

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

**MONDAY, AUGUST 8, 2022  
6:00 P.M.**

**West Hollywood Park Public Meeting Room - Council Chambers  
625 N. San Vicente Boulevard  
West Hollywood, CA 90069**

**1) CALL TO ORDER**

Chair Hallman called the meeting to order at 6:03 P.M.

**2) PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Vice Chair Balbone.

**3) ROLL CALL**

**Commissioners Present:**

Commissioner Berger  
Commissioner Oliver  
Commissioner Soon-Shiong  
Vice Chair Balbone  
Chair Hallman

**Commissioners Absent:**

Commissioner Roman  
Commissioner Steele

**Others Present:**

Danny Rivas, City Director of Community Safety; Jessica Anukam, City Public Safety Specialist; Melissa Crowder, City Clerk; Lieutenant Fanny Lapkin, Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department; Sergeant Mike Yost, Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department; Battalion Chief Sara Rathbun, Los Angeles County Fire Department; David Aguilar, Regional Vice President - Southern California, Block by Block.

## **ADJOURNMENT REQUEST**

Commissioner Hallman requested to adjourn in honor of singer, actress, and activist Olivia Newton-John.

## **APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

Commissioner Balbone requested to amend the agenda and move all monthly reports under “Unfinished Business” items after “Public Comments” and before “Commissioner Comments”. **Motion by Commissioner Balbone and approved by consensus.**

**ACTION:** Approve the agenda of August 8, 2022. **Motion by Commissioner Berger, seconded by Commissioner Oliver, and approved.**

## **POSTING OF THE AGENDA**

The agenda for the August 8, 2022, Public Safety Commission meeting was posted at City Hall, Plummer Park, and the West Hollywood Sheriff's Station.

### **4) APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

**ACTION:** Approve the minutes of July 11, 2022. **Motion by Vice Chair Balbone, seconded by Commissioner Soon-Shiong, and approved.**

### **5) PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Michael Carter, West Hollywood, spoke on the Commission's purview if it includes to look into required fire safety inspections in buildings that have been affected by fires. He also spoke on a previous experience regarding a fire that occurred in an underground parking lot with his neighbor. He also referenced a flow chart of City process previously provided by Director Danny Rivas.

Michael Wojtkielewicz, West Hollywood, spoke about his disagreement and concerns with the current agenda topics and the Commission.

Jamie Francis, West Hollywood, spoke about his concerns with some of the Commissioners and the recent National Night Out event. He also expressed his disappointment with the lack of communication and advertising of the “Dialogue with the Deputy” event to the public.

### **6) UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

#### **6A. REPORT FROM FIRE DEPARTMENT – MONTHLY REPORT**

Chief Rathbun reported on the month of July's fire responses in West Hollywood which include emergency medical services and fire. She also answered questions from previous public inquiries on homeless rubbish fires.

Vice Chair Balbone inquired about the June 2022 fire reports and a public comment from last commission meeting regarding a situation with an elevator power outage and asked for a follow-up offline to potentially investigate the building and or incident that occurred.

Chief Rathbun spoke on the month of June's fire reports and went over some emergency elevator protocols.

There was a lengthy discussion with the Commissioners, Chief Rathbun, and Director Danny Rivas regarding fire safety inspections, code requirements, and outreach for residential housing units, and asked these items to be prioritized and discussed as part of the Commissions workplan.

Commissioner Berger spoke about the comments made by community members during public participation and provided information that while he served as liaison to the Rent Stabilization Commission, he remembered there may be funding available regarding underground parking or for buildings when fires occur.

Director Danny Rivas informed the Commission of the upcoming tasks regarding the Neighborhood Watch program and other community safety trainings that are City Council directives.

Chief Rathbun spoke about attending the City's Homeless Collaborative meetings and the intention of future County/City resource collaborations.

Commissioner Oliver asked about a recent car fire incident.

Chief Rathbun addressed the protocol involving car fires. She also stated she would provide information concerning the fire car incident as a follow-up.

## **6B. REPORT FROM BLOCK BY BLOCK SECURITY AMBASSADORS – MONTHLY REPORT**

David Aguilar, Block by Block, reported on activity for the month that included scooter violations, graffiti removal, park violations, security request for local businesses, social services, and the new Aquatic Center.

Vice Chair Balbone inquired about the type of reports that will be provided now that there has been an expansion with the security ambassador staff throughout the City.

David Aguilar, Block by Block and Director Danny Rivas mentioned that reporting can be compiled to meet the Commissioners requests.

