

**MINUTES
CITY OF WEST HOLLYWOOD
LGBTQ+ COMMISSION**

**THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 9, 2023
7:00 P.M.**

**WEST HOLLYWOOD CITY HALL
1ST FLOOR – COMMUNITY MEETING ROOM
8300 SANTA MONICA BOULEVARD**

- 1. CALL TO ORDER** – Chair Egbuniwe called the meeting to order at 7:06pm.
- 2. LAND ACKNOWLEDGMENT:** Read by Chair Egbuniwe
“The West Hollywood LGBTQ+ Commission acknowledges that the land on which we gather and that is currently known as the City of West Hollywood is the occupied, unceded, seized territory of the Gabrieleño Tongva and Gabrieleño Kizh peoples.”
- 3. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE** – Commissioner White led the Pledge of Allegiance.
- 4. ROLL CALL**

PRESENT: Ron Cortes, Chiedu Egbuniwe, Nik Kacy, Renee F. Sotile, Alec White, and Amber Whittington

ABSENT:

5. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA:

ACTION: Motion to approve the November 9, 2023, Agenda as amended (Item 9.B. was heard after 8.B.) by Commissioner Kacy, seconded by Commissioner Cortes, and approved.

6. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES:

ACTION: Motion to approve the October 12, 2023, Meeting Minutes by Commissioner White, seconded by Commissioner Kacy, and approved.

7. PUBLIC COMMENT:

Joshua Marin-Mora, field representative for Assemblymember Rick Chavez Zbur, introduced himself to the Commission.

8. NEW BUSINESS:

A. EXPLORATION OF ALTERNATIVE AND ADDITIONAL PUBLIC RESTROOMS

The LGBTQ+ Commission received a report from Helen Collins, Facilities and Field Services Manager, on alternative and additional public restrooms.

Commissioner Kacy commented on the advantages of having accessible restrooms for members of the community that are experiencing homelessness at Plummer Park and asked whether a timed shower space could be implemented.

Commissioner Cortes asked staff if the restrooms are gender-neutral and suggested placing the hand-washing stations on the exterior of the restroom.

Commissioner Sotile inquired about the park hours, whether there will be a block-by-block presence to ensure safety for park patrons, residents, and community members, suggested the implementation of security cameras around the restrooms, and asked how often the parks are cleaned.

Commissioner White commented on the benefits of this item and expressed support.

Chair Egbuniwe expressed his support for this item and echoed Commissioner Sotile's thoughts about ensuring block-by-block ambassadors are present.

B. PROPOSED TRAINING FOR BAR AND NIGHTLIFE EMPLOYEES

The LGBTQ+ Commission received an update from Danny Rivas, Director of Community Safety, and discussed the request to propose training for bar and nightlife employees.

Danny provided an overview of the City's 'Bystander Intervention' training which is required for personnel in business establishments that serve alcohol for onsite consumption. The training is provided by the Rape Treatment Center (RTC) at UCLA Santa Monica Medical Center and is an educational course that addresses the issue of drug-facilitated sexual assaults and date rape drugs. The Bystander Intervention training program launched in March 2022, and to date, there have been over 3,000 employees that have completed the training.

Danny also provided an update on the City's distribution of drink-spiking test strips. There have been over 36,000 test kits that have been distributed to 23 businesses in West Hollywood.

Vice-Chair Whittington commented on her experience working in the nightlife industry in West Hollywood and asked if a mandatory anti-discrimination training on race, age, and disability discrimination could be implemented and required for bar and nightlife employees. Vice-Chair Whittington also asked staff what mechanisms the City can use to hold businesses accountable if they have engaged in discriminatory practices.

Danny informed the Commission that the City's municipal code prohibits businesses from discriminating on the basis of an individual's race, sexual orientation, gender identity, HIV Status, and standard of appearance or dress. The complaints are handled by the City's Code Compliance Division. Danny also provided his contact information to the Commission and encouraged Vice-Chair Whittington to reach out to continue the conversation.

Commissioner Cortes inquired about the reports/complaints filed against businesses and if those records are made public. Staff clarified that the City Clerk's office can be contacted for all public records requests.

Chair Egbuniwe asked staff about the complaint process that is handled by the City's Code Enforcement Division. Danny provided the contact information: phone at (323) 848-6516 (after hours), and via email, code@weho.org.

C. LEGISLATIVE AFFAIRS PRESENTATION

The LGBTQ+ Commission received a presentation from Hernan Molina, Governmental Affairs Liaison, on the City's Legislative Priorities.

The Commission provided feedback and asked about the City's Lobbyist and how long they have been contracted with the City.

