

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

THURSDAY, JUNE 13, 2024 – 7:00 P.M.

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

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Egbuniwe called the meeting to order at 7:05 pm

A. 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.”

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 Chair Chiedu Egbuniwe

Absent: Commission Vice Chair Amber Whittington

Also Present: Commission Liaison Jennifer Del Toro
Recording Secretary Moya Márquez

D. APPROVAL OF THE JUNE 13, 2024 AGENDA

The Commission was asked to approve the June 13, 2024 Meeting Agenda as posted.

ACTION: Approval of the June 13, 2024 Agenda as posted was motioned by Commissioner White, seconded by Commissioner Sotile, and approved unanimously.

E. APPROVAL OF THE APRIL 11, 2024 MINUTES

The Commission was asked to approve the April 11, 2024 Meeting Minutes.

ACTION: Approval of the April 11, 2024, meeting minutes was **motioned by Commissioner Roberts, seconded by Commissioner White, and approved unanimously.**

F. PUBLIC COMMENT

Victor Omelczenko, West Hollywood, spoke about the lottery application for affordable LGBTQ+ senior housing in a Hollywood building that West Hollywood partially funded. He emphasized that the City should do more to promote the lottery application.

Joe Green, West Hollywood, spoke about his attendance at WeHo Pride and the Health and Screening Fair the DAB will host on October 8th. He stressed that floats at Pride should be wheelchair accessible, and was concerned that the Fountain Ave beautification project may not be wheelchair accessible.

NiK Kacy, West Hollywood, spoke about their service to the Community and shared their disappointment at being removed from the Commission. They emphasized greater transparency on the removal process and were concerned about the treatment of community member volunteers.

Larry Block, West Hollywood, spoke about NiK Kacy's removal from the Commission.

Zara Barrie, West Hollywood, spoke about moving to West Hollywood from New York, and how Nik Kacy helped acclimate them to West Hollywood LGBTQ+ life and culture and shared how they support Nik.

Leon Elias Wu, spoke about their role as a fashion designer at the Equality Fashion week. They supported Nik Kacy and stressed that their removal from the Commission was unfair.

Bella, West Hollywood, spoke about their role as an event producer at Equality Fashion week. They supported Nik Kacy.

Mayor John Erickson thanked the Commission for their work and wished everyone a happy pride.

2. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

A. LIAISON APPOINTMENTS

The Commission received a schedule of the City's Advisory Board and Commission meetings and discussed which bodies the Commission is interested in appointing liaisons to.

The following liaison appointments were made:

Michael Roberts to the Historical Preservation Commission

Ron Cortes to the Arts and Cultural Affairs Commission, as well as the Human Services Commission

Alec White to the Business Licensing Commission

ACTION: Appointment of Michael Roberts to the Historical Preservation Commission; Ron Cortes to both the Arts and Cultural Affairs Commission and the Human Services Commission; and Alec White to the Business Licensing Commission as liaisons from the LGBTQ+ Commission was **motioned by Commissioner White, seconded by Commissioner Cortes and approved unanimously.**

3. NEW BUSINESS

A. ITEM ARTS GRANT PROGRAM – APPOINT PEER REVIEW PANELIST

The Commission considered appointing a member to participate on the Arts Project Grant Peer Review Panel.

Eva Angeloff, Grants Coordinator discussed the multiple category of grants available through the City's Arts Grant Program, highlighting the LGBTQ+ related grants.

Commissioner Cortes self-nominated and Commissioner Sotile self-nominated as an alternate in the event Commission Cortes is unavailable.

ACTION: Appointment of Commissioner Cortes as the primary representative and Commissioner Sotile as an alternate was **motioned by Commissioner Cortes, seconded by Chair Egbuniwe and approved unanimously.**

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

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

After initial deliberations, the Commission voted to table this item to the following meeting in order to review more carefully and provide better feedback.

ACTION: Motion to table item to July 2024 meeting was **motioned by Commissioner Cortes, seconded by Commissioner White and approved unanimously.**

C. 2024 RAINBOW KEY AWARDS CEREMONY

The Commission discussed dates and considered forming a Subcommittee to help plan the 2024 Rainbow Key Awards Ceremony.

