

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

**MONDAY, FEBRUARY 13, 2023
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 Steele
Vice Chair Balbone
Chair Hallman

Commissioners Absent:

Commissioner Roman

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 Jason Duron, Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department; Shea Gibson, Operations Manager, Block by Block; David Wilson, City Manager; and Derek Murray, City Social Services Program Administrator.

4) APPROVAL OF AGENDA

ACTION: Approve the agenda of February 13, 2023. **Motion by Vice Chair Balbone, seconded by Commissioner Oliver, and approved by the Commission.**

POSTING OF THE AGENDA

The agenda for the February 13, 2023, Public Safety Commission meeting was posted at City Hall, Plummer Park, and the West Hollywood Sheriff's Station.

5) APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Vice Chair Balbone inquired about the recommended items discussed at the last Commission meeting related to nightlife safety and whether they were sent as part of the report to the City Council.

ACTION: Approve the minutes of December 9, 2022. **Motion by Commissioner Berger, seconded by Commissioner Steele, and approved by the Commission.**

6) PUBLIC COMMENTS

Mikie Freedman, West Hollywood, spoke about her efforts of initiating a petition to ban scooters in the city. She also expressed her concerns with agenda item 9A, Municipal Law Enforcement Feasibility Study.

Genevieve Morrill, West Hollywood, greeted the Commissioners.

7) COMMISSIONER COMMENTS

Chair Hallman spoke about his experience at various recent events and meetings he participated in.

Commissioner Berger made mention of a first aid app that can be used to help during emergency situations.

Vice Chair Balbone spoke about the fifth anniversary of the Parkland School shooting tragedy and acknowledged other recent mass shootings. She also spoke about the importance of active shooter trainings provided to the community and announced the upcoming Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department Civilian Oversight Committee meeting.

8) UNFINISHED BUSINESS

8A. REPORT FROM FIRE DEPARTMENT – MONTHLY REPORT

Chief Smith gave thanks to the Public Safety Commission and the community for their continued support to the Los Angeles County Fire Department. He reported on the various fire incidents and calls for service in the City for December 2022 and January 2023. He also presented some upcoming City events that the Fire Department will be in attendance.

Vice Chair Balbone inquired about recent area fires.

Commissioner Berger inquired about some preventative ideas regarding the rubbish fires. He also asked about the barriers placed on the side streets.

Commissioner Steele asked about some of the Commission's recommended holiday safety measures that were distributed out to the community. She also suggested for a quarterly look-a-head plan in preparation for events and holidays.

Chief Smith and Director Rivas responded to all the Commissioner's questions and comments to address the request for staff to work on fire safety outreach and prevention.

8B. SHERIFF'S REPORT – MONTHLY REPORT

Sergeant Duron introduced himself to the Commission and reported on the crime stats for the months of December 2022 and January 2023 which include Part 1 crimes, recent arrests, and comparison with the prior year's crime stats. He spoke about the COPPS and EPT operations, some notable crime incidents, and upcoming community events.

Commissioner Berger inquired about the "Smash and Grab" burglaries.

Commissioner Steele asked Sergeant Duron various questions regarding the reported crimes, upcoming community events, standard Sheriff's Department protocols, the request for extra patrols in specified areas of the City, and the recommended safety actions for the nightlife business establishments.

Chair Hallman inquired about the traffic stop de-escalation practices and Deputy trainings regarding the death of Tyre Nichols that took place in Memphis, Tennessee.

There was continued conversation with the Commissioners and Sergeant Duron about Deputy trainings, de-escalation tactics, and general Deputy protocols especially during a hostile incident.

Commissioner Steele inquired about the security plan for the upcoming Drag Reading events.

Sergeant Duron and Director Rivas responded to all the Commissioner's questions and comments.

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

Shea Gibson, Block by Block Operations Manager, gave an update on the December 2022 and January 2023 monthly reports and their focus on recruitment, training, and engagement with the community. He talked about the increase of audits for quality control purposes, the added patrols in designated areas, and notable incidents that occurred during the reported months. He also spoke about his attendance at recent community meetings and events.

Chair Hallman asked a question regarding Letters of Agency.

Commissioner Steele requested some details on the monthly reports provided.

Shea Gibson and Sergeant Duron responded to all the Commissioner's questions and comments.

8D. REQUEST TRACKING AND COMMISSION CALENDAR

Director Rivas went over the updates to the Commission Calendar and tracking and highlighted completed actions from requests made by the Commission.

9) NEW BUSINESS

9A. MUNICIPAL LAW ENFORCEMENT FEASIBILITY STUDY

Chair Hallman briefly talked about his experience with the preliminary consultant interviews.

City Manager Wilson presented an overview of the Request for Proposal (RFP) process to select a consultant to conduct the Municipal Police Force Feasibility Study. The recommended consultant was Matrix Consulting.

