

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

**MONDAY, JUNE 13, 2022
6:00 P.M.**

VIA TELECONFERENCE

- 1. CALL TO ORDER** Chair Berger called the meeting to order at 6:00 P.M.
- 2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE** led by Commissioner Soon-Shiong
- 3. ROLL CALL:**

Commissioners Present: Balbone, Hallman, Oliver, Roman, Soon-Shiong, Vice Chair Roshay, and Chair Berger.

Commissioners Absent: None.

Others present: Captain Bill Moulder, Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department; Assistant Chief Drew Smith, Los Angeles County Fire Department; Community Services Liaison Megan Currier, Los Angeles County Fire Department; Operations Manager Shea Gibson, Block by Block; Bob Cheung, City Senior Transportation Planner; Coby Wagman, City Parking Operations Supervisor; Paige Portwood, City Associate Planner; Danny Rivas, City Community Safety Director; Jessica Anukam, City Public Safety Specialist; and Melissa Crowder, City Clerk.

4. ADJOURNMENT REQUESTS

Commissioner Balbone requested that the meeting be adjourned with a moment of silence in memory of the 163 people who recently lost their lives in gun violence related mass shootings as well as the 605 people who have been injured in mass shootings since the Commission's last meeting in April, including 19 children and 2 schoolteachers in Uvalde, TX.

5. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

ACTION: Motion by Chair Berger to approve the June 13, 2022, agenda, seconded by Vice Chair Roshay and approved.

POSTING OF THE AGENDA

The agenda for the June 13, 2022, Public Safety Commission meeting was posted at City Hall, Plummer Park, and the West Hollywood Sheriff's Station.

6. CONSENT CALENDAR

6A. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

ACTION: Motion by Commissioner Balbone to approve the April 19, 2022, Special Meeting minutes, seconded by Vice Chair Roshay and approved.

6B. UPDATE ON THE CITY'S DOCKLESS MOBILITY PROGRAM

Parking Operations Supervisor Coby Wagman and Associate Planner Paige Portwood spoke about the installation progress of the pilot docking stations for scooters throughout the City that will be rolled out in phases. Staff will work with operators to also install virtual docking stations. Mr. Wagman briefly discussed accountability with the scooters through the Sheriff's department to focus on moving violations and the Terms of Service with the participating scooter companies to hold riders to these terms. He also noted that staff will reach out to companies to obtain information regarding their Terms of Service and failure to comply to these terms. The pilot program is set to end December 2022, and staff will await City Council direction at a future council meeting.

Ms. Portwood provided information regarding the pending transportation project to assess feasibility of protected bike lanes for consideration of bike and scooter riders, other pedestrians, and cars, noting that there are no infrastructure plans in place for scooter riders at this time.

7. PUBLIC COMMENTS

YOLA DORE, WEST HOLLYWOOD, shared news of the ailing health of former Public Safety Commissioner Ruth Williams. She also spoke on having access to sidewalks and byways as it pertains to the Dockless Mobility Program. She shared the difficulties of navigating the sidewalks with scooters in the walkways and asked for accountability for these programs.

MANNY RODRIGUEZ, WEST HOLLYWOOD, gave well wishes to Ruth Williams. He expressed concern of scooter riders compromising the safety of the environment for pedestrians and asked that the on-demand scooter providers be held accountable for their operations.

MYRA FRIEDMAN, WEST HOLLYWOOD, expressed concern for the dangers caused by scooters and a recent incident where she was yelled at by a scooter rider on the sidewalk. Ms. Friedman gave her well wishes to Ruth Williams.

CAT ENG, WEST HOLLYWOOD, concurred with the previous public comments regarding scooters in the City. She spoke about an abandoned car left on her street that has been reported to parking enforcement as well as the Sheriff's Department. She inquired about records kept by Block by Block on reported incidents. She also spoke about the movement of the stop sign on Gardner and Lexington.

MICHAEL WOJTKIELEWICZ, WEST HOLLYWOOD, spoke about public safety and the hazards regarding specific alternative transportation types used. He spoke about the importance of infrastructure and the way the City handles concerns expressed by the public.

STEPHANIE HARKER, WEST HOLLYWOOD, agreed about the sentiments from previous public comments. She shared her own experiences with scooters on the public walkways. She thanked Vice Chair Roshay and Commissioner Roman for their comments. She would like to see accountability from the scooter companies and parents of minor users.

8. COMMISSIONER COMMENTS

Commissioner Oliver spoke about the solution of having micro-mobility lanes regarding the scooters. He noted that there are not enough docking stations and mentioned areas in the City where there are no stations based on the station map. He would like to hear more about accountability as it pertains to both riders and the scooter operators.

Commissioner Balbone asked for clarity on the term "Furniture Zones" that was mentioned in the staff report for the Dockless Mobility item. She asked about the scooter companies' commitment to the City regarding keeping the scooters out of the public right of way.

Vice Chair Roshay spoke about individual scooter rider's accountability for abuse of services. She doesn't believe responsibility should only fall on the scooter companies. She asked why the Dockless Mobility Program did not have all the docking stations placed throughout the City at the same time.

Chair Berger asked if scooter accountability can be more apparent to residents so that correctable action is being done.

Commissioner Hallman spoke about scooter rider safety. He shared his own experiences of near collisions while walking his dogs. He noted that the bike and scooter experience in The Netherlands doesn't have the same issues. He asked for the timeline on the Dockless Mobility Pilot Program.

Commissioner Roman spoke about his reasons for not turning on his camera during the meeting, noting that it was in protest of the Public Safety Commission

meetings being held virtually. He gave a brief history of the bike culture in the area. He spoke about the referred “bike lanes” made solely for all other alternative riders and the importance of having a better infrastructure for all riders and pedestrians.

Commissioner Oliver spoke about the importance of prevention, and the City working with the scooter companies in order to ensure that scooter users are held accountable for misuse.

Director of Community Safety Danny Rivas recommended that the Update on the City’s Dockless Mobility Program item be placed on the agenda for the next Public Safety Commission meeting for the Commission to consider recommendations to the City Council.

Vice Chair Roshay made a motion to add the Update Dockless Mobility Program on the July Public Safety Commission Meeting agenda. Commissioner Oliver seconded the motion. *The motion was approved by consensus to be placed on the next agenda in July.*

Commission Balbone requested that the staff report include information on the modernization options for scooter. She feels that this would provide the Commission a better understanding of the possible solutions and remedies to bring forth to the City Council.

Chair Berger suggested visible action to show that there is accountability regarding the scooters.

Commissioner Roman asked Mr. Wagman if the Block by Block Security Ambassadors can assist with moving scooters that they see while out in the City.

Commission Oliver spoke about a great turnout for the recent Pride events. He also spoke about the City maintaining the current funding levels for the Sheriff’s Department contract as well as further expansion of social services and mental health resources.

Commissioner Balbone thanked the City for the recent Pride events. She spoke about the April 24th special study session on nightlife safety.

ACTION: Formally calendar a joint discussion from the Public Safety Commission and the Women’s Advisory Board for concern of drink spiking and rapes in the City. *Motion by Commissioner Balbone, seconded by Vice Chair Roshay and approved by consensus.*

Commissioner Balbone also spoke about the Civilian Oversight Commission meetings and the processes of holding the Sheriff’s Department accountable. She suggested a possible workplan item to use our contracts/relationships for action items to address concerns in West Hollywood.

Commissioner Soon-Shiong brought forth data from the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department budget fact sheet. She spoke about the City's allocated budget towards the Sheriff's Department as well as performance and budget audits.

Commissioner Hallman thanked the City for its first West Hollywood Pride festival. He also thanked the City for inviting him to join a float for LA Pride. He noted that he was initially concerned for the safety of Pride in West Hollywood since there hadn't been one in many years and stated it turned out well. He also spoke about the mindfulness of the Sheriff's budget and focus on social services.

Commissioner Roman spoke about the crime stats reported for West Hollywood. He shared his concerns with law enforcement and the number of reported arrests versus reported crimes.

Commissioner Balbone reminded Commissioner Roman of the City's Code of Conduct and requested that he abide by it.

Mr. Rivas requested that the Commissioners be respectful and not to use explicit language when expressing their views.

Vice Chair Roshay spoke about the recent cancelled commission and subcommittee meetings.

Vice Chair Roshay briefly chaired the meeting due to technical issues that Chair Berger was experiencing.

9. NEW BUSINESS

9A. VISION ZERO ACTION PLAN TASK FORCE

Action: Commissioner Oliver was appointed to the Vision Zero Action Plan Task Force.

MICHAEL WOJKIELEWICZ, WEST HOLLYWOOD, spoke about his concerns about the current Public Safety Commission.

KEVIN BURTON, WEST HOLLYWOOD, and a member of the West Hollywood Bicycle Coalition expressed his support for this item.

10. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

10A. REPORT FROM FIRE DEPARTMENT – MONTHLY REPORT

Chief Smith spoke about the great turnout for this year's Pride festival. He went over May's report with no extraordinary incidents but noted slightly higher medical runs and cautioned about potential outdoor fires. Chief Smith stated these fires will be more prevalent as we enter the summer months.

Megan Currier had no additional comments for the department reporting.

MICHAEL WOJTKIELEWICZ, WEST HOLLYWOOD, spoke about his concerns with the Los Angeles County Fire Department and mentioned some issues that occurred in 2010. He spoke about occasions of where issues of dishonesty should be called out.

Commissioner Oliver thanked Chief Smith and Megan Currier for their efforts at this year's Pride festival.

Commissioner Balbone asked about the status of the fires from April 10th on San Vicente.

Chief Smith stated that the San Vicente fires are still under investigation with the Los Angeles County Fire Department's Arson unit. He stated it is a challenging case due to no eyewitness or available facts surrounding the fire but that it is likely to be an arson fire.

10B. REPORT FROM BLOCK BY BLOCK SECURITY AMBASSADORS - MONTHLY REPORT

MICHAEL WOJTKIELEWICZ, WEST HOLLYWOOD, spoke about his views on the suggestion of Block by Block picking up scooters left around. He doesn't agree with this suggestion. He also says good job to Block by Block.

Shea Gibson, Block by Block, gave congratulations to Danny Rivas as new Community Safety Director. He also gave a brief report on June's activities and mentions the higher volume of calls coming from the west side of the City. Mr. Gibson responded to an earlier public comment regarding the records Block by Block keeps of incident reports. He spoke about the areas within the City that Block by Block will now cover under the new City contract. He spoke about some issues with the unhoused population particularly near the kiosk areas, bus stops, and vacant commercial buildings. Mr. Gibson mentioned the increase in hiring for Block by Block staff due to the new City contract.

10C. SHERIFF'S REPORT – MONTHLY REPORT

Captain Moulder presented the May 2022 crime stats for Part 1 Crimes summarizing that there were 280 incidents, with 71% occurring on the west side,

15% occurring in the center of the City, and 14% on the east side. He continued to present that these stats include theft, aggravated assault, and pickpocketing. He also spoke about the pickpocket stats of 52 cases, with one arrest made. Captain Moulder detailed the incident of the arrest made at Mickey's nightclub and spoke about the pickpocketing incidents that occurred along the streets and during the West Hollywood Pride festival. Stats on robberies and burglaries were also provided and he spoke about the May 25th event for catalytic converters put on by a task force for regional auto theft prevention. Captain Moulder mentioned that another similar event is expected to be held sometime during the summer.

Commissioner Roman had some questions and comments regarding pickpocketing in the City. He asked about the solutions in place to solving the pickpocketing issue.

Captain Moulder spoke about some of the actions taken to combat pickpocketing such as undercover operations and operations with the COPPS and Entertainment Policing Teams. He explained that the various policing units must be trained for these undercover operations.

Commissioner Roman inquired about the process and success rate of past undercover operations. He expressed his concern with law enforcement services.

Director Rivas reminded Commissioner Roman to not use profanity when speaking in the meeting.

Commissioner Roman mentioned a scanning mechanism referred to as "pro scan" as a tool to help combat the pickpocketing in clubs and bars.

Chair Berger mentioned that the Commission may want to have more facts on the scanning device and implementation by the businesses rather than law enforcement.

A lengthy discussion regarding the crime statistics occurred between the Commissioners and Captain Moulder.

Chair Berger spoke on being able to see more action and communication in regard to the deputy trainings for undercover investigations.

Commissioner Balbone congratulates Captain Moulder and asked about the number of rapes that occurred in the month of May. She also asked about the gender of the victims and if any cases were related to situations of drinks being "spiked" or other involuntary drugs.

Captain Moulder referred to the report and stated one instance occurred with a female victim and there was no indication of involuntary drugs used.

Commissioner Balbone inquired the reason why crime trends for aggravated assaults and armed robberies have gone up over the years.

Captain Moulder went over last year's trends for aggravated assaults and gave an estimate of this year's trends. He spoke about providing more outreach to the unhoused populations and getting them in touch with the City's Social Services team.

Commissioner Balbone asked if the stats of cell phone thefts in the nightlife community are being discussed amongst the other cities. She made a suggestion to work with the business community to combat this issue of cell phone thefts.

Captain Moulder explained that there are westside commander meetings as well as meetings with other city captains to discuss what is going on in each area.

Chair Berger mentioned a software for cellphones to help catch cell phone thieves. He also inquired on how many unhoused persons committed these crimes that are repeat offenders and asked where they end up.

MICHAEL WOJTKIELEWICZ, WEST HOLLYWOOD, spoke about the responsibility of nightlife businesses where thefts occur and on the individual patrons.

Commissioner Oliver stated he would like to explore the idea of the ID scanner mentioned by Commissioner Roman.

