

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

**THURSDAY, JULY 11, 2024 – 7:00 P.M.**

**WEST HOLLYWOOD CITY HALL  
1<sup>ST</sup> FLOOR – COMMUNITY MEETING ROOM  
8300 SANTA MONICA BOULEVARD, WEST HOLLYWOOD CA 90069**

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

Vice Chair Whittington called the meeting to order at 7:06 pm

**A. LAND ACKNOWLEDGMENT:**

Read by Vice Chair Whittington

*“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.”*

**B. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

Commissioner White led the Pledge of Allegiance.

**C. ROLL CALL**

**Present** Commissioner Ron Cortes  
Commissioner Michael Roberts  
Commissioner Renee F. Sotile  
Commissioner Alec White  
Commission Vice Chair Amber Whittington

**Absent:** Commission Chair Chiedu Egbuniwe

**Also Present:** Commission Liaison Jennifer Del Toro  
Recording Secretary Moya Márquez  
Assistant City Clerk Lulu Morales

**D. APPROVAL OF THE JULY 11, 2024 AGENDA**

The Commission was asked to approve the July 11, 2024 Meeting Agenda as posted.

**ACTION:** Approval of the July 11, 2024 Agenda as posted was motioned by Commissioner Whittington, seconded by Commissioner White, and approved unanimously.

**E. APPROVAL OF THE JUNE 13, 2024 MINUTES**

The Commission was asked to approve the June 13, 2024 Meeting Minutes.

**ACTION:** Approval of the June 13, 2024, meeting minutes was **motioned by Commissioner White, seconded by Commissioner Roberts, and approved unanimously.**

**F. PUBLIC COMMENT**

LARRY BLOCK, West Hollywood, spoke about the process of appointing and removing commissioners and encouraged the Commission to advocate for a different process of removing commissioners. He also spoke about the purview of the LGBTQ+ Commission and encouraged them to be more vocal and create more change in the planning of Pride.

**2. UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

**A. 2024 REVISIONS TO RAINBOW KEY AWARD GUIDELINES TO INCORPORATE TWO ADDITIONAL AWARDS**

The Commission considered approving revisions to the Rainbow Key Award Guidelines incorporating two additional awards: the Melissa Etheridge Award and the Audre Lorde Award.

The Commission worked through the entire guideline document, recital by recital, and agreed to a series of changes and clarifications that will be sent to the City Attorney for review, followed by City Council for final approval.

**ACTION:** Approval of a series of revisions to the Rainbow Key Award Guidelines incorporating the Melissa Etheridge and Audre Lorde Awards with direction to forward to the City Attorney and City Council for final ratification was **motioned by Commissioner White, seconded by Commissioner Sotile and approved unanimously.**

**B. RAINBOW KEY AWARDS**

The Commission received an update from the Rainbow Key Awards subcommittee and continued the discussion on the 2024 Rainbow Key Awards Ceremony.

The Commission requested that staff reach out to the 2024 Awardees and ask them to confirm date availability in the following order of preference:

1<sup>st</sup> choice - October 11

2<sup>nd</sup> choice - Oct 12

3<sup>rd</sup> choice - Jan 24, 2025

**ACTION:** Request that staff confirm Awardee availability for any of the three dates selected was **motioned by Commissioner Whittington, seconded by Commissioner Cortes and approved unanimously.**

### **3. NEW BUSINESS**

#### **A. ELECTION OF CHAIR**

The Commission considered nominating and electing a Chair position for a term through June 30, 2025.

**ACTION:** Selection of Commissioner Whittington to serve as Chair was **motioned by Commissioner Cortes, seconded by Commissioner Roberts and approved unanimously.**

#### **A. ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIR**

The Commission considered nominating and electing a Vice-Chair position for a term through June 30, 2025.

Commissioner White and Commissioner Roberts were both nominated for the position and gave brief comments to the Commission on why they wanted to serve.

**ACTION:** Selection of Commissioner White to serve as Vice-Chair was **motioned by Commissioner Whittington, seconded by Commissioner Sotile and approved unanimously.**

### **4. PUBLIC COMMENT**

None.

### **5. ITEMS FROM COMMISSIONERS**

Commissioner Roberts spoke highly about the cooling center promotion campaign the City has been running during the heat wave.

Commissioner Cortes spoke highly of the WeHo Civic Leadership Academy and encouraged his fellow Commissioners to consider enrolling in the next cohort. He also spoke about his perception that the Commission isn't able to enact meaningful changes in the City with regard to Pride.

Commissioner Sotile congratulated the new Chair Whittington and Vice Chair White. spoke about her perception of unfairness that the Pride Community Grants funds were not given out entirely this year during Pride. She expressed that she believed that the Commission should do more for Pride. She also spoke about recent successes in her volunteer work in catching and spaying/neutering West Hollywood cats.

Commissioner White thanked everyone for voting him to be Vice-Chair.

Vice-Chair Whittington expressed agreement with Larry Block's statements about creating a new way to remove Commissioners and asked staff on how to proceed with making such a request. She also spoke about how she met with the LGBTQ+ Commission Director of the County of Los Angeles and that the County Commission was interested in speaking with the Commission. She also shared that she has been painted on a mural at the LGBTQ+ Center. Finally, she congratulated Commissioner White for his election to the role of Vice-Chair and Commissioner Cortes for his work in the Civic Leadership Academy. She also thanked the Commission for voting her into the role of Chair.

Commissioner Roberts asked a question about how the Commission could follow up on items that are of interest to the Commission.


#### **6. ITEMS FROM STAFF**

Jennifer Del Toro, Staff Liaison, shared that the Commission will hold a Pride Debrief at the August meeting with relevant lead staff members to hear feedback from the Commission. She added that the September meeting will focus on the Commission's workplan.

#### **7. ADJOURNMENT**

The LGBTQ+ Commission adjourned at 8:54 pm to its regularly scheduled meeting on Thursday, August 8, 2024, at 7:00 p.m. to be held in West Hollywood City Hall - 1st Floor Community Meeting Room at 8300 Santa Monica Boulevard, West Hollywood, CA 90069.

APPROVED BY A MOTION OF THE LGBTQ+ COMMISSION ON THIS 8TH DAY OF AUGUST 2024.

  
Amber Whittington | Commission Chair

  
Moya Márquez | Recording Secretary