

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

**MONDAY, JULY 11, 2022  
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**

Melissa Crowder, City Clerk, called the meeting to order at 6:06 P.M.

**2) PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Richard Maggio.

**3) OATH OF OFFICE**

The Oath of Office was administered to Jackie Steele by Mayor Pro Tempore Shyne.

Michael King, West Hollywood, spoke on congratulating newly appointed Public Safety Commissioner Steele.

Adam Darvish, West Hollywood, spoke on congratulating newly appointed Public Safety Commissioner Steele. He also spoke about his experiences in the City. Mayor Pro Tempore Shyne gave well wishes and thanked the Public Safety Commission.

**4) ROLL CALL**

**Commissioners Present:**

Commissioner Balbone  
Commissioner Hallman  
Commissioner Oliver  
Commissioner Roman  
Commissioner Soon-Shiong (left meeting at 9:55 P.M.)  
Commissioner Steele

## **Commissioners Absent:**

Chair Berger

## **Others Present:**

Danny Rivas, City Director of Community Safety; Jessica Anukam, City Public Safety Specialist; and Melissa Crowder, City Clerk; Captain Bill Moulder, Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department; Lieutenant Fanny Lapkin, Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department; Sergeant Mike Yost, Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department; Assistant Chief Drew Smith, Los Angeles County Fire Department; Daniela Vasile, Divisional Vice President - West Coast, Block by Block; David Aguilar, Regional Vice President - Southern California, Block by Block; Sean Eldridge, Implementation Specialist Manager, The Center For Policing Equity; Caitlin Pots, The Center For Policing Equity.

## **5) ADJOURNMENT REQUEST**

Commissioner Balbone requested to adjourn in honor of resident Ruth Williams. She also requested to adjourn for the 60 people that have been killed in mass shootings since the last Public Safety Commission meeting.

## **6) APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

Commissioner Balbone requested to move item 11A. Election of Chair and item 11B. Election of Vice Chair up on the agenda. **Motion by Commissioner Balbone, seconded by Commissioner Oliver, and approved.**

**ACTION:** Approve the agenda of July 11, 2022. **Motion by Commissioner Balbone, seconded by Commissioner Steele, and approved.**

## **POSTING OF THE AGENDA**

The agenda for the July 11, 2022, Public Safety Commission meeting was posted at City Hall, Plummer Park, and the West Hollywood Sheriff's Station.

## **7) APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

**ACTION:** Approve the minutes of June 13, 2022. **Motion by Commissioner Oliver, seconded by Commissioner Soon-Shiong, and approved. Abstention by Commissioner Steele.**

## **8) PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Richard Maggio, Rent Stabilization Commissioner, spoke on providing the Public Safety Commission with ordinances, information, and updates regarding Rent

Stabilization and Housing as a liaison. He also congratulated Jackie Steele as newly appointed Public Safety Commissioner.

Danny Hang, West Hollywood, spoke on congratulating newly appointed Public Safety Commissioner Jackie Steele.

Jamie Francis, West Hollywood, spoke about his personal experiences regarding crime in the City. He also expressed his disappointment with some of the Commissioners' position on the Sheriff's budget.

Councilmember Erickson spoke on welcoming newly appointed Public Safety Commissioner Jackie Steele.

Zekiah Wright, West Hollywood, spoke on congratulating newly appointed Public Safety Commissioner Jackie Steele.

Steve Martin, West Hollywood, spoke on congratulating newly appointed Public Safety Commissioner Jackie Steele. He also talked about the City's discussion of the possibility of having their own police force.

Donna, West Hollywood, thanked the West Hollywood Sheriff's Station for their service and support. She also expressed her concerns with the recent decision on the Sheriff's budget.

Polly Businger, West Hollywood, spoke regarding her concerns with crime in her area and agreed with the previous comments made. She also expressed she would like to keep the Sheriff's Department in the City.

Mike Carter, Neighborhood Watch Captain of Ogden Drive, spoke about his disapproval of the recent decision regarding the Sheriff's budget and the security ambassadors.