Commissioner Berger inquired about a possible scooter study to measure the number of scooters who ride on the street versus the sidewalk. He also asked about the technology for the sidewalk scooter detection launch and the results of a previous scooter survey.

Director Danny Rivas referred to the Long Range Planning and Parking Services Divisions handling the mobility scooter program for future updates on the Commissioner's request.

Adam Darvish, West Hollywood, thanked the Commissioners for a new beginning for this Commission. He also thanked the Fire Department for their services. He asked Block By Block for an understanding of the type of service they provide in the City. He also had some questions regarding the scooter program.

## **6C. SHERIFF'S REPORT – MONTHLY REPORT**

Lieutenant Lapkin reported on the Part I and Part II crime stats for July 2022. She also noted that the COPPS and Entertainment Policing Team have concluded their trainings that will allow them to participate in undercover operations.

Commissioner Berger asked about the organized pickpocket group activity in the City.

Lieutenant Lapkin answered that there will be more operations to handle these groups now that training has concluded for the appointed units.

Chair Hallman confirmed with Director Danny Rivas if a special Public Safety Commission Meeting will take place on the topic of pickpocketing.

Director Danny Rivas spoke on the tentative scheduled special meeting date set for August 24, 2022.

Commissioner Berger and Lieutenant Lapkin had a discussion on the June 2022 crime stats.

Commissioner Soon-Shiong made a comment to clarify some of the facts surrounding a recent arrest. She made suggestions for the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department removing any misleading imagery on the website regarding this particular case. She also asked about the presence of "Deputy gangs" at the West Hollywood Sheriff's Station.

Lieutenant Lapkin provided details on the mentioned arrest and clarified information that was previously presented by Commissioner Soon-Shiong. She also confirmed that there are no Deputy gangs at the West Hollywood Sheriff's Station.

Vice Chair Balbone inquired on plans for making the West Hollywood Sheriff's Station more secure when transporting arrestees.

Lieutenant Lapkin spoke on looking into ways for the West Hollywood Sheriff's Station to better secure the fencing surrounding the Station.

Commissioner Berger asked how the public can protect themselves from crimes involving thefts of catalytic converters and "smash and grabs".

Lieutenant Lapkin shared some safety tips to prevent the mentioned crimes.

Chair Hallman asked how to assist with the problem of crime taking place in residential subterranean parking structures. He also asked about assistance from Block by Block for residential street patrol.

Lieutenant Lapkin shared some safety tips to prevent the mentioned crimes. She also referred to some of the City programs catered to homelessness and other social services related to these crimes.

Director Danny Rivas spoke about foot patrols that could be performed by Block by Block on residential streets.

Annie Jump Vicente, West Hollywood, spoke about the use of the term "transient" for people experiencing homelessness. Annie also spoke about the importance of rendering care and assistance for unhoused people in the City and expressed concerns and disagreements with the Sheriff's Department.

Adam Darvish, West Hollywood, congratulated Lieutenant Lapkin, Captain Moulder, and the rest of the Sheriff's Department team for their hard work and service in the City. He also asked about community trainings such as active shooter training available for the public.

Jamie Francis, West Hollywood, spoke about his dispute with information provided by a Commissioner earlier in the meeting regarding an incident with an escaped arrestee and the difficulty he experienced when trying to learn more about the "Dialogue with the Deputy" event. He also expressed his disagreement with the Commission.

Commissioner Berger commented that he would like to request for the Sheriff's Department to meet with Jamie Francis, West Hollywood resident, and any other residents who were not informed of the "Dialogue with the Deputy" event.

Commissioner Soon-Shiong spoke on the information she received and let the public know the information for the "Dialogue with the Deputy" event was publicly posted.

## **7) COMMISSIONER COMMENTS**

Chair Hallman thanked City staff for the coordination of the National Night Out event. He also spoke about the collaborative work to update the emergency management plan.

Commissioner Oliver also spoke about the update of the emergency management plan for the community.

Vice Chair Balbone spoke about the recent town hall meeting on the topic of Monkey Pox. She also suggested for the City to bring more active shooter trainings to the community.

Commissioner Oliver thanked the Neighborhood Block Captains and community for a successful National Night Out event. He also mentioned the tradition of members from the Public Safety Commission as well as Councilmembers riding with first responders and law enforcement for this collaborative event.

Commissioner Berger spoke about working together with former Public Safety Commissioners. He also talked about partnering up with the American Red Cross and the CERT trainings with the Los Angeles County Fire Department.