Chair Hallman inquired about the community's involvement in the study process.

Commissioner Steele asked some questions about the interview process and expressed that the Commission should have been more involved with the formulation of the interview questions and other preliminary steps.

Commissioner Oliver asked if there will be an opportunity for the community to provide input before a decision is finalized to contract with the recommended consultant.

Commissioner Berger went over some of his notes and feedback regarding the consultant agenda attachments provided.

Commissioner Steele expressed her concerns and disagreement about the RFP process of this agenda item.

Commissioner Oliver asked some questions and feedback based on the information provided in the consultant agenda attachments.

Vice Chair Balbone expressed her feedback on the RFP process and noted some important points that were not highlighted in the consultant agenda attachments that may be important to the members of the community.

The Commissioners and City Manager Wilson continued to have a lengthy discussion regarding the RFP process and shared their feedback on the item.

George Nickle, West Hollywood, expressed his concerns with the agenda item stating there was not enough community involvement. He also spoke about the importance of security for West Hollywood community activities.

Steve Martin, West Hollywood, agreed with the sentiments made by the Commissioners regarding this item and expressed the importance of the community's input on whether a feasibility study should be pursued or not.

Zekiah Wright, West Hollywood, expressed the importance of community engagement on this study and suggested for the selected consultant to address the focused needs specific to the West Hollywood community. Zekiah also requested that there be a reconsideration of the selected consultant.

Stephanie Harker, West Hollywood, shared her disagreement of the feasibility study stating there was little community engagement. She also expressed her support for the West Hollywood Sheriff's Department.

Yola Dore, West Hollywood, agreed with the previous public comment and expressed her disagreement of the feasibility study without community engagement.

Cathy Blaivas, West Hollywood, shared similar sentiments with the other public comments made and expressed her disagreement of the feasibility study without community engagement.

Miss Tiger, West Hollywood, stated she is a board member on the West Hollywood LGBTQ+ Advisory Board and supports the feasibility study and expressed the need for community involvement. She also provided feedback of important topics to consider for the study.

Commissioner Steele recommended there be further discussion amongst the Public Safety Commission and community members regarding the RFP interview process of selecting the consultant.

Commissioner Balbone and Commissioner Berger suggested the Commission decide amongst themselves of next steps before the agenda item goes back to the City Council.

Commissioner Berger suggested that the new Commissioner appointments be considered prior to moving forward with the study session.

City Manager Wilson and Director Rivas responded to all the Commissioner's and the public's questions and comments. It was recommended that the Public Safety Commission meeting in March be solely focused on the proposed study session to further discuss the feasibility study item prior to being presented to the City Council.

ACTION: The Public Safety Commission have a study session at the next regular scheduled Commission meeting to allow the Commission and the members of the public to provide their input and review of the RFP selection of the consultant performing the Municipal Police Force Feasibility Study. Members of the Commission and staff will work together on the structure of that meeting. **Motion by Commissioner Steele, seconded by Vice Chair Balbone, abstention by Chair Hallman, and approved by the consensus of the rest of the Commission.**

9B. HIV ZERO INITIATIVE

Dr. Aaron Celious from Maroon Society, Inc. and City staff Derek Murray provided a presentation on the HIV Zero five-year Initiative that was brought to the City of West Hollywood.

Chair Hallman spoke about his personal experiences and the importance of awareness for HIV prevention. He asked a few questions to the speakers about their work in the community.

Commissioner Steele thanked the guest speakers on the presentation and praised their efforts with collaborating with the City contract service providers. She also had some questions based on the information provided from the presentation and thanked Chair Hallman for suggesting to bring this item to the Commission.

Vice Chair Balbone asked some questions about the data provided in the presentation.

Commissioner Oliver thanked the guest speakers for the presentation.

Dr. Aaron Celious and Derek Murray responded to all the Commissioner's questions and comments.

10) ITEMS FROM STAFF

Director Rivas briefly provided some updates of the Commission's ongoing discussions, work plan requested actions, community events, and trainings.

Vice Chair Balbone asked a question regarding the Center for Policing Equity (CPE) update that was provided.

Commissioner Steele thanked staff for their work. She also asked a question regarding the CPE update that was provided.

Director Rivas responded to all the Commissioner's questions and comments.

11) PUBLIC COMMENTS

No public comments.

12) ITEMS FROM THE COMMISSION/COMMISSIONER COMMENTS

Vice Chair Balbone commended the work that staff provided to put together the Municipal Police Force Feasibility Study and reiterated the importance of community engagement for the item.

13) ADJOURNMENT

The Public Safety Commission adjourned at 10:14 P.M. to its next regular meeting to on March 13, 2023.

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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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