

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

**MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 12, 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 6:10 P.M.

2) PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Chair Hallman.

3) ROLL CALL

Commissioners Present:

Commissioner Berger
Commissioner Oliver
Commissioner Roman (Left meeting at 9:03 P.M.)
Vice Chair Balbone
Chair Hallman

Commissioners Absent:

Commissioner Soon-Shiong
Commissioner Steele

Others Present:

Danny Rivas, City Director of Community Safety; Jessica Anukam, City Public Safety Specialist; Assistant Chief Drew Smith, Los Angeles County Fire Department; Sergeant Mike Yost, Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department; Operations Manager Shea Gibson, Block by Block.

4) APPROVAL OF AGENDA

ACTION: Approve the agenda of September 12, 2022. **Motion by Commissioner Berger, seconded by Commissioner Oliver, and approved.**

POSTING OF THE AGENDA

The agenda for the September 12, 2022, Public Safety Commission meeting was posted at City Hall, Plummer Park, and the West Hollywood Sheriff's Station.

5) APPROVAL OF MINUTES

ACTION: Approve the minutes of August 8, 2022, and August 24, 2022. **Motion by Vice Chair Balbone, seconded by Commissioner Berger, and approved.**

6) PUBLIC COMMENTS

Gabby Lasry expressed her support with the Commission's recommendation for the City Council to adopt the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) definition of antisemitism. She also spoke about her experience as a Jewish student.

Matyos Kidane asked for the Commission to rescind their decision in recommending to the City Council to adopt the IHRA's definition of antisemitism. He also gave reasons why their decision should be reconsidered.

Akhil Gopal expressed his disagreement with the Commission's recommendation to the City Council to adopt the IHRA's definition of antisemitism. He asked for the Commission to rescind their decision.

Liora Berkstein, West Hollywood, requested for the Commission to maintain their support for the IHRA's definition of antisemitism. She also spoke about her experience being Jewish in West Hollywood.

Joseph Karlan thanked the Commission for their support for the IHRA's definition of antisemitism. He also spoke about his feelings on the importance of adopting this definition.

Celine Quissiny asked the Commission to rescind their decision in recommending to the City Council to adopt the IHRA's definition of antisemitism. She also spoke about her feelings that the adoption for this definition can lead to censorship.

Yola Dore, West Hollywood, provided updates of upcoming events as the liaison for the City's Disabilities Advisory Board.

Chloe Levian asked the Commission to maintain their support for the recommendation to adopt the IHRA's definition of antisemitism to the City Council.

Nadia encouraged the Commission to rescind their decision in recommending to the City Council to adopt the IHRA's definition of antisemitism. She also spoke about her feelings on the importance of why not to adopt the definition.

Mustafa Nizam urged the Commission to rescind their decision in recommending to the City Council to adopt the IHRA's definition of antisemitism.

West Seegmiller, West Hollywood, expressed his disagreement with the Commission's recommendation to the City Council to adopt the IHRA's definition of antisemitism. He asked for the Commission to rescind their decision. He also questioned if the Commission's recommendation is under their purview.

Jordan David, West Hollywood, asked for the Commission to rescind their decision in recommending to the City Council to adopt the IHRA's definition of antisemitism. He also gave reasons why their decision should be reconsidered.

7) COMMISSIONER COMMENTS

Chair Hallman asked the Commission if they would like to speak on the IHRA definition item that was discussed in the July and August meetings. He also spoke about the Commission's role as it pertains to recommendations made to the City Council.

Commissioner Berger also spoke about the Commission's function of making recommendations to the City Council.

Vice Chair Balbone spoke about the concern of antisemitism in the community, and she suggests for the City Council to consider all comments that were made on the IHRA definition adoption so that an appropriate action can be made.

Commissioner Oliver thanked all commentators on the comments regarding the IHRA definition. He also reread the definition aloud and expressed his reason for wanting the City Council to adopt the IHRA definition for antisemitism. He also shared his personal experiences of antisemitism.

Chair Hallman reminded meeting attendees to be respectful during Commissioner comments or they will be asked to be removed from the meeting.