The Commission discussed dates to consider, including fall dates in October or early November, and potentially next year.

Commissioners Roberts and Chair Egbuniwe self-nominated to be on the Subcommittee.

ACTION: Appointment of Commissioner Roberts and Chair Egbuniwe to the 2024 Rainbow Key Awards Subcommittee was **motioned by Commissioner White, seconded by Commissioner Cortes and approved unanimously.**

D. 2024 BI+ VISIBILITY WEEK EVENT

The Commission discussed dates and considered forming a Subcommittee to help plan an event in commemoration of 2024 Bi+ Visibility Week.

Chair Egbuniwe and Commissioner Sotile self-nominated to be on the Subcommittee.

ACTION: Appointment of Chair Egbuniwe and Commissioner Sotile to the 2024 Bi+ Visibility Week Subcommittee was **motioned by Commissioner White, seconded by Commissioner Roberts and approved unanimously.**

4. PUBLIC COMMENT

Larry Block, West Hollywood, spoke about several issues at Pride (including ticket pricing being too expensive, that the trans community and Latino community felt left out, and the street fair could be improved). He stressed that the Commission should advocate for a bigger say in decisions for Pride and do more outreach to LGBTQ themed businesses. He also encouraged the Commission to appoint a liaison to the Public Safety Commission.

5. ITEMS FROM COMMISSIONERS

Commissioner Roberts spoke about the successes of Pride. He was happy with the free Friday event and shared that the park was packed. He spoke about attending an informative meeting with the Sheriff's Department last month about building relationships between the LGBTQ+ Community and law enforcement. He expressed he was happy to see Commissioner Kacy give public comment.

Commissioner Cortes expressed he wanted the Commission to discuss the new Rainbow District initiative. He also attended the inauguration of LA County's LGBTQ+ Commission. He mentioned that the Commission should consider appointing a liaison to the County's Commission. He expressed frustration that when the Commission shared ideas for the Pride festival with Events staff, that they never received anything back. He asked everyone to consider a procedural adjustment to ensure that their recommendations are received and responded to. He also offered his condolences to Commissioner Sotile on her loss

Commissioner Sotile shared that she loved the Pride festival and being part of the parade. She was disappointed that Nik Kacy was let go, and asked Councilmember Shyne to consider re-appointing Kacy. She was also disappointed that two community members applied for a community grant for Pride and were declined, even when all the funds were not used. Finally, she also echoed Commissioner Cortes' statements that she feels that the Commission's Pride suggestions aren't being seriously considered. She asked that the meeting be adjourned in memory of her sister, Sheryl Goldwasser.

Commissioner White shared he went to Pride and the Pride Kick Off and had heard positive feedback on WeHo Pride. He offered his condolences to Commissioner Sotile on her loss.

Chair Egbuniwe mentioned he spoke with the Sheriff's Department after personally experiencing an incident at Pride and suggested inviting the Sheriff's Department to explain how they work with the LGBTQ+ Community. He expressed his sadness in losing Nik Kacy as a fellow Commissioner and asked Councilmember Shyne to consider re-appointing Kacy or consider appointing a trans voice, of which the Commission now has none.

6. ITEMS FROM STAFF

Jennifer Del Toro, Staff Liaison, shared that the Commission can hold a Pride Debrief and invite lead staff members for Pride to hear feedback from the Commission. She also shared that staff can explore the request for a WeHo LGBTQ+ Commission liaison appointment to the newly formed LA County LGBTQ+ Commission.

7. ADJOURNMENT

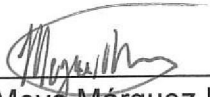
The LGBTQ+ Commission adjourned in memory of Sheryl Goldwasser at 8:53 to its regularly scheduled meeting on Thursday, July 11, 2024, at 7:00 p.m. to be held in West Hollywood City Hall - 1st Floor Community Meeting Room at 8300 Santa

Monica Boulevard, West Hollywood, CA 90069.

APPROVED BY A MOTION OF THE LGBTQ+ COMMISSION ON THIS 11th DAY OF
July 2024.



Chiedu Egbuniwe | Commission Chair



Moya Márquez | Recording Secretary