

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

**MONDAY, OCTOBER 10, 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 6:04 P.M.

2) PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Commissioner Berger.

3) ROLL CALL

Commissioners Present:

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

Commissioners Absent:

None

Others Present:

Danny Rivas, City Director of Community Safety; Jessica Anukam, City Public Safety Specialist; Corri Planck, City Strategic Initiatives Manager; Ben Galan, City Building and Safety Manager; Francisco Contreras, City Long Range Planning Manager; Assistant Chief Drew Smith, Los Angeles County Fire Department; Lieutenant Fanny

Lapkin, Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department; Operations Manager Shea Gibson, Block by Block; Abby Arnold, Holloway Project Consultant.

4) APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Commissioner Berger suggested item 9B, The Multi-stall Gender Neutral Restroom Facilities Update, be moved to the following Public Safety Commission meeting agenda.

The Commission unanimously agreed to keep item 9B on the current meeting agenda as scheduled.

ACTION: Approve the agenda of October 10, 2022. **Approved unanimously by the Commission.**

POSTING OF THE AGENDA

The agenda for the October 10, 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 September 12, 2022. **Approved unanimously by the Commission.**

6) PUBLIC COMMENTS

Michael Carter, West Hollywood, Captain of Ogden/Orange Neighborhood Watch, requested that his neighborhood is included in the areas covered for the Block by Block Kiosk Program. He also expressed some public safety concerns in his neighborhood.

West Hollywood resident expressed his concerns of noise and disturbance in his neighborhood near La Brea and Santa Monica.

Chair Hallman asked Community Safety Director, Danny Rivas, if the previous public commentor's noise and disturbance issues can be addressed. Director Rivas responded that the City's Code Enforcement will follow up and address the issue.

A discussion between the Commissioners and Director Rivas took place regarding more frequent check-ins and the possible placement of security guards located at the McDonalds on La Brea.

Chair Hallman inquired about some virtual Zoom callers experiencing difficulty joining the Commission meeting. Director Rivas responded that staff is verifying the meeting access details.

Stephanie Harker, West Hollywood, expressed her concerns trying to join in the evenings meeting via Zoom.

Michael Wojtkielewicz, West Hollywood, expressed his frustration joining the meeting via Zoom as well and his overall disagreement with the City. He shared his concerns of a possible health risk near the Ralphs on La Brea.

In response to the public participants, Commissioner Steele acknowledged the issues members of the public were experiencing accessing the meeting.

Chair Hallman inquired about the website access to the Commission Meetings.

Director Rivas briefly gave a walkthrough and explained the agenda posting and meeting access process.

7) COMMISSIONER COMMENTS

Vice Chair Balbone requested to adjourn and express condolences for a formal Commissioner Jeff Wack whose husband had recently passed away.

Commissioner Steele expresses her support of the many Los Angeles residents that called for the termination of the Los Angeles Council Members for the racist remarks. She also shared her thoughts on the removal of a member of the public from the last Public Safety Commission.

Commissioner Soon-Shiong spoke about the importance of hearing community members as they share their stories and concerns regarding safety in the community. She mentioned a story shared by a member of the Trans Gender Advisory Board at a previous City Council meeting.

Chair Hallman spoke about the incident that occurred during the last Public Safety Commission where a member of the public was removed. He also talked about his attendance at a recent City meeting for the Holloway Home Key Project. He also shared his experience of theft in his neighborhood.

8) UNFINISHED BUSINESS

8A. REPORT FROM FIRE DEPARTMENT – MONTHLY REPORT

Chief Smith gave thanks to the Los Angeles County Fire Department and the community for their support. He also reported on fire calls for service for the month of September in West Hollywood. He spoke in depth about the dumpster fires that occurred in the City.

Commissioner Steele inquired about data for the rubbish fires that occurred. She also asked if there are any solutions such as locking security measures that can be placed on the trash containers to prevent these rubbish fires.

There was a discussion amongst the Commissioners, Chief Smith, and Director Rivas regarding rubbish fires and some of the solutions to better secure outdoor garbage receptacles.

Chief Smith announced his Department will be offering CERT Fire Safety training to the West Hollywood community and provided details of the upcoming classes.

8B. SHERIFF'S REPORT – MONTHLY REPORT

Lieutenant Lapkin reported on the Part I and Part II crime stats in West Hollywood for September 2022 which included grand thefts, petty thefts, burglaries, and arrests. She also provided updates on the COPPS undercover operations and foot beat actions. She announced that the West Hollywood Sheriff's Station Community Academy classes will be offered to the community and provided the details of the classes. She also mentioned various upcoming personnel trainings that will be held at the Station.