Chair Hallman asked the Commission on agreement of a set time limit for any questions the Commission may have concerning items on the agenda, including the Sheriff's, Fire, and Block by Block monthly agency reports

The Commissioners had a discussion regarding setting a specific time limit for questions on items placed on the agenda and consensus was made by the Commissioners who were present to set that time limit to three minutes.

Chair Hallman also reminded the Commission on the Absence of Meetings guidelines as described in the Public Safety Bylaws.

Commissioner Berger inquired about the six-month public safety update.

Director of Community Safety, Danny Rivas, spoke about the Commission updates that will be included in the Work Plan and the requested public safety six-month update.

8) UNFINISHED BUSINESS

8A. REPORT FROM FIRE DEPARTMENT – MONTHLY REPORT

Chief Smith reported on fire calls for service for the month of August in West Hollywood which included rubbish and structure fires and rescues.

Vice Chair Balbone and Chief Smith had a lengthy discussion about the protocol for the Fire Department when they are called for incidents involving intoxicated or unresponsive individuals from the afterhours establishments.

Commissioner Berger referenced a rebate program, Home Secure, that tenants can take advantage of.

Director Danny Rivas provided the Commission some more details regarding the Home Secure program.

Chief Smith introduced the new Battalion Chief Zack Kates to the Los Angeles County West Hollywood Fire Department team.

8B. SHERIFF'S REPORT – MONTHLY REPORT

Sergeant Yost reported on the Part I and Part II crime stats in West Hollywood for August 2022. He also talked about recent community events the Sheriff's Department participated in, upcoming events scheduled, and on the recent trainings station personnel completed.

Chair Hallman inquired about the recent Sheriff's personnel trainings. He also asked about the beat patrols on the east side of the City for the businesses experiencing excessive theft.

Sergeant Yost spoke about the COPPS and Entertainment Policing Teams frequent check-ins on businesses in the area.

Commissioner Berger inquired about incidents involving "Estes Robberies".

Sergeant Yost gave an explanation on the meaning of "Estes Robberies".

Commissioner Oliver inquired about the recent pick pocketing arrests. His question was deferred by the Chair to be brought up during the Pick Pocket Study Session and Community Listening Meeting Debrief section of the meeting. He also asked about the scheduled Sheriff's personnel trainings.

Sergeant Yost provided information regarding station personnel trainings.

Commissioner Berger and Sergeant Yost had a lengthy conversation regarding follow up questions from the previous regular Public Safety Commission meeting.

Annie Jump Vicente, West Hollywood, presented a quote and expressed her feelings on the Commission's recommendation to the City Council to adopt the IHRA's definition of antisemitism. Annie also expressed her disagreement with Commissioner Berger from a comment made at the August 8th Commission meeting along with disagreements with the Sheriff's Department.

8C. REPORT FROM BLOCK BY BLOCK SECURITY AMBASSADORS – MONTHLY REPORT

Shea Gibson, Block by Block, referenced the August 2022 monthly reports provided to the Commission. He also gave a brief update on the recruitment process of the additional 30 security ambassadors and foot patrols. Mr. Gibson also gave an update on the expected stationed kiosks.

Mr. Gibson and the Commissioners had a discussion about the kiosks and security presence at the community parks.

Commissioner Roman suggested a mixer being held with Block by Block and the Sheriff's Department for a collaborative meeting.

Vice Chair Balbone welcomed Mr. Gibson back from his paternity leave of absence. She also asked about the presence of the Security Ambassadors in specific areas of the City.

Commissioner Oliver and Chair Hallman congratulated Mr. Gibson on the birth of his child.

Annie Jump Vicente, West Hollywood, spoke about her disagreement with Block by Block Security Ambassadors and the Commission. She also expressed her concerns regarding available resources for the unhoused and trans communities in the City.

Chair Hallman reminded the public commentator of the meeting etiquette. He also asked Mr. Gibson if Block by Block has received any employee applications from the trans community.

Mr. Gibson responded that they have received applications from the trans community.

Commissioner Oliver asked for the prioritization of recruitment for transgender individuals applying to Block by Block.

