

**MINUTES
CITY OF WEST HOLLYWOOD
PUBLIC FACILITIES COMMISSION**

**WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 14, 2022
TELECONFERENCE MEETING***

6:30 P.M. – REGULAR MEETING

***IN AN EFFORT TO PROTECT PUBLIC HEALTH AND PREVENT THE SPREAD OF COVID-19 (NOVEL CORONAVIRUS), AB 361 HAS AUTHORIZED PUBLIC MEETINGS TO TAKE PLACE VIA TELECONFERENCE WHEN STATE AND LOCAL OFFICIALS ARE RECOMMENDING MEASURES TO PROMOTE SOCIAL DISTANCING.**

1. CALL TO ORDER – Chair Mason called the meeting to order at 6:34 p.m.

A. LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT – Read by Chair Mason.

B. ROLL CALL

**PRESENT: Commissioner Isaacs (she/her);
Commissioner Larry (he/him);
Commissioner Polachek (she/her);
Commissioner Torres (she/her);
Vice Chair Solomon (he/him); and
Chair Mason (he/him).**

ABSENT: Commissioner Karliss (he/him).

**ALSO PRESENT: Helen Collins (she/her), Facilities and Field
Services Division Manager; Erin Hamant
(she/her), Senior Administrative Analyst;
Elizabeth Anderson (she/her), Strategic
Initiatives Program Administrator; Abby
Arnold, Strategic Initiatives Consultant;
and Jenny Swan, Strategic Initiatives
Consultant.**

C. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE – Led by Commissioner Torres.

2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

ACTION: Approve the September 14, 2022 Agenda.

Motion by Polachek, seconded by Torres, and approved unanimously.

Roll Call Vote:

Commissioner Isaacs – Y
Commissioner Larry – Y
Commissioner Polachek – Y
Commissioner Torres – Y
Vice Chair Solomon – Y
Chair Mason – Y

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

ACTION: Approve the minutes of the prior Public Facilities Commission meeting dated August 10, 2022.

Motion by Solomon, seconded by Mason, and approved unanimously.

Roll Call Vote:

Commissioner Isaacs – Y
Commissioner Larry – Y
Commissioner Polachek – Y
Commissioner Torres – Y
Vice Chair Solomon – Y
Chair Mason – Y

4. PUBLIC COMMENTS

Yola Dore, WEST HOLLYWOOD, spoke to the Commission as the Disabilities Advisory Board liaison to share information about upcoming local events for October's National Disabilities Awareness Month.

5. COMMISSIONER COMMENTS

Commissioner Larry had no comments.

Commissioner Isaacs shared about her recent visit to the Aquatic & Recreation Center and encouraged the public to visit and sign up for classes.

Commissioner Polachek wished everyone a nice summer and shared her enthusiasm for the upcoming agenda items and discussion.

Commissioner Torres shared her appreciation for the community cooling station at Plummer Park and asked staff if it would be possible to open a new location in the future at the Aquatic & Recreation Center. She wished everyone a happy National Hispanic Heritage Month.

Vice Chair Solomon provided a status update on the Commission's purview review process.

Chair Mason reflected on Pride and expressed his enthusiasm and gratitude for this annual and local event. He asked staff when City facilities, such as Plummer Park Fiesta Hall, will be available to the public to rent.

6. CONSENT CALENDAR – None.

7. PUBLIC HEARINGS – None.

8. UNFINISHED BUSINESS – None.

9. NEW BUSINESS

A. **WEST HOLLYWOOD HOMELESS INITIATIVE: 2022 UPDATE ON FIVE-YEAR PLAN TO ADDRESS HOMELESSNESS AND DISCUSSION REGARDING INTERIM HOUSING PROGRAM AT HOLLOWAY MOTEL SITE**

SUBJECT: The Commission will receive a brief update on the *The City of West Hollywood Five-Year Plan to Address Homelessness in Our Community*, changes in regional homeless services, and program outcomes from City-funded non-profit agency partners. The Commission will also participate in a facilitated focus group discussion regarding the planned interim housing program at the Holloway Motel site.

Staff provided a presentation highlighting the City's progress to-date to address homelessness in West Hollywood.

Commissioner Isaacs asked about impact timelines for initiative items that are still in process. Staff provided information about the Care Team RFP process and regional outreach to providers who may be interested to support the initiative with its launch proposed for 2023. New ways to track success and progress in each of the City's social services providers to identify.