D. LGBTQ+ Commission Meeting Time

ACTION: Motion to change the meeting time from 7:00pm to 6:30pm, beginning in January 2024 by Commissioner Kacy, seconded by Commissioner Sotile, and approved.

9. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

A. RAINBOW KEY AWARDS

The LGBTQ+ Commission received an update from the Rainbow Key Awards subcommittee and staff on the 2023 Rainbow Key Awards Ceremony. The Commission expressed interest in moving forward with the date of Tuesday, January 30, 2024, at 5:00pm for the 2023 Rainbow Key Awards Ceremony.

ACTION: Motion to approve the Rainbow Key Awards subcommittees recommendation to hold the 2023 Rainbow Key Awards Ceremony on Tuesday, January 30, 2024, at 5:00pm by Commissioner Kacy, seconded by Commissioner White, and approved.

B. PUBLIC SAFETY EQUIPMENT, TECHNOLOGY, AND SECURITY ENHANCEMENTS DEBRIEF – **heard after item 8.B.*

The LGBTQ+ Commission received a debrief on the special meeting held on August 14, 2023, where various public safety equipment, technology, and security enhancements were discussed, and was asked if there were additional comments or recommendations that should be included.

Commissioner Kacy asked staff about statistics and data that could be provided in conjunction with the staff report.

Vice-Chair Whittington commented on data storage and concerns about privacy and accessibility.

Commissioner White and Commissioner Sotile expressed support for enhanced security in the City.

Chair Egbuniwe expressed support for more security throughout the City, but asked how the data will be stored and who will have access to it.

10. PUBLIC COMMENT

None.

11. ITEMS FROM COMMISSIONERS

Commissioner Cortes –Commissioner Cortes provided his updated WeHoCommissionercortes@gmail.com where he can be reached for any Commission related businesses.

Commissioner Kacy

Updated the Commission that they are in touch with members of the City's Transgender Advisory Board. Commissioner Kacy also thanked Hernan and Danny for their reports and asked if the Commissioners could get together outside of the traditional meeting setting. Lastly, Commissioner Kacy also thanked Commissioner Blood for his time serving on the Commission and the Commissioners for their work.

Commissioner Sotile

Commissioner Sotile asked the Commission to adjourn in memory of Sue Cowell, prominent LGBTQ+ activist and AIDS services pioneer, and Natalie Holloway. Commissioner Sotile also stressed the importance of taking care of the City's community cats.

Commissioner White

Commissioner White provided an event attendance report and his new email address, Alecweho@gmail.com where he can be reached for any Commission related business. Commissioner White also asked that the Commission adjourn in memory of 85th anniversary of Kristallnacht.

Vice-Chair Whittington

Vice-Chair Whittington asked for the item about mandatory anti-discrimination training to be brought back for additional conversation. Vice-Chair Whittington also expressed concerns about the process for filing a complaint with the City's Code Enforcement Division as it relates to reporting hate crimes.

ACTION: Motion to extend meeting to 9:15pm by Chair Egbuniwe, seconded by Vice-Chair Whittington and approved.

Chair Egbuniwe

Chair Egbuniwe provided a brief event attendance report and asked how the Commission will be participating in providing feedback and input on Pride. Chair Egbuniwe also expressed support for Vice-Chair Whittington's request to bring back the item to discuss mandatory anti-discriminatory training. Additionally, Chair Egbuniwe shared information about an upcoming event Transgender Day of Remembrance (TDOR) event on Nov. 17th in the City of Los Angeles.

A. LIAISON REPORTS

Commissioner Cortes - attended Arts & Cultural Affairs Commission and provided an update on the meeting including the Laurel House renovation project.

Chair Egbuniwe notified the Commission that he was able to get in touch with members of the Historic Preservation Commission.

12. ITEMS FROM STAFF

- A. The LGBTQ+ Commission discussed cancelling their December 14, 2023, Commission meeting. Staff reminded the Commission of the deadline to complete code of conduct training and notified Vice-Chair Whittington that the comments made in regards to mandatory anti-discrimination training with Danny and will connect with event staff about update on Pride.

Yvonne Quarker, Community Services Director, provided an update on Pride and notified the Commission that staff will be bringing an item to Council in December and will begin soliciting feedback from the Commission shortly after.

13. ADJOURNMENT

The LGBTQ+ Commission adjourned at 9:11pm in memory of Sue Cowell, Natalie Holloway, and the 85th anniversary of Kristallnacht to its regularly scheduled meeting on Thursday, December 14, 2023, at 7:00 p.m. to be held in the West Hollywood City Hall - 1st Floor Community Meeting Room at 8300 Santa Monica Boulevard, West Hollywood, CA 90069.

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Chiedu Egbuniwe

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Chair Egbuniwe

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Jasmine Duckworth

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Recording Secretary | Jasmine Duckworth