Chair Hallman inquired about the type of recent pickpocketing activities.

Commissioner Oliver inquired about the upcoming Community Academy classes.

Vice Chair Balbone inquired about the upcoming Sheriff's personnel trainings.

Commissioner Steele asked questions regarding the September 2022 Sheriff's Reports. She also made some requests for specific reporting types and formats for the future. She asked if the Sheriff's department could work with the LGBTQ+ leaders.

Commissioner Berger asked some questions about the data in the September 2022 Sheriff's report.

Commissioner Roman inquired about the Nixle reports via text alerts. He also inquired about the bike patrols and the foot beats.

Chair Hallman suggested some foot beats on the east side of the City.

Lieutenant Lapkin responded to all the Commissioner's questions and comments.

Yola Dore, West Hollywood, announced several upcoming events. She also mentioned difficulty accessing the meeting via Zoom and her concerns with the gender neutral restroom facilities update.

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

Shea Gibson, Block by Block, gave an update on the September 2022 monthly report. He also provided a brief update on the recruitment process of the additional 30 security ambassadors, new foot patrols, and stationed kiosks.

Chair Hallman inquired about the hiring status for Block by Block and the security in the parks.

Commissioner Roman suggested for Block by Block to hire local applicants from the community. He also made suggestions for new placement for one of the expected security kiosks. He inquired about recent news articles regarding unhoused individuals and the security ambassador's roles.

Vice Chair Balbone asked some questions about the security ambassador trainees. She also gave a suggestion for placement of one of the newly installed kiosks.

Commissioner Oliver suggested to add more security ambassadors near the McDonalds on La Brea.

Commissioner Steele suggested that businesses such as the McDonalds location on La Brea provide their own security services at their facility. She also inquired about the Narcan training for Block by Block personnel and asked if Block by Block could meet with LGBTQ+ leaders.

Commissioner Berger asked if the community was still unfamiliar with the work Block by Block does. He also inquired about the September 2022 report and an update on the scooters.

Stephanie Harker, West Hollywood, expressed her concerns with the Block by Block security team's safety and inquired if safety measures such as protection devices will be provided to the ambassadors.

Shea Gibson and Director Rivas responded to all the questions and comments made by the Commissioners and members of the public.

8D. REQUEST TRACKING AND COMMISSION CALENDAR

Vice Chair Balbone requested an estimated time for the delivery of the new formatted agency reports.

Commissioner Steele requested that a debrief be scheduled immediately after any special meetings and study sessions have occurred with the Commission.

The Commissioners had a discussion regarding special meetings.

Director Rivas responded to all the Commissioners questions and comments.

8E. COMMISSION WORK PLAN

Commissioner Berger requested to add a review of the Commissions purview to the Work Plan. He also suggested the Commission focus on customer service as it pertains to service calls to the City's partnered agencies and follow up on those calls.

Chair Balbone requested that follow up actions from the recent study sessions should be documented on the Commission Work Plan.

Commissioner Steele asked if the Night Life Study Session item could become a permanent item placed on the Public Safety Commission agenda moving forward.

Director Rivas responded to all questions and comments made by the Commissioners and members of the public.

ACTION: To include the Night Life Study Session Update Debrief to the November Public Safety Commission Agenda. **Motioned by Commissioner Steele and approved unanimously by the Commission.**

9) NEW BUSINESS

9A. WEST HOLLYWOOD HOMELESS INITIATIVE 2022 UPDATE ON FIVE-YEAR PLAN TO ADDRESS HOMELESSNESS

Corri Planck, City Strategic Initiatives Manager, provided a brief presentation of an overview of the City's Homeless Initiative Plan, Holloway Project.

Abby Arnold, Holloway Project Consultant, led the focus group discussion on the City's Homeless Initiative Plan, Holloway Project.

There was a lengthy discussion between the Commissioners, Corri Planck, and Abby Arnold regarding the City's Homeless Initiative Plan.

Steve Martin, West Hollywood, expressed his concerns with aspects of the Holloway Project Program and would like to know more about the prospective applicants. He also gave some of his suggestions towards the implemented plan and spoke on his own personal experiences.

Stephanie Harker, West Hollywood, expressed the importance that accurate detailed information should go out to the community about the Holloway Project Program.

Cathy Blaivas, West Hollywood, agreed with the previous speaker for there to be more information out to the public to mitigate any misunderstandings of the program.