Larry Block, West Hollywood, spoke about his disappointment with the City's decision to decrease the Sheriff's budget and increase the security ambassador program. He also read a list of donations made by the parent company of Block by Block to Republican Party interests.

Stephanie Harker, West Hollywood, spoke on congratulating Captain Bill Moulder on his promotion. She also spoke about the recent City Council decision on the Sheriff's budget and expressed that she would like to see an end to the scooter mobility program.

Cathy Blaivas, West Hollywood, spoke on congratulating newly appointed Public Safety Commissioner Jackie Steele. She also expressed agreement with all the previous comments in regard to the Sheriff's budget and the process that led to the

City Council's decision. She spoke about accountability needed for the scooters that are left out on the streets.

Ashlei Shyne, West Hollywood, spoke on congratulating newly appointed Public Safety Commissioner Jackie Steele. She also shared her experience with the Block by Block security ambassadors and talked about the importance of more security presence in the City.

Michael Wojtkielewicz, West Hollywood, spoke about his disagreement and concerns with the current agenda, difficulties joining the current meeting, the Commission, and the City Council.

Karen O'Keefe, West Hollywood, spoke about her concerns that the City prioritizes the convenience of motorist versus green alternative methods of transportation. She also shared her personal experience of an incident involving her uncle as a pedestrian with a motorist.

## **9) COMMISSIONER COMMENTS**

Commissioner Hallman welcomed everyone at the first in-person commission meeting since the pandemic. He also welcomed newly appointed Public Safety Commissioner Jackie Steele. He gave an update of the collaborative Emergency Preparedness Plan meeting he had with staff and mentioned the recent City meeting he attended outside the commission.

Commissioner Balbone welcomed newly appointed Public Safety Commissioner Jackie Steele. She also mentioned the various City meetings she attended and those discussions regarding public safety.

Commissioner Steele talked about her attendance at a recent City event. She greeted the Commission and the general public and encouraged the public to get involved in the various conversations and group organizations. She also talked about having more inclusion for the Bi and Bi+ community.

Commissioner Soon-Shiong expressed her support to the recent City Council decision regarding the Sheriff's budget and the addition of staff to the security ambassadors. She also provided statistics to support her position on the matter.

Commissioner Oliver welcomed newly appointed Public Safety Commissioner Jackie Steele. He spoke about the recent City Council decision regarding the Sheriff's budget and the importance of public safety in the community. He spoke in agreement that there should be more accountability regarding the scooter program and the importance of having micro mobility lanes on the streets for the scooters. He also thanked and congratulated Captain Moulder and Lieutenant Lapkin.

Commissioner Roman welcomed newly appointed Public Safety Commissioner Jackie Steele. He reported on crime for the month of May and June 2022. He expressed his support for the recent City Council decision regarding the Sheriff's budget and the addition of staff to the security ambassador program. He also spoke about the importance of everyone and all public service agencies working together for a safer West Hollywood.

## **10) NEW BUSINESS**

### **10A. ELECTION OF CHAIR**

Melissa Crowder, City Clerk, provided the Commission with an overview of the nomination and election process. She opened up the nominations for the Chair.

**ACTION:** The Public Safety Commission will discuss and elect a Chair. **Motion by Commissioner Steele to nominate Commissioner Balbone. Motion by Commissioner Balbone to nominate Commissioner Hallman.**

**The nominees for Chair were Commissioner Balbone and Commissioner Hallman.**

**Commissioner Roman voted for Commissioner Balbone. Commissioner Oliver voted for Commissioner Hallman. Commissioner Hallman voted for himself. Commissioner Balbone voted for Commissioner Hallman. Commissioner Soon-Shiong voted for Commissioner Balbone. Commissioner Steele voted for Commissioner Balbone.**

**Commissioner Hallman received three (3) votes and Commissioner Balbone received three (3) votes.**

**Commissioner Balbone declined the Chair nomination.**

**Commissioner Hallman was elected new Chair of the Public Safety Commission.**

### **10B. ELECTION OF VICE CHAIR**

Melissa Crowder, City Clerk, opened up the nominations for the Vice Chair.

