

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

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 12, 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 Whittington called the meeting to order at 7:04 pm

A. LAND ACKNOWLEDGMENT:

Read by 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. ADMINISTER THE OATH OF OFFICE TO NEWLY APPOINTED LGBTQ+ COMMISSIONER

The Oath of Office was administered to newly appointed member Shane Ivan Nash.

C. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Commissioner Roberts led the Pledge of Allegiance.

D. ROLL CALL

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

Absent: Commissioner Chiedu Egbuniwe

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

E. APPROVAL OF THE SEPTEMBER 12, 2024 AGENDA

The Commission was asked to approve the September 12, 2024 Meeting Agenda as posted.

ACTION: Approval of the September 12, 2024 Agenda as posted was **motioned by Chair Whittington, seconded by Commissioner Sotile, and approved unanimously.**

F. APPROVAL OF THE AUGUST 8, 2024 MINUTES

The Commission was asked to approve the August 8, 2024 Meeting Minutes.

ACTION: Approval of the August 8, 2024, meeting minutes was **motioned by Chair Whittington, seconded by Commissioner Cortes, and approved unanimously.**

G. PUBLIC COMMENT

JOSEPH GREEN, WEST HOLLYWOOD, spoke on the Health and Wellness event on Oct 1st from DAB. He also shared other events from the LA County Commission on HIV & AIDS, including the Aging Caucus meeting on Oct 1st; the Black Caucus meeting on Sept 19th, & the Trans Caucus meeting on Oct 22; and the Women’s Caucus on Oct 21st.

JOSHUA MARIN-MORA, staff field deputy for Assemblymember Zbur shared that the Assemblymember shares his regards to the Commission and sends his congratulations to newly sworn-in Commissioner Nash. He shared three assembly bills (AB 2258, 2442, and 2447) that were authored by the Assemblymember that the Commission may wish to track.

ZEKIAH WRIGHT, congratulated Commissioner Nash on his appointment, and thanked the Commission for their work in supporting LGBTQ+ rights in the City.

JARRED HARRISON, shared that he moved to West Hollywood a year ago, and was attracted to West Hollywood for its reputation as an LGBTQ+ City. He is producing a multimedia storytelling project and invites Commissioners to share their stories through his project.

2. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

A. RAINBOW KEY AWARDS

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

Staff recording secretary Márquez reported to the Commission that the proposed December dates for the Rainbow Key Awards do not work for all the awardees. Commissioner Roberts expressed his belief that the event should

be held at a date when the most awardees are able to attend, and the Commission agreed by consensus. Staff shared they will reach back out to awardees with potential January dates, if the Commission would allow such a date. There was consensus with the Commission for staff to proceed with looking at January dates.

ACTION: None taken.

B. BI+ VISIBILITY WEEK

The Commission received an update from staff on the 2024 Bi+ Pride event.

Staff recording secretary Márquez spoke on the upcoming Sept 22nd Bi+ Visibility Week celebration in the park.

ACTION: Received and filed.

3. NEW BUSINESS

A. WORKPLAN DISCUSSION

The LGBTQ+ Commission reviewed and discussed a proposed workplan for the 2024-2025 year and made suggestions as appropriate.

The Commission received a presentation from staff liaison Jennifer Del Toro on the proposed workplan.

Commissioner Roberts inquired about the process of creating a new Commission initiative. Staff liaison Del Toro explained that this is the time for the Commission to discuss the addition of new items and initiatives for the following year.

Commissioner Cortes spoke about how many people in the public don't understand the purpose and scope of the Commission beyond their limited involvement in WeHo Pride.

Vice Chair White arrived at 7:43PM.

Chair Whittington spoke about the importance of combating discrimination in nightlife establishments in WeHo. She asked if such an initiative could be added to the workplan.

Staff liaison Del Toro suggested that it doesn't fall under the Commission's purview given the previous discussion with the Community Safety Department item at the November 2023 meeting. She suggested that the Commission could invite the Economic Development Director to a future Commission meeting to discuss this as it relates to the business community.

Commissioner Roberts asked if the City has ever offered sensitivity training to nightlife businesses and raised the possibility of discussing safe space designations for local businesses.

Commissioner Sotile asked if the Commission could involve itself with the domestic violence silhouettes program – with the idea of working with the Chamber to enlist businesses to display them year-round and have them rotate to raise awareness of intimate partner violence. She also shared the idea of creating an LGBTQ+ history archive grant to help preserve the history of WeHo by creating a digital archive that people could access. And finally, she shared her desire to create a filmmakers grant.

Staff liaison Del Toro spoke about the silhouettes program and explained that the lead advisory body for this initiative is the Women's Advisory Board, so staff will need to further discuss this request internally. She also shared that the Arts Grant program is expanding to include filmmaker grants as part of the next full grants program cycle.

Commissioner Cortes suggested partnering with the library's WeHo Stories project to capture stories of WeHo's history. He also requested we discuss the Commission's Visibility and Impact at Pride. He also suggested that the Commission should provide feedback on the Historic Rainbow District designation in the City's nightlife area.

Commissioner Nash requested the Commission discuss the body's mission statement.

Staff Liaison Del Toro summarized the newly added items: to request a future item from the Economic Development Department to discuss LGBTQ+ discrimination at nightlife businesses including potentially offering safe space designations for businesses, as well as delineating involvement from the Commission on the upcoming Rainbow District designation initiative; a future item on the drafting of the Commission's mission statement; an item to discuss the Commission's Visibility and Impact at Pride, and an item looking at Preserving LGBTQ+ History to include WeHo Stories information and a potential archive grants program.

Commissioner Sotile also had suggestions about WeHo Pride. Staff liaison Del Toro suggested that interested Commissioners wishing to make more suggestions for Pride could speak to the City Council at their next meeting.

ACTION: None.

4. PUBLIC COMMENT

BLOSSOM BROWN, LOS ANGELES, congratulated Commissioner Nash, and spoke about how she appreciated the conversation on Pride and wanted to talk about Trans erasure at Pride. She asked the Commission to remember to

include the disabled, trans, and the poor at Pride.

5. ITEMS FROM COMMISSIONERS

Commissioner Cortes welcomed Commissioner Nash. He also thanked Jarred for giving public comment, and for leading his project to help end stigma around people with HIV/AIDS. He also shared information on the upcoming Artists Roundtable being hosted by the Arts Division.

Commissioner Nash thanked the Commission for welcoming him, and shared he looked forward to working with everyone.

Commissioner Roberts thanked everyone for their ideas and thanked the public speakers. He also welcomed Commissioner Nash.

Commissioner Sotile shared that her WeHo Community Cats TNR program saved five cats yesterday. She congratulated Commissioner Nash, and thanked Blossom for her comments. She also thanked staff for their help.

Vice Chair White welcomed Commissioner Nash. He reported that he attended the Mayor's public lunch event.

Chair Whittington apologized for missing the last meeting. She welcomed Commissioner Nash, and thanked staff for their work.


6. ITEMS FROM STAFF

None.

7. ADJOURNMENT

The LGBTQ+ Commission adjourned at 9:01pm to its regularly scheduled meeting on Thursday, October 10, 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 10th DAY OF October 2024.


Amber Whittington | Commission Chair


Moya Márquez | Recording Secretary