

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

**MONDAY, JULY 8, 2019
6:30 P.M.**

**PLUMMER PARK COMMUNITY CENTER,
ROOMS 5 & 6
7377 SANTA MONICA BOULEVARD, WEST HOLLYWOOD, CA**

1. **CALL TO ORDER** at 6:31 PM
2. **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE** led by Karen O'Keefe
3. **ROLL CALL**

Commissioners Present: Berger, Laflen, Norton, Sol, Waack, Williams

Commissioners Absent: None

Others present: Captain Ed Ramirez, Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department; Battalion Chief Brian Kane, Los Angeles County Fire Department; Megan Currier, Community Services Liaison, Los Angeles County Fire Department; Shea Gibson, Block by Block; Kristin Cook, Public Safety Director; Janet Jimenez, Assistant to the City Manager

4. **ADJOURNMENT REQUESTS**

Commissioner Sol requested that the meeting be adjourned in the memory of the 19 law enforcement officers and firefighters who have passed away since the June meeting.

5. **APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA**

ACTION: Motion by Commissioner Williams to approve the July 8, 2019 agenda, seconded by Commissioner Norton and approved.

POSTING OF THE AGENDA

The agenda for the July 8, 2019 Public Safety Commission meeting was posted at City Hall, Plummer Park, the West Hollywood Sheriff's Station, and the West Hollywood Library.

6. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

ACTION: Motion by Commissioner Williams to approve the June 10, 2019 minutes, seconded by Commissioner Norton, and approved.

7. PUBLIC COMMENTS

Karen O'Keefe, Rent Stabilization Commissioner, introduced herself and gave a brief description of the work of the Rent Stabilization Commission and how it relates to public safety.

Brian Rubenstein, resident of West Hollywood, spoke regarding safety concerns in Plummer Park, including narcotics use and unsanitary conditions.

Kevin Burton, West Hollywood Bicycle Coalition, announced that bicycle safety classes are coming up on July 14th, 28th, and August 11th in Plummer Park.

Wes Driver, resident of West Hollywood, spoke regarding safety concerns in Plummer Park, including issues with single use restrooms.

Cathy Blaivas, resident of West Hollywood, spoke regarding an escalation of safety concerns in Plummer Park and spoke in support of increased Sheriff's presence.

William Seegmiller, Political Action Director for the Sex Workers Outreach Project, spoke in support of harm reduction by expanding needle exchange programs and housing in West Hollywood.

8. COMMISSIONER COMMENTS AND LIAISON REPORTS

Commissioner Berger thanked Ms. O'Keefe for her attendance and spoke regarding the City's work on rent stabilization issues and providing tenant assistance. Commissioner Berger thanked Ms. Balbone for alerting the Commissioners to the abandoned suitcases at a previous meeting and encouraged all to use the City's App to report issues. Commissioner Berger thanked the other public speakers for their attendance and for their participation on various public safety issues.

Commissioner Norton thanked the public speakers for their attendance. Commissioner Norton asked for Sheriff and Fire personnel to give an update on July 4th and asked if there was an increase in illegal fireworks. Commissioner Norton asked for Sheriff and Fire personnel to give emergency preparedness tips in light of the recent earthquakes. Commissioner Norton spoke regarding her attendance at the Senior Advisory Board which included a presentation on fraud prevention and thanked the Sheriff's personnel for their attendance.

Commissioner Williams thanked the public speakers for their attendance. Commissioner Williams spoke regarding safety concerns in Plummer Park and

spoke in support of expanding needle exchange programs and an increased Sheriff's presence. Commissioner Williams spoke regarding the recent earthquakes and emergency preparedness. Commissioner Williams spoke regarding the importance of neighborhood activism.

Commissioner Sol said that emergency kits are available from SOS Survival Products. Commissioner Sol spoke regarding the importance of involving all parties in solutions to safety issues. Commissioner Sol spoke regarding personnel issues in the Public Safety Department.

Commissioner Waack thanked all the public speakers for their attendance. Commissioner Waack spoke regarding the work of Flaming Saddles and The Abbey to prevent pickpocket thefts.

9. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

9A. UPDATE FROM CODE COMPLIANCE ON MODIFIED CODE COMPLIANCE STAFFING, SCOOTER ENFORCEMENT, AND MASSAGE PARLOR ENFORCEMENT

Commissioners received a presentation from Danny Rivas, Code Compliance Manager, on modified staffing of code compliance officers, scooter enforcement, and massage parlor enforcement.