**ACTION:** The Public Safety Commission will discuss and elect a Vice Chair. **Motion by Commissioner Oliver to nominate Commissioner Balbone.**

**Commissioner Balbone was the only Vice Chair nominee; therefore, she was elected new Vice Chair of the Public Safety Commission.**

Chair Hallman thanked the Commission for his nomination and election as Chair. He also thanked and acknowledged newly elected Vice Chair Balbone.

## **11) UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

### **11A. UPDATE ON THE CITY'S DOCKLESS MOBILITY PROGRAM**

Danny Rivas, Director of Community Safety, congratulated newly appointed Public Safety Commissioner Jackie Steele. He also congratulated newly elected Chair Hallman and Vice Chair Balbone. He noted that the requested information for the Dockless Mobility Program has been provided by staff. This has been made available as a supplement to the information provided from the June commission meeting.

Commissioner Steele asked various questions regarding updates of the Dockless Mobility Program and the latest Chamber of Commerce business meeting.

Danny Rivas, Director of Community Safety, mentioned that these updates can be provided at a later date.

Commissioner Oliver asked about the responsibility of enforcement on scooters and accountability measures.

Danny Rivas, Director of Community Safety, explained the companies of ABM and Block by Block's role of enforcement with scooter devices on the public walkway. He also referred to the Sheriff's Department on further advice on enforcement with scooter riders. He suggested the Commission bring forth a memo of inquiries on this item at the future City Council meeting where this item would be heard.

Commissioner Balbone inquired about responsibility of removal of scooters from public walkways and accountability for scooter riders. She also suggested a method of issuing fines for improper scooter placement on public walkways.

Danny Rivas, Director of Community Safety, responded that these are items to add for the memo to the City Council.

Commissioner Roman inquired about a method that would allow scooters to be disabled on sidewalks. He also made a suggestion of a designated parking area for the scooters placed throughout the City.

Chair Hallman expressed his concerns along with similar concerns from the public regarding the scooters. He stated he would like to see improvements with the program.

Commissioner Steele inquired about the number of agencies that are involved in the handling of the scooters. She expressed her concerns of the scooters with some of the issues that have been discussed. She also stated that she would like to see improvements with the pilot.

Commissioner Oliver stated he would like to see more scooter company enforcement and the ability to issue fines for scooter negligence.

Myra (Mikie) Friedman, West Hollywood, expressed her concerns about the scooters in the City. She congratulated newly appointed Public Safety Commissioner Jackie Steele and also congratulated newly elected Chair Hallman and Vice Chair Balbone.

Karen O'Keefe, West Hollywood, expressed her support of making the Dockless Mobility Program permanent in the City. She spoke about the environmentally friendly reasons this program is beneficial.

Yola Dore, West Hollywood, spoke about the importance of ADA accessibility for people with disabilities regarding scooters in the City.

Michael Wojtkielewicz, West Hollywood, spoke in agreement on the remarks from public speaker Karen O'Keefe. He also expresses his support for the Dockless Mobility Program.

Manny Rodriguez, West Hollywood, spoke on congratulating newly appointed Public Safety Commissioner Jackie Steele. He also spoke about the agencies responsibility of the scooters in the City and expressed his opposition of the Dockless Mobility Program.

Zekiah Wright, West Hollywood, spoke on her support for the Dockless Mobility Program but agreed with the Commission to allow the scooter pilot program to continue with the recommended changes and improvements.

**ACTION:** Receive and provide direction to staff to prepare a memo to the City Council regarding this item and or appoint a Public Safety Commissioner to attend the City Council meeting to speak on the Commission's behalf on this item. **Commission Oliver motioned for staff to draft a memo to the City Council addressing the multitude of concerns raised related to compliance, accountability, ADA accessibility, and penalty fees before a formalized Dockless Mobility Program is established. Motion was seconded by Commissioner Steele, and approved.**

## **11B. REPORT FROM FIRE DEPARTMENT – MONTHLY REPORT**

Chief Drew Smith congratulated newly appointed Public Safety Commissioner Jackie Steele. He also congratulated newly elected Chair Hallman and Vice Chair Balbone. He reported that the month of June was a busy month for the Fire Department starting off with WeHo Pride. He addressed the many inquiries regarding the amount of equipment the Fire staff bring for an emergency call.