Vice Chair Solomon asked about the Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority (LAHSA), the annual homeless count for Los Angeles county, and the relationship and roles of LAHSA and the City of West Hollywood. Staff explained how the City uses LAHSA's homeless count instructions to conduct the count locally. Staff shared their surprise also in seeing West Hollywood's significant drop from 112 people in 2020 experiencing homelessness to 40 people in 2022, and surmised the latest local count indicates a positive sign for the City's local efforts related to momentum-building and expanded investments in homeless services, outreach, case management, shelter services, and exits to permanent housing. Locally there was a significant reduction and at the countywide-level there was a

slowing in growth with only a 4% increase across the region. The local count is influenced by factors both under and outside the City's direct control. Staff confirmed the local count number matches the City's monthly average count of about 40 people sleeping in the city each night. After the City has another point in time count, it can begin to determine if there is a decrease trend.

Chair Mason asked how the City should address the idea that homelessness is rampant in the city. Staff agreed there are many challenges to storytelling and its shifting realities. Oftentimes data clashes with a person's feelings and experiences. Communications professionals find that consistent exposure to a topic may allow people to consider a different narrative. Staff try to counter-balance the rampant feeling by replacing it with people-centered strategies and the City's pride for finding local solutions that are led with dignity and compassion for all people.

Next, a focus group was led by City consultants, Abby Arnold and Jenny Swan, to collect the Commission's feedback on the City's plan to convert the Holloway Motel into an interim housing facility and program. The facility is proposed for 15 years, at a minimum, and once open will eliminate one of the largest local barriers by offering a pathway to permanent housing for the City's unhoused population. Programming components will include user assistance services, with ideas such as: identifying housing vouchers and/or subsidies, preparing required documentation (IDs, proof of income, birth certificates, etc.), providing meals and mental health services; providing daytime activities and support groups; and offering fitness and other on-site restorative programs.

The Commission was encouraged to ask clarifying questions, share their ideas and concerns, and to bring solutions to the conversation as much as possible.

The following three focus group questions were asked to each Commissioner.

- 1) What are your hopes and concerns as related to the work of the Commission?

Commissioner Torres shared her enthusiasm for the program and familiarity with the Ascencia facility in Glendale. She identified local businesses as a possible concern for the success of the program. Many businesses may be concerned based on proximity of the Motel to their businesses. Related to Commission work, could consider installing a gardening program for mental health.

Commissioner Polachek agreed that proximate businesses and possibly proximate residents may have concerns. She suggested to be articulate and clear about what activities and programs will specifically take place on-site. She asked staff how long the average stay will be for users and will the City target people who are resistant to permanent housing. Staff responded that the average stay will be 90 days which will provide users time to engage in on-site services and other key building blocks for permanent housing placements. The facility's on-site activities could be offered to all and provide essential engagement points with the City's chronically anchored unhoused community members a few hours a day. This can build rapport and trust over time and hopefully facilitate a person's pathway to permanent housing. Once the facility comes online, it will also be great to have the local capacity to hold a room and use strategic methods to bring in chronically anchored unhoused community members.

Commissioner Larry was glad to hear about the daytime activities and fitness for users and asked if the facility would also assist with job search and job skills development. He recognized the importance for individuals to want to maintain and sustain for themselves. Staff agreed and shared that this could be integrated on-site through the City's contract provider JVS.

Vice Chair Solomon advocated for the Holloway Motel Project team to use grassroots outreach strategies to gain buy-in from nearby neighborhood groups, HOAs, local businesses, apartment managers, and other neighbors adjacent to the Holloway Motel location. Staff agreed to this plan and referenced their comprehensive outreach strategy for the project. Staff hope to find local advocates for the project who really believe in the importance of the work and impact.

Chair Mason asked the project team to continue sharing information with the public and encouraging City Officials to be project advocates. He suggested holding a community cleanup event or volunteer event where the homelessness narrative can be reimaged. He cautioned against the project utilizing "hostile" architecture which reinforces exclusion. The Commission would be interested to review the facility design, benches, trash cans, and other infrastructure selections in the future.

Commissioner Isaacs asked how to get involved with the project. She shared the pride she has being in a city that works hard to help its unhoused population and cares for their wellbeing.

2) How does this project relate to the priorities of the Commission?

