oliver spoke in support of having a westside kiosk that is movable on the westside.

Staff introduced David Aguilar, Block by Block.

Chair Berger asked Mr. Aguilar to speak regarding how Security Ambassadors protect themselves.

Mr. Aguilar said that Security Ambassadors are not armed and are trained to remove themselves from volatile situations and to notify law enforcement.

Commissioner Oliver spoke in support of unarmed Security Ambassadors who know when to call law enforcement when appropriate.

Chair Berger asked Mr. Aguilar if there is anything Block by Block can do to improve communication with law enforcement. Chair Berger spoke in support of putting the Block by Block phone number on Commissioners' business cards.

Mr. Aguilar said that the Security Ambassadors have a good relationship with law enforcement and spoke in support of more public education.

Vice-Chair Roshay spoke regarding the Commission's request for more public education regarding Block by Block's services.

Staff spoke regarding the various ways that the City is advertising Block by Block's services including through social media, the City's website, Chamber meetings, business meetings, and Neighborhood Watch meetings.

Commissioner Hallman spoke regarding the participation of Block by Block Security Ambassadors at National Night Out.

Vice-Chair Roshay spoke in support of notifications similar to LA Marathon and other events.

Commissioner Balbone spoke in support of a westside location for a kiosk but asked for clarification from staff on logistics.

Commissioner Hallman spoke in support of utilizing the electronic bus shelters to advertise Block by Block.

Commissioner Balbone spoke in support of flyers for windows in businesses and utilizing vacant space, such as the Coast Playhouse, to advertise.

Chair Berger spoke in support of increasing the budget for Block by Block.

Vice-Chair Roshay spoke in support of increasing the budget for Block by Block but said it would be beneficial to wait until Mr. Gibson is in attendance to discuss the current need.

**9C. SHERIFF'S REPORT – MONTHLY REPORT AND DISCUSSION OF STAFFING FOR FY 2022-2023 BUDGET**

Lieutenant Moulder spoke regarding the increase of Part I crime in December as compared to last year which included an increase in the west and east sides and a decrease in the city center. The increase on the westside was fueled by vehicle burglaries, grand thefts, and mail thefts. Burglaries and thefts increased city wide. Lieutenant Moulder spoke regarding the various ways that the Station is addressing the increase in crime including saturation patrols, partnerships with County resources such as major crimes, and Community Impact Team patrols. Lieutenant Moulder spoke regarding the lifesaving rescue by two COPPS team Deputies of a toddler who was choking.

Commissioner Balbone asked if the increase on the westside is happening at entertainment locations.

Lieutenant Moulder said that a significant number of pick pocket thefts occur at the clubs although there were also vehicle burglaries and thefts unrelated to entertainment locations.

West Seegmiller thanked all Commissioners and spoke in support of medical freedom and spoke regarding anti-Semitic flyers.

Adam Darvish, resident of West Hollywood, thanked Lieutenant Moulder for the extra patrols by the Sheriff in his neighborhood and asked for additional information regarding cameras in the City, including cameras similar to Beverly Hills. Mr. Darvish spoke regarding the shooting at Burlington Coat Factory in Los Angeles and asked how the Sheriff's Department protects residents during an active shooter event.

Michael Wojtkielewicz, resident of West Hollywood, expressed concern with how the media interacts with the Sheriff's Department and said that there is a lack of coverage of crimes.

Lieutenant Moulder said that the Sheriff's Department is mandated to protect free speech. Lieutenant Moulder spoke regarding cameras, active shooter training and response, and working with the media to help solve crimes.

Commissioner Soon-Shiong asked for clarification regarding Sheriff billing and staffing.

Commissioner Balbone asked for clarification regarding the number of Deputies working at the station.

Staff spoke regarding the number of Deputies working at the station versus the number of Deputies that the City pays for directly.

Vice-Chair Roshay spoke regarding the increase in cost for the Sheriff's contract and asked for clarification regarding special events expenditures in FY20.

Staff said that expenditures for Halloween 2019 are included in FY20.

Councilmember Erickson thanked the Commissioners for their hard work.

Commissioner Oliver spoke in support of foot patrols and proactive community policing and improving the relationship with the Sheriff's Department

Chair Berger said that the Commissioners should give direction on how much staffing the Station should have and set priorities for the Deputies.

Commissioner Hallman spoke regarding his neighbor feeling unsafe.

Commissioner Soon-Shiong spoke regarding Dignity and Power Now's presentation from December regarding a decrease in "feeling safe" and increased Sheriff's costs.

Commissioner Balbone said that it is difficult to find other cities who have similar non-sworn resources and/or a Public Safety Commission.

Vice-Chair Roshay said that she would like to see the Commission continue to support alternatives to sworn resources such as the Behavioral Health Crisis Unit. Vice-Chair Roshay said that Deputies continue to deter people from reporting crimes.

Staff and Lieutenant Moulder said that with specific information, Lieutenant Moulder and other supervisors at the Station can review instances of not taking reports. Lieutenant Moulder said that not all information rises to a criminal report, but that if there is a training or personnel issue, he can follow up with specific information.

Chair Berger spoke regarding his colleague's work at the City of Beverly Hills and said that their work includes strengthening crime prevention through the use of cameras, drones, bullet proof glass, more private security, and more police.

Commissioner Balbone spoke regarding the need for transparency.

Commissioner Oliver spoke regarding the need for transparency and highlighted the difference between West Hollywood Station and the larger county. Commissioner Oliver spoke regarding the need to work together to solve issues.

Chair Berger spoke in support of utilizing automated calls to gauge customer service after a call for service.

Commissioner Hallman spoke regarding the importance of customer service and said that the responding Deputy should be able to handle the situation and to give options to the constituent for a solution. Commissioner Hallman spoke in support of more customer service training.

Commissioners continued the discussion to next month's meeting.

## **9D. PUBLIC SAFETY COMMISSION WORK PLAN**

Staff thanked Commissioners Oliver and Hallman for their assistance with the Emergency Plan Update.

Commissioner Balbone spoke regarding the recent sub-committee meeting with the Women's Advisory Board. Commissioner Balbone said that the nightlife safety issues are broader than just women's issues and that the sub-committee is working on prevention activities, such as providing GHB test strips to the community.

Michael Wojtkielewicz, resident of West Hollywood, expressed concern with the lack of assistance from the City to provide housing and to properly address the pandemic.

Commissioner Balbone spoke regarding the work plan and suggested involving the Fire Department, Code Compliance, and Building and Safety in community education, building safety, and other residential safety issues.

Commissioner Balbone said that it would also be important to include information on complaints that go directly to the Sheriff's Department and bypass the City.

Staff said that they will schedule Danny Rivas, Code Compliance Manager, and Ben Galan, Building and Safety Manager, to attend and discuss at the March meeting.

Commissioner Hallman spoke regarding the need for an emphasis on residential fire safety.

**10. ITEMS FROM STAFF**

**10A. PUBLIC SAFETY COMMISSION CALENDAR**

Commissioners and staff reviewed the upcoming schedule of agenda items and decided to first watch a video from the Coalition of Economic Survival in lieu of an in person presentation.

**11. PUBLIC COMMENTS**

None.

**12. ITEMS FROM THE COMMISSION/COMMISSIONER COMMENTS**

None.

**13. ADJOURNMENT**

The Public Safety Commission adjourned at 8:38 PM in the memory of Los Angeles County Firefighter Jonathan Flagler and the 17 victims of the recent fire in the Bronx, New York and in honor of health care workers continuing to care for patients during the COVID-19 pandemic. The next regular meeting is scheduled for February 14, 2022 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.)***