William Seegmiller, Political Action Director for the Sex Workers Outreach Project, spoke regarding human trafficking and the massage parlor working group.

Commissioner Waack asked if e-bikes are treated similarly to scooters.

Mr. Rivas said that e-bikes are treated similarly to scooters.

Commissioner Williams asked if there is a phone number to report issues with scooters and e-bikes.

Mr. Rivas said that the best number to call is 323-848-6516.

Commissioner Sol asked for clarification on enforcement.

Mr. Rivas said that code compliance officers enforce issues to the best of their ability according to the code.

Commissioner Laflen spoke regarding confusion over the ordinance and spoke in support of ensuring that staff and the community are clear on the rules.

Commissioner Waack asked for clarification on who takes the lead on enforcement of massage parlors and if code compliance officers receive adequate training.

Mr. Rivas said that Sheriff's personnel accompany code compliance officers, but that code compliance officers take the lead on enforcement according to the massage parlor ordinance.

Commissioner Berger asked for additional information on massage parlor enforcement and asked if signs are available in multiple languages.

Mr. Rivas said that staff focuses on the City's massage parlor ordinance with regard to enforcement and any proposed changes in the code would be brought back to City Council for consideration.

Commissioner Berger asked Mr. Rivas to speak about the WeHo App.

Mr. Rivas spoke regarding the WeHo App and the work to improve response times.

Commissioner Williams asked if the Rent Stabilization Division could send reminders to property owners to check their smoke detectors on a regular basis.

Commissioner Laflen said that she had mentioned to the Rent Stabilization Commission that the City of Los Angeles has a five year inspection program.

Commissioner Waack asked for clarification regarding hard wired versus battery operated smoke detectors.

Mr. Rivas spoke regarding smoke detectors and carbon monoxide detectors and said that the requirements are based on the type of use of the housing unit.

9B. UPDATE FROM THE INNOVATIONS DIVISION ON THE CAMERA PILOT PROJECT

Commissioners received a presentation from Kate Kigongo, Innovations Division, on the camera pilot project. Ms. Kigongo spoke regarding the partnership between businesses and the Sheriff's Department to share footage when relevant. Ms. Kigongo spoke regarding the Ring Camera rebate program and said that approximately 120 rebates of 200 total rebates were distributed. Ms. Kigongo said that the smart poles include emergency buttons that will be connected to 911.

Commissioner Sol asked for more information regarding the smart bus stops and shelters.

Ms. Kigongo spoke regarding the bus stop outside of Joey's and the bus shelter near Halal Guys.

Commissioner Laflen asked how the City will be able to protect the shelters to ensure that they are used for their intended use and suggested possibly installing a timer into the charger.

Commissioner Waack said that he rarely sees people sitting for too long at the Joey's location.

Commissioner Norton asked for more information regarding wrapping the cameras into the Smart Cities Program, storage procedures, and facial recognition policy.

Ms. Kigongo said that the camera program is following best practices set out by the Sheriff's Department Advanced Surveillance and Protection Unit. Ms. Kigongo said that the City has no interest in facial recognition capabilities.

Commissioner Williams spoke in support of having cameras in Plummer Park.

Ms. Kigongo said that as the City's fiber network is extended, it will improve connectivity and possible locations for cameras.

Commissioner Sol asked for the locations of the current pilot cameras.

Ms. Kigongo said that the pilot cameras are along Santa Monica Boulevard at Robertson, San Vicente, La Cienega, Fairfax, and La Brea.

Commissioner Berger asked for clarification on the smart node capabilities.

Ms. Kigongo said that the environmental sensors are not active yet, that the emergency buttons will be connected directly to 911, and that the lighting is programmable.

Commissioner Laflen spoke regarding the dangers of facial recognition until the technology is more accurate.

Commissioner Waack asked for more information regarding public records requests.

Ms. Kigongo spoke regarding the large amount of work it takes to manage the public records requests for camera footage.

Commissioner Waack asked for more information regarding the smart node near IHOP and said that staff should consider activating the cameras on the smart nodes as well. Commissioner Waack asked Ms. Kigongo to return to the Public Safety Commission with draft recommendations before reporting back to City Council with a final recommendation.

Ms. Kigongo said that the node near IHOP is a test which includes trying to find good alternatives to small cell sites being placed on City infrastructure.

Commissioner Williams spoke in support of returning to the Public Safety Commission with draft recommendations before reporting back to City Council with a final recommendation.

Commissioner Norton said that the Public Safety Commission and City Council did include Plummer Park in the camera project program.

9C. UPDATE FROM THE LEGISLATIVE AND COMMUNITY AFFAIRS DIVISION ON NATIONAL NIGHT OUT

Commissioners received a presentation from Jasmine Duckworth from the Legislative and Community Affairs Division on Neighborhood Watch and National Night Out which will be held on Tuesday, August 6th.

Commissioner Laflen spoke in support of a better connection among Public Safety Commissioners and Neighborhood Watch.

Ms. Duckworth said that very few Block Captains communicate with her on a regular basis and added that she reaches out to all of the Block Captains every month.

Commissioner Laflen suggested more outreach, including holding meetings for residents to find out more about Neighborhood Watch.

Commissioner Sol spoke regarding Next Door and other online ways that groups connect to each other.

Ms. Duckworth said that the City is exploring a presence on Next Door as a supplement to traditional Neighborhood Watch. Ms. Duckworth said that pop up events are a possibility in the future.

Commissioner Sol suggested that Ms. Duckworth lead the Neighborhood Watch meetings instead of having the meetings be neighbor led.

Commissioner Williams said that the Commission should be notified of all Neighborhood Watch meetings.

Commissioner Berger spoke regarding a Neighborhood Watch sub-committee and previous research done into motivating and support groups. Commissioner Berger spoke regarding the evolution of technology and how it impacts traditional Neighborhood Watch groups.

Commissioner Waack spoke in support of having Ms. Duckworth attend future Public Safety Commission meetings.

Commissioner Laflen spoke regarding the balance between digital and in person resources.

Commissioner Williams asked for more details regarding National Night Out logistics.

9D. REPORT FROM FIRE DEPARTMENT – MONTHLY REPORT

Battalion Chief Kane reviewed the Fire Department statistics for June 2019, including suppression, rescue, and fire prevention activities. Chief Kane said that there were no calls related to illegal fireworks. Chief Kane said that there were no major issues during the earthquakes.

Commissioner Waack asked for additional information regarding the individual who climbed a billboard.

Chief Kane spoke regarding the response from the Los Angeles County Fire Department and the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department's MET team who safely rescued the individual.

Chief Kane introduced Megan Currier, the new Community Services Liaison for Division VII.

Commissioner Sol asked if Ms. Currier is in charge of CERT training.

Ms. Currier said that she will be in charge of the CERT training.

9E. REPORT FROM SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT – MONTHLY REPORT; SHERIFF'S 5 YEAR AGREEMENT; RECOMMENDATIONS FOR DEPLOYMENT TO ADDRESS NEIGHBORHOOD CONCERNS FOR FISCAL YEAR 2019-2020

Staff presented a summary of the Sheriff's Department's 5 Year Agreement with its contract cities and asked for Commissioners' input on deployment for Fiscal Year 2019-2020.

Staff and Commissioners decided that a larger discussion about Sheriff's resources will be scheduled for the September Public Safety Commission meeting.

Captain Ramirez reviewed the Sheriff's Department's statistics for June 2019, including crimes, response times, and calls for service.

Commissioner Williams asked for clarification on the Citizen App. Commissioner Williams asked for more information on Prop 47 arrests. Commissioner Williams thanked Captain Ramirez for his response to concerns in Plummer Park.

Captain Ramirez thanked the community for being the Station's "eyes and ears" and said that he looks forward to working closer with the neighbors concerned about Plummer Park.

Commissioner Berger asked if the DUI checkpoints are still being advertised.

Captain Ramirez said that they announce the checkpoints but do not give the location.

Commissioner Berger said that there is an outstanding public records request from WeHoville that has not been completed by the County yet and asked Captain Ramirez to follow-up.

Commissioners Waack and Laflen said that they received notifications regarding the DUI checkpoints via the Beverly Press and Nixle.

9F. REPORT FROM BLOCK BY BLOCK SECURITY AMBASSADORS – MONTHLY REPORT

Mr. Gibson reviewed the monthly report from June 2019, including pedestrian assistance, crosswalk assistance, homeless issues, and disturbances.

Commissioner Norton thanked Mr. Gibson for the Security Ambassadors hard work, especially at Pride weekend. Commissioner Norton noted the increase in statistics.

Mr. Gibson said that there are additional security ambassadors logging statistics and said that the busy Pride weekend contributed to the increase.

10. NEW BUSINESS

10A. PLUMMER PARK SAFETY ISSUES

Commissioners and staff discussed safety concerns related to Plummer Park. Staff outlined recent increased in security guard staffing and Sheriff's patrols as of July 1st.

Commissioner Laflen asked for the locking mechanism to be removed on single use restrooms.

Commissioner Berger asked for an update on the Sheriff's sub-station.

Staff said that the consideration for a sub-station will be taken back to City Council at the second meeting in September.

Commissioner Williams suggested staffing the sub-station with Sheriff's volunteers.

Commissioner Sol spoke in support of homeless individuals utilizing the park and the restrooms.

Commissioner Laflen spoke regarding concerns from patrons regarding park staff's response to public safety issues.

Staff spoke regarding the strong partnership between park staff, public safety staff, and Sheriff's personnel.

Commissioner Waack asked for clarification on the additional dedicated park deputy's hours.

Captain Ramirez said that the additional dedicated park deputy works from 8 PM – 4 AM.

Commissioner Waack asked staff to follow-up on the single use restroom issues.

Yola Dore, resident of West Hollywood, spoke in support of additional lighting, office hours for homeless outreach teams, and installing cameras in Plummer Park.

Commissioner Berger asked if the Sheriff's Station has access to undercover operations.

Captain Ramirez said that he can utilize undercover operations.

10B. WORK PLAN FOR 2019-2020 AND COMMISSION SUB-COMMITTEES

This item was tabled to the August Public Safety Commission meeting.

10C. EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS AND NEIGHBORHOOD PARTNERSHIPS

Staff gave a brief update to the Commission on the longtime work of neighbors, including Carl Cronin and Commissioner Williams, to promote emergency preparedness.

Commissioner Williams gave a brief history of emergency preparedness efforts in the City of West Hollywood. Commissioner Williams suggested that the Commission discuss ways to attract people to an emergency preparedness event. Commissioner Williams suggested hosting an event during a regular Public Safety Commission meeting, possibly televised in the Council Chambers.

Commissioner Berger spoke in support of a weekend event in the park with vendors.

Kevin Burton, resident of West Hollywood, spoke regarding the difficulty of getting people interested in emergency preparedness and described a successful event in the City of Los Angeles with multiple vendors and agencies represented.

Commissioner Laflen spoke in support of a public safety fair.

Commissioner Sol spoke in support of partnering with the Farmers' Market.

Commissioner Berger spoke in support of modeling it after the Senior Health Fair.

Yola Dore, resident of West Hollywood, spoke in support of utilizing West Hollywood's Communications Department to advertise the event.

Commissioner Waack and fellow Commissioners asked staff to follow-up and host an event for September during National Preparedness Month.

10D. PUBLIC SAFETY EDUCATION

This item was tabled to the August Public Safety Commission meeting.

10E. ELECTION OF CHAIR AND VICE-CHAIR

ACTION: Motion by Commissioner Waack to elect Commissioner Laflen as Chair, seconded by Commissioner Williams and approved.

ACTION: Motion by Commissioner Williams to elect Commissioner Berger as Vice-Chair, seconded by Commissioner Norton and approved.

11. ITEMS FROM SUBCOMMITTEES

Commissioner Laflen spoke regarding a recent sub-committee meeting with the Women’s Advisory Board and the ongoing work on bar safety.

12. ITEMS FROM STAFF

Staff reminded all that the City Clerk’s Office is hosting annual training for Commissioners and Advisory Board Members on Wednesday, July 17th.

13. PUBLIC COMMENTS

None.

14. ITEMS FROM THE COMMISSION/COMMISSIONER COMMENTS

Commissioner Berger thanked all for staying so late.

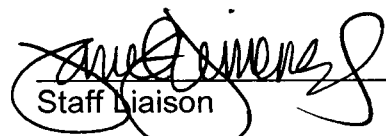
Commissioner Williams thanked Commissioner Waack for his hard work as Chair of the Public Safety Commission over the past year.

15. ADJOURNMENT

The Public Safety Commission adjourned at 10:14 PM in memory of the 19 law enforcement officers and firefighters who have passed away since the June meeting. The next meeting is scheduled for August 12, 2019 at 6:30 PM at Plummer Park – Rooms 5/6 at 7377 Santa Monica Boulevard, CA 90046.



Public Safety Commission Chair



Staff Liaison

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.)