

WEST HOLLYWOOD HUMAN SERVICES COMMISSION
MINUTES – MARCH 12, 2002
COMMUNITY CONFERENCE ROOM, CITY HALL

I. CALL TO ORDER

A. CALL TO ORDER

The West Hollywood Human Services Commission was called to order by Chair Peter Mackler at 6:05 p.m., Tuesday, March 12, 2002, in the Community Conference Room at 8300 Santa Monica Boulevard, West Hollywood.

B. ROLL CALL

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Commissioner Griffin.

Present: Ruth Cislowski, John D’Amico, Steven Davis, Teresa DeCrescenzo, Ponsella Gratton, Dr. Bill Griffin, Peter Mackler
Excused: none
Absent: none

A quorum was present at all times. Staff present included Lloyd R. Long, Director of Human Services; Daphne Dennis, Social Services Administrator; Nancy Beard, Recreation Services Administrator; David Giugni, and Jeff Book.

C. POSTING OF AGENDA

The Secretary reported that notices for the meeting had been posted as required.

D. PROCEDURE FOR PUBLIC COMMENT

Persons desiring to address the meeting were asked to complete a request form.

II. MINUTES

Commissioner Mackler asked that discussion under new business regarding negative scores be included in the minutes, and whether any sort of pattern can be followed in the new year.

Minutes of the February 12, 2002, meeting were read and approved on a motion by Commissioner Davis, seconded by Commissioner Griffin, with Commissioner DeCrescenzo abstaining.

III. ITEMS FROM THE PUBLIC

Garrison Smith said that from 9:30 to 11 a.m. tomorrow the Gay & Lesbian Center will hold a .75-mile rally for AIDS LifeCycle at West Hollywood Park. The fundraising event is coming up, in partnership with the San Francisco AIDS Center.

Roz Helfand of Mayor Heilman's staff invited commissioners to the human rights speakers series featuring Anthony Romero, ACLU executive director.

Ms. Helfand also noted that the Commission co-sponsors the Yom Hashoah remembrance, and asked if a commissioner would like to participate in reading during the program, which is Sunday, April 7, at 7 p.m.

IV. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

A. CBD COLLEGE

Daphne Dennis introduced Alla Shustrov of CBD College, who said they have been providing computer and language training since 1998. They currently train 24 people per year, West Hollywood residents who are immigrants/refugees. She said the weakness in the program is the limited number of hours that they can teach English as a second language (ESL), and that they would like to extend that part. The computer lab is open from 9 a.m. to 10 p.m.

She said they provide services far beyond the per-person cost paid to them by the City, and that currently their students are mostly 40-59 in age, although their usual student mix is predominantly 21-49. She said they do not have enough spaces to advertise their availability, because demand for the slots is always high. CBD is an acronym for community based education and development.

B. WHEST

WHEST staffers, including Anne Factor, discussed strengths of their program, which include their highly trained staff, and weaknesses, which include a flat budget and a slight decline in support from JVS, due to declining contributions. They are responding with increased outreach to the business community and with a new brochure. Threats include fluctuations in budgeting, decreases in federal commitment, rising housing costs, and the need to meet residents' actual needs.

Commissioner Davis said he enjoyed WHEST's job fair recently, and asked if they work only with West Hollywood employers. Anne Factor said they use a mix of employers, and that another job fair will be held in Plummer Park this April.

C. ANGELS AMIDST

Nancy Beard provided a brief overview of the program held Feb. 20, in which 11 people were honored for their altruistic service to the community. She reviewed the selection process, in which a committee of business persons evaluates nominations submitted by the public.

She said the program will be improved next year with an enhanced initial review of nominees, including basic verification of the information presented on the nomination documents. Other improvements will include the involvement of Social Services staff in reviewing information on the nominees, and reemphasis that the committee that judges the applications should not be publicly recognized.

Commissioner Davis asked why business people were used as judges, and Lloyd Long said it was because the process had been perceived as too political in earlier years, and that the business committee was regarded as a way to provide distance.

Commissioner Davis asked that if previous winners are to be listed on the program, then all previous winners should be listed, and not just those of the most recent years.

Commissioner D'Amico noted that one of this year's recipients was Christine Maggiore.

V. NEW BUSINESS

A. RETREAT

Commissioner DeCrescenzo is not available on the previously planned March 23 date, so after discussion commissioners decided to make their next regular meeting a retreat, with the topic being the social services funding process for this year.

The Commission will hold a joint study session with the City Council from 6:00 to 7:30 p.m. on Monday, May 13, at West Hollywood Park Auditorium.

B. COMMUNITY REPORT 2002

Daphne Dennis said staff will complete a social services report involving asset maps and strategic planning information. There will be no community survey in this cycle due to lack of funding.

VI. ITEMS FROM COMMISSION

Commissioner Cislowski also attended the job fair, and said it was much larger than she expected. She also attended the children's roundtable meeting, at which LAUSD Board Member Caprice Young was the speaker.

Commissioner DeCrescenzo noted that ecstasy (MDMA) has been approved for experimental testing in connection with post-traumatic stress disorder.

She also noted that in studies on suicide by gay teenagers, there is no support for the premise that gay youth commit suicide at a higher rate than others, and therefore this commonly heard idea is a myth.

Commissioner Griffin spoke to the planning commission on low-income housing.

Commissioner Davis commented on the code of conduct meetings, which he said were non-productive and irritating. He said staff should follow up with attendees to determine how they reacted to the program, and adjust the presentation accordingly.

Commissioner Mackler said there was no chairs meeting last month. He reminded commissioners to file their Form 700 by April 2.

The Commission designated Commissioners Mackler and Griffin to participate in the Holocaust Remembrance event.

VII. ITEMS FROM STAFF

A. STRATEGIC PLAN

A meeting will be held at 6:30 p.m., March 25, at West Hollywood Park Auditorium. The agenda item was presented by Daphne Dennis.

B. PARK MASTER PLAN

Lloyd Long asked the Commission to designate a member to participate in the park master planning process, which will probably involve 12 to 15 meetings over 30 weeks, once it is initiated. The Commission named Commissioner D'Amico as its representative, with Commissioner Davis as alternate.

VIII. ITEMS FROM THE PUBLIC

There were no additional items from the public.

IX. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 7:45 p.m. in memory of William Joseph West, Sr., father of Tom West, and in memory of Charles S. "Chuck" Gillan, partner of Paul Winfield.

The next regular meeting is at 6:00 p.m., Tuesday, April 9, 2002.

Signed: _____


Steven L. Davis

Attest:

