

**MINUTES
CITY OF WEST HOLLYWOOD
LGBTQ+ COMMISSION**

**THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 14, 2023
7:00 P.M.**

**WEST HOLLYWOOD CITY HALL
1ST FLOOR – COMMUNITY MEETING ROOM
8300 SANTA MONICA BOULEVARD**

- 1. CALL TO ORDER** – Jennifer Del Toro, Staff liaison, called the meeting to order at 7:07pm.
- 2. LAND ACKNOWLEDGMENT:** Read by Commissioner Sotile
“The West Hollywood LGBTQ+ Commission acknowledges that the land on which we gather and that is currently known as the City of West Hollywood is the occupied, unceded, seized territory of the Gabrieleño Tongva and Gabrieleño Kizh peoples.”
- 3. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE** – Commissioner Blood led the Pledge of Allegiance.
- 4. ROLL CALL**

PRESENT: Patrick Ryan Blood, Ron Z. Cortes, Chiedu Egbuniwe, Renee F. Sotile, Alec White, Amber Whittington

ABSENT: Nik Kacy

5. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA:

***ACTION:** Motion to approve the September 14, 2023, Agenda as posted by Commissioner Blood, seconded by Commissioner Egbuniwe, and approved.*

6. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES:

***ACTION:** Motion to approve the August 10, 2023 Meeting Minutes by Commissioner Blood, seconded by Commissioner Sotile, and approved.*

7. PUBLIC COMMENT:

Joe Green, Co-Chair of the Los Angeles County Commission on HIV, introduced himself to the Commission and invited the Commissioners to attend future meetings,

and suggested that the Commission separately recognize the 2022 and 2023 Rainbow Key Award nominees.

8. NEW BUSINESS:

A. ELECTION OF CHAIR

ACTION: *The LGBTQ+ Commission elected Commissioner Egbuniwe as Chair.*

B. ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIR

ACTION: *The LGBTQ+ Commission elected Commissioner Whittington as Vice-Chair.*

C. C.I.T.Y. x1 YOUTH GROUP'S 2023 PRE-THANKSGIVING DINNER AND COMMUNITY EVENTS

The LGBTQ+ Commission received an update from Carlos Sosa, Executive Director of the C.I.T.Y. x1 Youth Group and staff on staff's recommendation that the West Hollywood City Council approve the co-sponsorship of the C.I.T.Y. x1 Youth Group's 2023 pre-Thanksgiving dinner and community events beginning on Sunday, November 19, 2023, and lasting through Wednesday, November 22, 2023, in the amount of \$1,000.

Carlos also notified the Commissioners about C.I.T.Y. x1 Youth Group's 'Tamale Jam' – a social event where attendees will be linked to services like transitional living, emotional support, and health care.

ACTION: *Received and filed.*

D. LEGISLATIVE AFFAIRS UPDATE

The LGBTQ+ Commission received a brief presentation from the City's Governmental Affairs Liaison, Hernan Molina, about the California State Legislature and any potential impacts to the LGBTQ+ community in upcoming legislation.

Hernan encouraged the LGBTQ+ Commission to create a joint legislative subcommittee with the City's Transgender Advisory Board and encouraged the Commission to appoint members at their October or November meeting.

9. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

A. RAINBOW KEY AWARDS

Staff provided an update on the Rainbow Key Awards and possible dates for the 2023 Rainbow Key Awards Ceremony. The Rainbow Key Awards subcommittee will meet in September to discuss next steps with staff in selecting a date for the 2023 Awards Ceremony.

ACTION: *Motion to appoint Vice-Chair Whittington to the Rainbow Key Awards subcommittee by Commissioner Blood, seconded by Commissioner Sotile, and approved.*

Commissioner Blood and Commissioner White expressed interest in hosting a Rainbow Key Awards Ceremony this year. Commissioner Blood also suggested that the former members of the LGBTQ+ Advisory Board be invited to the 2023 Rainbow Key Awards Ceremony to honor their nominees and participate in the ceremony.

Commissioner Sotile inquired about holding the 2023 Awards in January 2024 and the 2024 Awards later in the 2024 calendar year.

The Commission voted by consensus to look at dates in 2023 for the 2023 Rainbow Key Awards or alternatively hold the 2023 Rainbow Key Awards Ceremony in January 2024 and the 2024 Rainbow Key Awards Ceremony later in the 2024 calendar year.

Staff notified the Commission that the Mayoral installation will be taking place at the beginning of January 2024, but staff will look at available dates towards the latter part of the month.