Commissioner Roman asked if there are any trained officers for undercover operations within the West Hollywood Sheriff's Station.

Captain Moulder stated that the Sheriff's Department cannot require this ID scanning device for businesses. He continued to state that if businesses decide to have this device, it would be a good deterrent for theft and can be helpful in investigations. Captain Moulder also mentioned that some of the detectives at the West Hollywood Sheriff's Station are trained for undercover operations and that he is not trained himself.

Commissioner Roman spoke about the nightlife businesses that already use the ID scanning system in West Hollywood. He also stated that he would like to see more cameras on the street in the entertainment district in efforts to help the police catch the thieves.

Chair Berger asked if the ID scanning system could be used by the Sheriff's Department to make an arrest.

Captain Moulder responded that it is possible to make an arrest after using information provided by the ID scanning system. He also mentioned that more

officers would need to be trained for undercover operations for these nightlife establishments.

Chair Berger made a suggestion of providing City incentives to fund the cameras and or ID scanning devices for businesses.

10D. COMMISSION WORK PLAN AND REQUEST TRACKING

Chair Berger stated that he would like to revisit the reimagining police discussion.

Director Rivas made a suggestion to schedule a special meeting to focus on the work plan as a new liaison to the Commission.

Vice Chair Roshay referred to Goal 6 of the Commission Work Plan related to contracts with public safety agencies. She stated that she would like to go over and possibly add a piece to the fourth section of reviewing information on complaints that go directly to the Sheriff's Department and bypass the City.

Vice Chair Roshay made a motion to creating a new and transparent accountability system and grievance process within the Commission regarding complaints filed against the Sheriff's Department. This continued to explain that this could be added to Goal 6, Section 4 of the work plan. Commissioner Soon-Shiong seconded the motion. *The motion halted for further discussion.*

Melissa Crowder, City Clerk, reminded the Commission that there are limitations of oversight for individual complaints per the municipal code. She mentioned that there is an existing Civilian Oversight Commission that handles complaints for the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department.

Commissioner Balbone asked if there is a process in place for the public to raise concerns/complaints against City contracted vendors.

Melissa Crowder, City Clerk, spoke briefly about the limitation of the Public Safety Commission regarding complaints and mentions this limitation was kept in the update of the municipal code for this Commission.

Chair Berger spoke about ways to improve and to be a third party resource for complaints from a customer service standpoint.

Commissioner Oliver stated he would like to have more information before moving forward with the motion.

Commissioner Soon-Shiong mentioned that this request can be added to the work plan for further discussion.

Commissioner Roman asked for some clarity on the current complaint process when filing against law enforcement. He made a suggestion of a robocall or survey for complaint services.

Captain Moulder explained the different ways that the public can make complaints against the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department.

MICHAEL WOJTKIELEWICZ, WEST HOLLYWOOD, expressed his concerns with the complaint process with other contracted services within the City as well as the City itself.

Previous motion continued and to be further discussed and added to the workplan. Approved by consensus.

Chair Berger asked Director Rivas if a special meeting can be conducted to go over the workplan.

Director Rivas agreed to set a future date with the Commission.

11. ITEMS FROM STAFF

11A. PUBLIC SAFETY COMMISSION CALENDAR

Director Rivas reviewed the Commission Calendar with the Commissioners.

Commissioner Roman inquired about Mr. Rivas' new role and provided his congratulations.

12. PUBLIC COMMENTS

MICHAEL WOJTKIELEWICZ, WEST HOLLYWOOD, expressed his disagreement with the Public Safety Commission and the City.

13. ITEMS FROM THE COMMISSION/COMMISSIONER COMMENTS

Vice Chair Roshay expressed zero tolerance of the disrespect and harassment aimed towards Commissioner Soon-Shiong. Commissioner Roshay also announced her resignation from the Public Safety Commission and gave well wishes. She also made a suggestion to have Commissioner Balbone fulfill the Vice Chair seat.

Commissioner Hallman expresses that the Commission can still have difference in opinion and still do the work together. He also gave well wishes to Vice Chair Roshay.

Commissioner Balbone also gave her well wishes to Vice Chair Roshay.

Commissioner Oliver gave his well wishes to Vice Chair Roshay as well.

14. ADJOURNMENT

The Public Safety Commission adjourned at 9:15 P.M. to its next regular meeting, which will be held on Monday, July 11, 2022, at 6:00 P.M. at the West Hollywood Park Public Meeting Room - Council Chambers.

DocuSigned by:
Tony Berger
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Public Safety Commission Chair

DocuSigned by:
Jessica Anukam
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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.)