The Commissioners and City Clerk, Melissa Crowder, had a discussion about the idea of working with former Public Safety Commissioners.

Vice Chair Balbone spoke about the Public Safety Commissioners riding with the Sheriff's Department for National Night Out and if this tradition will continue based the public's perception on the topic.

## **8) COMMISSION WORK PLAN, REQUEST TRACKING, AND COMMISSION CALENDAR**

Director Danny Rivas spoke to the Commissioners about scheduling time to discuss the Commission Work Plan.

Chair Hallman suggested that the Commission discuss the work plan once all members of the Commission are available.

Commissioner Berger suggested that at a future meeting the Commission Work Plan be made visible on the large screen so that all can view.

Vice Chair Balbone inquired about updates on the Joint Women's Safety Subcommittee and public safety trainings for the Transgender Advisory Board and pending LGBTQ Commission.

Melissa Crowder, City Clerk, provided an explanation on the rules regarding the formation of a subcommittee.

Director Danny Rivas provided updates to the Request Tracking spreadsheet which included a set date for the Nightlife Study Session meeting and the Special Public Safety Commission meeting on the topic of Pickpocketing.

The Commissioners provided their availability and feedback for the Special Public Safety meeting set to take place on August 24, 2022.

Director Danny Rivas provided an update regarding the Scooter Mobility Program memo and shared that the update from City staff would be presented to the City Council on September 19, 2022.

The Commissioners and Director Danny Rivas discussed statistical reporting related to the Scooter Mobility Program.

Director Danny Rivas provided an update regarding the sidewalk technology launch and community and business surveys related to the program. He also informed the Commission that this information would be shared as part of the item City staff present to the City Council on September 19.

## **9) NEW BUSINESS**

### **9A. INTERNATIONAL HOLOCAUST REMEMBRANCE ALLIANCE**

Commissioner Oliver spoke about his Jewish heritage and the recent antisemitic attacks in the community. He also provided examples, statistics, and the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance's (IHRA) definition of antisemitism.

Adam Darvish, West Hollywood, thanked Commissioner Oliver for presenting this item and expressed his support. He also spoke on his personal experiences.

Commissioner Berger had some questions regarding the recommendation of adopting the IHRA's definition of antisemitism.

**ACTION:** Commissioner Oliver motioned for the Commission to recommend to the City Council the adoption of the IHRA's non-legally binding working definition of antisemitism as a City. **The motion was approved by consensus of the entire Commission.**

## **10) ITEMS FROM STAFF**

Director Danny Rivas provided some updates regarding the Block by Block City contract and shared City staff is working with the West Hollywood Sheriff's Station and Block by Block on how information will be presented in the future. Director



Danny Rivas, Commissioners, and City Clerk Melissa Crowder had a discussion about the Commission's Bylaws. Director Danny Rivas suggested including any Bylaw revisions on the September Commission agenda for approval.

## 11) PUBLIC COMMENTS

Alessia Duran, West Hollywood, spoke about the reported rubbish fires in the community and addressing homelessness which seems to be related to this issue. She also referenced the Citizen app that can be used for the public to be notified of various incidents and emergencies occurring in the area.

Annie Jump Vicente, West Hollywood, presented some old pedestrian signs to the Commission and spoke about experiences of drivers disregarding traffic signs and signals that put pedestrians in danger. Annie also expressed concerns with the Sheriff's Department and asked for more safety and public assistance for the unhoused community.

## 12) ITEMS FROM THE COMMISSION/COMMISSIONER COMMENTS

Commissioner Berger questioned the conduct of the previous speaker who presented City pedestrian signs that were once posted.

Director Danny Rivas responded that the situation will be looked into.

Commissioner Berger thanked everyone for joining and contributing to the meeting.

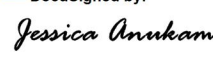
Chair Hallman spoke about the Commission's efforts to make meetings run more efficiently as they get used to repopulating in Council Chambers and becoming more familiar with the operating system.

## 13) ADJOURNMENT

The Public Safety Commission adjourned at 8:54 P.M. to its next meeting, which will be held on Wednesday, August 24, 2022, at 6:00 P.M. at the West Hollywood Park Public Meeting Room – Council Chambers.

DocuSigned by:  
  
7E3EB24D032040B

Public Safety Commission Chair

DocuSigned by:  
  
406B803FC06D450...

Public Safety Commission Secretary

**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.)***