Commissioner Roman asked City Clerk, Melissa Crowder, about the agenda order of items in order to allow for emergency service speakers to present earlier in the Commission meeting.

Melissa Crowder, City Clerk, suggested that a motion be made during the Approval of Agenda portion of meeting. She also explained that depending on the Commission Bylaws the agenda can be reorganized to accommodate time for these speakers.

Commission Roman asked Chief Smith why large fire trucks are used instead of smaller vehicles during situations that may not require all emergency fire equipment.

Chief Drew Smith responded to Commissioner Roman and gave examples to explain the reason of the use of the fire trucks for non-fire related emergency calls.

Chair Hallman asked if other cities practice the same policy for use of the fire trucks.

Chief Drew Smith responded to Commissioner Hallman that some cities practice similar policy.

Michael Wojtkielewicz, West Hollywood, spoke about an experience of a power outage where an individual was stuck in an elevator and his concern for emergency services to reach them in a timely manner.

Vice Chair Balbone inquired if there is any municipal code or requirements for situations when there is a power outage and an elevator is out of service.

Danny Rivas, Director of Community Safety, responded that there is a municipal code for out of service elevators during a power outage but not when a person is inside. He also explained the protocol for similar incidents.

Commission Steele spoke about her feelings of the importance of large fire trucks needed for emergency calls such as an overdose scenario.

### **11C. REPORT FROM BLOCK BY BLOCK SECURITY AMBASSADORS – MONTHLY REPORT**

David Aguilar, Block by Block, pointed out the additional report provided to the Commission apart from the regular monthly report that focuses on scooter violation statistics. He also mentioned that June was busy and there was more recruitment due to the increase in staff placed at City Hall, the parks, and the Aquatic Center. He provided more statistics of Block by Block activity for the month of June.

Steve Martin, West Hollywood, spoke on congratulating newly elected Chair Hallman and Vice Chair Balbone. He also welcomed all to attend the City's National Night Out event in August. He agreed with Commissioner Roman's comments of the positive experience with the Block by Block security ambassadors.

Lynn Russell, West Hollywood, asked Block by Block staff about company protocol



in various public situations and asked other questions regarding the security ambassador duties so that the general public can be more informed on what type of work they do in the City.

Michael Wojtkielewicz, West Hollywood, spoke about his concerns with the Commission and gave his description of the Block by Block security ambassador role in the City.

Daniela Vasile, Block by Block, responded to the questions from resident Lynn Russell and gave an explanation of the Block by Block company, the required certifications each security ambassador receives, and the overall work they do in the City day-to-day.

A lengthy discussion regarding the security ambassador hiring process, job roles, job training, and collaboration with other agencies occurred between the Commissioners and representatives from Block by Block.

Chair Hallman thanked to Block by Block for their service to the City.

#### **11D. SHERIFF'S REPORT – MONTHLY REPORT**

Captain Bill Moulder congratulated newly appointed Public Safety Commissioner Jackie Steele. He also congratulated newly elected Chair Hallman and Vice Chair Balbone. He presented Lieutenant Fanny Lapkin and Sergeant Mike Yost along with himself as a team to reach out to if needed. He reported on the June part I crime stats and updates to staff training and undercover operations. He mentioned that the department received a grant for the purchase of more bikes to add to their foot patrol unit and gave an update to recent arrests made and an incident involving an aggravated assault. He also answered several questions that were asked by the Commission from the previous meeting.

A lengthy discussion regarding the crime statistics, recent reported incidents, situations where Narcan treatment would be administered, the effect of the City Council decision on the Sheriff's budget, and presentation of crime statistics used by the Sheriff's Department occurred between the Commissioners and Captain Moulder.

Melissa Crowder, City Clerk, explained to the Commission the correct speaking order for the meeting.

Michael Wojtkielewicz, West Hollywood, spoke about his concerns with the Sheriff's Department and shared an experience where an individual made an emergency call. He also spoke on other personal experiences and grievances with the Sheriff's Department.

