

**BUSINESS LICENSE COMMISSION
CITY OF WEST HOLLYWOOD
MINUTES
TUESDAY, AUGUST 9, 2022
WEST HOLLYWOOD PARK PUBLIC MEETING ROOM – COUNCIL CHAMBERS
625 N. SAN VICENTE BOULEVARD**

6:00 P.M. – SPECIAL MEETING

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Saltzman called the meeting to order at 6:04 P.M.

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Chair Matos led the Pledge of Allegiance.

3. ROLL CALL

PRESENT: Commissioner Eisenberg
 Commissioner Hang
 Commissioner Lo
 Vice Chair Vulin
 Chair Matos

ABSENT: Commissioner Saltzman
 Commissioner Yusupov

ALSO PRESENT: Director of Community Safety, Danny Rivas
 Director of Economic Development, John Leonard
 Code Enforcement Supervisor, Yessica Benitez
 Commission Secretary, Falyn Kingi
 Deputy City Attorney, David King

4. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Approve the Business License Commission agenda of Tuesday, August 9, 2022.

ACTION: Approve the agenda of Tuesday, August 9, 2022.

Motion by Vice Chair Vulin, seconded by Commissioner Lo and approved.

5. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Approve the Minutes of the previous Business License Commission Meeting of Tuesday, July 12, 2022.

ACTION: Approve the minutes of Tuesday, July 12, 2022.

Motion by Vice Chair Vulin, seconded by Commissioner Lo and approved.

6. PUBLIC COMMENT

RICHARD MAGGIO, WEST HOLLYWOOD RENT STABILIZATION COMMISSIONER, reported on rent-controlled units.

7. PUBLIC HEARING

A. A VARIANCE REQUEST TO TRANSFER FIFTY-EIGHT-POINT-SEVENTY-THREE PERCENT OWNERSHIP OF THE CANNABIS CONSUMPTION AREA (SMOKING, VAPING AND EDIBLES) BUSINESS LICENSE FOR THE BUSINESS KNOWN AS ORIGINAL CAFÉ LOCATED AT 1201 LA BREA AVENUE

SUBJECT: The West Hollywood Business License Commission shall conduct a public hearing to consider a variance request from Flore Flora, LLC to allow the transfer of a total of fifty-eight-point-seventy-three percent ownership in the Cannabis Consumption Area (Smoking, Vaping and Edibles) Business License to Hightimes Holding Corporation.

Chair Matos, opened the public hearing and asked for the Commission's disclosures.

Business License Commission Secretary, Falyn Kingi, informed the Commission that all notices were posted at the City's three legally required posting locations and mailed to occupants within a 500-foot radius of the business.

Code Enforcement Supervisor, Yessica Benitez, presented the staff report dated August 9, 2022. Director of Economic Development, John Leonard, reminded the Commission that the business was approved for operation in October 2019 and the action before the Commission was to consider the variance request only.

Chair Matos, requested to know if the community raised concerns about the business operations, the vacancy prompted by Covid-19, and parking operations. Code Enforcement Supervisor, Yessica Benitez, and Director of Community Safety, Danny Rivas, responded.

Commissioner Eisenberg, inquired about online articles that mentioned two (2) civil suits filed against the applicant. Director of Economic Development, John Leonard, responded.

Chair Matos, requested to know if the Municipal Code had a clause that would allow the Commission to investigate civil matters. Deputy City Attorney, David King, responded.

PAUL HENDERSON, APPLICANT, informed the Commission there was no presentation. He then introduced himself and shared background information regarding Hightimes.

Commissioner Eisenberg, questioned how the business was financed, inquired about the civil suits filed against Hightimes, and requested applicant's professional background information. The Commission then posed questions and requested clarification from the applicant. PAUL HENDERSON, APPLICANT, responded accordingly.

RICHARD MAGGIO, WEST HOLLYWOOD, spoke in support of the item 7A.

Commissioner Lo, recommended that the Commission approve Staff's recommendation.

Commissioner Eisenberg, expressed concern with the issues raised on the online articles. This led to a detailed discussion between the Commission.