Commissioner Torres echoed Chair Mason's comment for the project team to continue informing the public and sharing event/project info with City Officials so they can assist staff in project advocacy. Focusing on the positives that will come to the community as a result of the project rather than any nuisances.

Commissioner Polachek championed that the City should use proactive messaging to displace the general misconceptions people may hold about unhoused individuals. Examples of such messaging could include: successful project implementation means less people sleeping in city parks or camping out in city parks, less public bathrooms being locked and occupied, less tension in the community over park use and park space, eliminate possible feelings that city parks are being "taken over," etc.

3) What ways do you think the community at large can contribute to the success of this project and what are some ways that we can engage them?

Chair Mason explained that the Commission provided their answers to this question in earlier comments.

Commissioner Polachek asked how many rooms will be available in the facility and how the program will ensure West Hollywood unhoused individuals are prioritized. The team answered that the project plan is to have 20 units, a partial kitchen, and various spaces to provide administration and participant services. A tiered prioritization process will be used to select program participants: engaging already established unhoused individuals in the city, using recommendations received from the City's various social services providers, and using an enrollment program for all facility occupants. The City does not anticipate lines forming outside of the facility once it opens.

Commissioner Torres mentioned the WeHo app and asked if the City prefers for community members to report unhoused individuals with the WeHo app. Staff emphasized that the WeHo app is not the preferred manner to report unhoused individuals. The WeHo app can be used to request maintenance/work order services in the City so it could be used to report abandoned belongings cleanup, refuse pickup, etc. The public should use the West Hollywood Homeless Initiative Concern Line at (323) 848-6590 to report concerns about unhoused individuals. It is a

voicemail line that is staffed by ten people who will route and coordinate the response.

The consultants thanked the Commission for their time and feedback. Staff shared that future project updates will be shared with the Commission.

ACTIONS:

- 1) **Receive and file the annual update on the City of West Hollywood Five-Year Plan to Address Homelessness in Our Community.**
- 2) **Engage with consultant team in a facilitated focus group discussion regarding the planned interim housing program at the Holloway Motel site.**

B. FY22-23 CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM PRESENTATION

SUBJECT: The Commission will receive a presentation on the Facilities and Field Services Division's Capital Improvement Program projects for FY22-23.

Staff provided a presentation to review adopted capital budget items and asked the Commission for feedback.

Commissioner Torres asked about the timeline for the Dog Park Listening Sessions. Staff answered that it should take place at the end of October with a confirmed date still pending.

Vice Chair Solomon asked about the Shade Structure for Plummer Park Playground. Staff explained that the budget request was not approved.

Chair Mason asked if the WeHo Park Improvements item includes pending improvements at the Aquatic and Recreation Center and if a PA system will be available at the new facility. Staff answered that all anticipated improvements at the ARC have been included in various adopted budget items and the City will use a portable PA system at the ARC and its installation is in process.

ACTION: Receive and provide feedback.

10. **EXCLUDED CONSENT CALENDAR – None.**
11. **PUBLIC COMMENTS – None.**

12. ITEMS FROM STAFF

A. LOOK AHEAD CALENDAR FOR AGENDA PREP & COMMISSION ITEMS TRACKER

Staff reviewed changes made to the look ahead calendar since the previous meeting.

Vice Chair Solomon asked if a windscreen could be added to the Plummer Park Tennis Courts area. He asked for an update on the website updates led by the Recreation Division.

B. DISCUSSION ON IN-PERSON & TELECONFERENCE MEETINGS

Staff and City Officials have been directed by the City Council to resume in-person meetings for all City Advisory Boards and Commissions beginning in October. The Commissioners shared various concerns and asked questions.

Vice Chair Solomon asked if the Commission could meet at various City facility locations throughout the year. Staff explained that public meeting locations should not be frequently relocated.


13. ITEMS FROM COMMISSIONERS & SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS

Chair Mason thanked everyone for a great meeting.

14. ADJOURNMENT

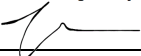
The Public Facilities Commission meeting adjourned at 8:26 p.m. to its next regular meeting* on Wednesday, October 12, 2022 at 6:30 p.m. at Plummer Park Community Center, Rooms 5 and 6, 7377 Santa Monica Blvd., West Hollywood, CA 90046.

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Erin Hamant, Acting Recording Secretary

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Jake Mason, Chair