Commissioner Cortes asked if the Commission could host the 2023 Ceremony at an offsite location. Hernan Molina, the City's Governmental Affairs Liaison and Community & Legislative Affairs Acting Manager, notified the Commission of the challenges of holding the Ceremony at a venue outside of the West Hollywood Council Chambers due to limited live broadcast options within the City and staff's capacity to host multiple events throughout the month and more than one event on one day.

10. PUBLIC COMMENT

None.

11. ITEMS FROM COMMISSIONERS

Commissioner White

Provided an event attendance report about events he has attended since the last LGBTQ+ Commission meeting and expressed excitement about working with the Commission on the Rainbow Key Awards.

Commissioner Blood

Thanked staff, Hernan Molina, members of the public that participated in public comment, and all presenters. Commissioner Blood notified the Commission of upcoming Metro meetings, the first taking place on Tuesday, September 19th (virtual webinar on Zoom) and the second on Tuesday, September 26th (in-person meeting at the City of West Hollywood's Aquatic and Recreation Center). Commissioner Blood also notified the Commission about Bi-Visibility Week and Suicide Prevention Week, and provided the Suicide and Crisis lifeline, 988 for community members in need.

Vice-Chair Whittington

Vice-Chair Whittington apologized for being absent for the September LGBTQ+ Commission meeting, notified the Commission about her attendance and participation in the Equality California's Leadership Summit, and thanked Planning Commissioner, Erick Matos for his work and service to West Hollywood.

Vice Chair Whittington also suggested the Commission agendaize a discussion about racial and disability discrimination at West Hollywood bars and nightclubs and explore possible training for staff employed in this sector.

ACTION: *Motion to agendaize this discussion at a future Commission meeting by Chair Egbuniwe, seconded by Commissioner Blood, and approved.*

Commissioner Cortes

Informed the Commission that Bi-Sexual Awareness Week begins next week and suggested that the Commission agendaize a discussion related to how the LGBTQ+ Commission can collaborate to provide services to protect the LGBTQ+ population that suffers from addiction.

ACTION: *Motion to agendaize at a future meeting by Commissioner Blood, seconded by Vice-Chair Whittington, and approved.*

Commissioner Sotile

Congratulated Vice-Chair Whittington and Chair Egbuniwe and notified the Commission about Bi-Visibility Week and the events taking place next weekend.

On September 20th, the Writers Guild Association (WGA) is hosting a Bi-Sexual Awareness Week at 10am to create space for bi-writers and allies. Commissioner Sotile also provided an update on the events and meetings she has attended since the last meeting.

Commissioner Sotile also congratulated Cathy Blaivas and Stephanie Harker on their work and efforts on Plummer Park.

Chair Egbuniwe

Chair Egbuniwe thanked the Commission for electing him as Chair, thanked staff, and provided an event attendance report, which included his attendance at Women's Equality Day, and a fundraiser for Danica Roem, the first trans-person elected to state legislature. Additionally, Chair Egbuniwe invited the Commission to the One Institute's 'Archives as Activism' event on October 7th, from 10:00am-1:00pm at the One Gallery on Robertson Blvd. Chair Egbuniwe also notified the Commission about Suicide Prevention Awareness Week, encouraged community members in need to utilize the Suicide and Crisis lifeline, 988, and acknowledged Bi-Sexual Awareness Week.

12. ITEMS FROM STAFF

Staff provided an update on the following events and happenings in the City:

Bi+ Ice Cream Social

City is hosting its 2nd annual Picnic Day celebrating and marking the end of Bi+ Visibility Week with the *Bi+ Ice Cream Social* on Saturday, September 23rd, from 1:00pm-5:00pm at Plummer Park's Fuller Lawn.

2024 WeHo Pride Arts Festival Curator/Producer RFQ

The City is seeking a qualified Curator/producer or team to curate, produce, present, and promote a weekend of multidisciplinary LGBTQ art activations on June 15-16, 2024, during the 2024 WeHo Pride Arts Festival. The Request for Qualifications (RFQ) closes on Thursday, September 28, 2023.

13. ADJOURNMENT

The LGBTQ+ Commission adjourned at 8:37pm in memory of Laury Ann Crawford to its regularly

scheduled meeting on Thursday, October 12, 2023, at 7:00 p.m. to be held in the West Hollywood City Hall - 1st Floor Community Meeting Room at 8300 Santa Monica Boulevard, West Hollywood, CA 90069.

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Chiedu Egbuniwe

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Chair Egbuniwe

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Jasmine Duckworth

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Recording Secretary | Jasmine Duckworth