Commissioner Berger inquired about the update of the Block by Block data reports.

Vice Chair Balbone asked Mr. Gibson if Block by Block has had any review in trainings from the City's Commission and Boards regarding LGBTQIA+.

8D. PICK POCKET STUDY SESSION AND COMMUNITY LISTENING MEETING DEBRIEF

Adam Eramian, Operations Manager for Mickey's West Hollywood, provided a brief update of the pick pocket activity occurring at Mickey's. He also spoke about the success of the company's use of the Patron Scan application. He also inquired about Block by Block's security personnel practices regarding making citizens' arrests.

Chair Hallman asked Director Rivas if there is a way to inquire why Block by Block does not make citizens' arrests as part of their security scope of work.

Director Rivas informed the Commission that practices such as citizens' arrests is not part of the agreement within the City's contract with Block by Block.

Adam Eramian suggested that the City should consider allowing the Security Ambassadors to make citizens' arrest as part of their regular security functions.

Commissioner Roman and Adam Eramian had a discussion regarding Mickey's business practices of combatting crime in the establishment. They talked about the importance of having Sheriff's foot beat patrols in the vicinity when bars close at 2 a.m.

Commissioner Roman presented a list of possible recommendations to the City Council that would be helpful in combatting the pick pocketing issue.

The Commissioners had a lengthy discussion regarding the possible privacy concerns when it comes to the function of some of the ID scanner applications such as Patron Scan.

Commissioner Berger recommended a centralized lost and found for the City's businesses. He also expressed his support for cloud-based video footage for easy access to present to law enforcement during an investigation of crimes in nightlife establishments.

The Commissioners and Director Rivas discussed their workplan follow up on the Pick Pocketing Study item.

Commissioner Berger inquired about the arrests and consequences for pick pocketing.

ACTION: Receive and provide direction to staff to prepare a memo of recommendations to the City Council to help combat the pick pocketing issues in nightlife establishments. **Motioned by Commissioner Berger, seconded by Chair Hallman, and approved.**

Annie Jump Vicente, West Hollywood, expressed her disagreement with the Commission. She also provided her educational background and community experiences.

Chair Hallman asked for a member of the public to be removed from the City Council Chambers.

8E. REQUEST TRACKING AND COMMISSION CALENDAR

Vice Chair Balbone asked about a previous meeting's inquiries and follow up on elevator safety.

Director Rivas provided a brief update and will continue to follow up on the elevator safety inquires in future meetings.

8F. COMMISSION WORK PLAN

Vice Chair Balbone gave some recommendations to be added to the workplan for the Nightlife Safety discussion. She also inquired about follow up items regarding this discussion.

9) NEW BUSINESS

9A. REVISIONS TO THE COMMISSION BYLAWS

Director Rivas presented the current Commission Bylaws and provided proposed changes.

The Commission and Director Rivas had a lengthy discussion regarding the proposed changes to the Commission Bylaws and Commission consensus was made to move forward with all of the proposed changes.

10) ITEMS FROM STAFF

Director Rivas presented requested changes and updates of the monthly Sheriff's and Security Ambassador monthly agency reports. He also provided information of upcoming community events and updates from the recent Neighborhood Watch/Resident Association virtual meeting.

The Commission and Director Rivas had a lengthy discussion regarding the proposed changes and updates to the monthly agency reports.

Vice Chair Balbone inquired about updates of the communication plan with the Nightlife Safety Study Session. She also asked about other follow up items from this study session briefing.

Director Rivas informed the Commission that an update concerning the City Council Nightlife Safety Study Session will be provided to those representatives that participated in the session in the coming weeks.

11) PUBLIC COMMENTS

There were no public comments.

12) ITEMS FROM THE COMMISSION/COMMISSIONER COMMENTS

Commissioner Berger asked about the upcoming community trainings. Director Rivas responded.

13) ADJOURNMENT

The Public Safety Commission adjourned at 9:13 P.M. to its next regular meeting, which will be held on Monday, October 10, 2022, at 6:00 P.M. at the West Hollywood Park Public Meeting Room – Council Chambers.

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Public Safety Commission Chair

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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.)