Corri Planck and Abby Arnold responded to all Commissioner and public questions and comments. Corri Planck also provided some resource information where the community can learn more about the Holloway Project.

9B. MULTI-STALL GENDER NEUTRAL RESTROOM FACILITIES

City staff members, Francisco Contreras and Ben Galan, presented an update on the proposed ordinance for the City's Multi-Stall Gender Neutral Restroom Facilities.

There was a lengthy discussion between the Commissioners, Francisco Contreras, and Ben Galan regarding the proposed ordinance.

Steve Martin, West Hollywood, expressed his concerns regarding the proposed Multi-Stall Gender Neutral Restroom Facilities Ordinance and suggested for the City to be more flexible deciding on model plans for the facilities.

Stephanie Harker, West Hollywood, expressed some safety concerns on the topic of the Multi-Stall Gender Neutral Restroom Facilities.

Yola Dore, West Hollywood, agreed with the previous speaker regarding the importance of safety in the design of Multi-Stall Gender Neutral Restroom Facilities.

Alpita Patel, West Hollywood, agreed with the previous speakers regarding the importance of safety in the design of Multi-Stall Gender Neutral Restroom Facilities.

Joel Mark, West Hollywood, agreed with the remarks made by previous speakers about the importance of safety in the design of Multi-Stall Gender Neutral Restroom Facilities.

Chair Hallman asked when the Multi-Stall Gender Neutral Restroom Facilities item was going to the City Council.

The Commissioners inquired about some details on the proposed ordinance for the Multi-Stall Gender Neutral Restroom Facilities.

Commissioner Steele provided some clarification on the proposed ordinance and background information on this item based on her involvement as a member of the City's Transgender Advisory Board. She also reminded the Commission that this item was passed recently through SB 1194 at the State level and that our City Council supported this legislation.

Commissioner Berger made some suggestions on the proposed Multi-Stall Gender Neutral Restroom Facilities ordinance. He also expressed his concerns with the ordinance and that the community was not notified on the item presented.

Francisco Contreras and Ben Galan responded to all Commission and public questions and comments.

10) ITEMS FROM STAFF

Director Rivas briefly provided some reminders of upcoming community events.

11) PUBLIC COMMENTS

Steve Martin, West Hollywood, provided some clarifications on the proposed Multi-Stall Gender Neutral Restroom Facilities ordinance. He spoke about the importance of the community's input on the item before it is presented back to the City Council.

Cathy Blaivas, West Hollywood, spoke in agreement with a previous public speaker earlier in the meeting regarding difficulties joining the Zoom meeting. She also spoke about the concerns of a possible health risk near the Ralphs on La Brea and agreed with the last public commentator on the importance of community input.

12) ITEMS FROM THE COMMISSION/COMMISSIONER COMMENTS

Chair Hallman spoke about the Multi-Stall Gender Neutral Restroom Facilities ordinance. He feels that the Commission should be more involved on the item.

ACTION: To add the Multi-Stall Gender Neutral Restroom Facilities back onto the November Public Safety Commission Agenda. **Motioned by Chair Hallman, Seconded by Commissioner Berger, and approved unanimously by the Commission.**

Director Rivas provided suggestions of drafting a memo of recommendations to the City Council regarding the Multi-Stall Gender Neutral Restroom Facilities ordinance.

Commissioner Berger expressed his concerns and the community not being notified on the Multi-Stall Gender Neutral Restroom Facilities ordinance and for some members of the community having difficulty joining the evenings meeting via Zoom.

ACTION: Amend the previous motion to also include that the Multi-Stall Gender Neutral Restroom Facilities item be brought before the Disabilities Advisory Board for their feedback. **Motioned by Vice Chair Balbone, Seconded by Chair Hallman, and approved unanimously by the Commission.**

Commissioner Oliver expressed his concerns about the way in which the presentation for the Multi-Stall Gender Neutral Restroom Facilities ordinance was brought to the Commission.

The Commission had further discussion about the Multi-Stall Gender Neutral Restroom Facilities ordinance.

Director Rivas provided information about the requirements of the Commission agenda postings and supplemental documents. He also gave explanation of the information details posted on the City's website for the Public Safety Commission section.

Commissioner Soon-Shiong announced her resignation from the Public Safety Commission. She also spoke about her positive and negative experiences during her time on the Commission.

Commissioners shared their well wishes and sentiments to Commissioner Soon-Shiong after she announced her resignation.

13) ADJOURNMENT

The Public Safety Commission adjourned at 10:04 P.M. to its next regular meeting, which will be held on Monday, November 14, 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.

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