Chair Hallman acknowledged the time of the meeting and suggested meeting with the Vice Chair to tighten up the flow of future Public Safety Commission meetings.

Vice Chair Balbone had some questions addressing some issues and possible allegations regarding gang activity in West Hollywood.

Captain Bill Moulder responded to Vice Chair Balbone's inquiries.

Chair Hallman thanked the Sheriff's Department for the service to the City.

## **11E. CENTER FOR POLICING EQUITY UPDATE**

Sean Eldridge and Caitlin Pots gave a PowerPoint presentation of the Implementation Managers/Law Enforcement Initiatives, from the Center for Policing Equity (CPE) regarding CPE's work and the study in partnership with the West Hollywood Sheriff's Station, including the National Justice Database.

Steve Martin, West Hollywood, spoke about his concerns of the data pulled from the CPE and the fact that it was primarily based on race and not on other identifying factors. He also expressed his disagreement with a comment made by Commissioner Soon-Shiong.

Victor Omelchenko, West Hollywood, spoke on congratulating newly appointed Public Safety Commissioner Jackie Steele. He also congratulated newly elected Chair Hallman and Vice Chair Balbone. He asked some questions to the CPE regarding their work with other cities and if they have collaborated with the City's Social Justice Taskforce.

Sean Eldridge responded to say that West Hollywood is the only contracted City that the CPE is working with in the area. He stated they plan to work with the Social Justice Taskforce in the future.

Commissioner Steele asked about the process of how the Community Engagement Teams and law enforcement work with the community. She asked questions about the data used.

Sean Eldridge responded that the work with the community is conducted in many ways and that they will continue to find ways that best work for everyone.

Commissioner Oliver agreed with some of the public comments and Commissioner Steele's questions regarding the subject focus for their data.

Vice Chair Balbone mentioned that the work with the CPE should include conversations with other advisory boards in the City. She also asked questions regarding the CPE's data.

## **11F. COMMISSION WORK PLAN, REQUEST TRACKING, AND COMMISSION CALENDAR**

The Commission agreed to table item 11F. Commission Work Plan, Request Tracking, and Commission Calendar for the next commission meeting.

Vice Chair Balbone inquired about the Joint Subcommittee special meeting on the nightlife study session.

Danny Rivas, Director of Community Safety, and Melissa Crowder, City Clerk, gave an update that the meeting date will be provided once scheduled.

**ACTION:** Vice Chair Balbone motioned to have Commissioner Jackie Steele added to the Joint Women's Safety Subcommittee to take the place of former Commissioner Alana Roshay. **The motion was seconded by Chair Hallman and approved.**

Commissioner Oliver agreed with a comment from a member of the public that everyone should be able to disagree respectfully.

**ACTION:** Commissioner Oliver motioned to place an item on the agenda to have the Commission bring forth a memo to the City Council adopting the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliances definition of antisemitism. **The motion passed by consensus of the entire Commission.**

The Commissioners thanked Melissa Crowder, staff, and everyone for this meeting.

## **12. ITEMS FROM STAFF**

Danny Rivas, Director of Community Safety, gave an announcement about the Dialog with the Deputy's event held at the Dialog Café on July 21, 2022. He also announced the National Night Out event that will be held on August 2, 2022, throughout the City. He gave an update on the changes made to the City's Community Safety Department, formally known as the Public Safety Department.

## **13. PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Victor Omelchenko, West Hollywood, spoke about his experience attending meetings from a few years back regarding public safety and seismic retrofitting of specific buildings within the City. He would like to suggest to the Commission to provide an update on the City's request to have soft story building structures be seismically retrofitted in preparation of earthquakes.

## **14. ADJOURNMENT**

The Public Safety Commission adjourned at 10:43 P.M. to its next regular meeting, which will be held on Monday, August 8, 2022, at 6:00 P.M. at the West Hollywood Park Public Meeting Room – Council Chambers.

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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.**

***(Disclaimer: Staff records the meetings for the sole purpose of composing the official meeting minutes; therefore, the recordings are not of commercial quality.)***