After a detailed discussion, the Commission agreed that the applicant must return before the Commission for a review period of six months and one year.

Deputy City Attorney, David King, reminded the Commission that a motion must include "as amended."

Director of Economic Development, John Leonard, recommended that "SECTION 7" be added to the resolution and proceeded to read the proposed language.

ACTION: Adopt Resolution No. BLC22-0009, "A RESOLUTION OF THE BUSINESS LICENSE COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF WEST HOLLYWOOD APPROVING THE ASSIGNMENT OF FIFTY-EIGHT POINTSEVENTY-THREE PERCENT OF THE OWNERSHIP FOR THE CANNABIS CONSUMPTION AREA (SMOKING, VAPING, AND EDIBLES BUSINESS LICENSE KNOWN AS "THE ORIGINAL CANNABIS CAFÉ" (ATTACHMENT A) as amended.

Motion by Commissioner Vulin, seconded by Commissioner Eisenberg and approved, as amended.

8. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

A. UPDATE ON THE LOS ANGELES COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH AND CITY EXECUTIVE ORDERS AND ITEMS RELATED TO BUSINESSES.

SUBJECT: The West Hollywood Business License Commission will receive an update regarding the Los Angeles County Department of Public Health and City Executive Orders and items related to businesses.

Code Enforcement Supervisor, Yessica Benitez, reported on the monthly Health Officer Order updates and provided background information as provided in the staff report dated August 9, 2022.

Commissioner Hang, requested to know the number of Monkeypox vaccinations administered in West Hollywood. Code Enforcement Supervisor, Yessica Benitez, notified the Commission that the information would be available at the next Business License Commission meeting.

ACTION: Receive and file.

9. NEW BUSINESS

None.

10. ITEMS FROM STAFF

Director of Community Safety, Danny Rivas, informed the Commission of the National Night Out event and its success. He then advised the Commission that the next Business License Commission meetings will include general health order updates, and a variance request. He concluded by notifying the Commission that an update, with regards to all existing business licenses reviewed and conditionally approved through the Commission, would be provided.

Commissioner Lo requested an update on pending Cannabis businesses. Director of Community Safety, Danny Rivas, responded.

11. PUBLIC COMMENT

None.

12. ITEMS FROM COMMISSIONERS

Commissioner Lo, thanked Commissioner Maggio for sharing the updates from the Rent Stabilization Commission.

Chair Hang, shared his National Night Out experience. He then informed the Commission that he attended the Equality California Summit with Mayor Pro Temp Shyne and Chair Matos, and other representatives from other Commissions.

Chair Matos, requested that City Council consider a variance amendment of the Municipal Code to include civil matters, business practices, and other concerns as part of the review process. Deputy City Attorney, David King, recommended that the request be brought back as an action item at the next meeting. Director of Economic Development, John Leonard, informed the Commission that the language in place, for variance and assignments, was added to the Municipal Code through a negotiated settlement agreement. Chair Matos, recommended that the variance amendment be agenda for the next meeting.

Chair Matos, announced that he was appointed to the Planning Commission and thanked the Business License Commission and Staff.

The Commission extended their gratitude, well wishes and congratulated Chair Matos on his assignment to the Planning Commission.

Director of Community Safety, Danny Rivas, congratulated Chair Matos and informed the Commission that the election for the Chair will take place on the next meeting of September 2022.

13. ADJOURNMENT

The West Hollywood Business License Commission adjourned at 7:15 P.M. to its next regular meeting scheduled for Tuesday, September 13, 2022, at 6:00 P.M. at the West Hollywood Park Public Meeting Room - Council Chambers, 625 N. San Vicente Boulevard, West Hollywood, CA 90069.

PASSED, APPROVED, AND ADOPTED by the Business License Commission of the City of West Hollywood at a meeting held this 13th day of September, 2022.

DocuSigned by:



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ANTHONY VULIN, VICE CHAIR

ATTEST:



FALYN KINGI, COMMISSION SECRETARY