

**HUMAN SERVICES COMMISSION
CITY OF WEST HOLLYWOOD
REGULAR MEETING
MINUTES
TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 10, 2024
PLUMMER PARK - ROOMS 5 & 6
7377 SANTA MONICA BOULEVARD
6:00 PM**

1. **CALL TO ORDER:** Chair Eyres called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm and read the Land Acknowledgment.

A. ROLL CALL

PRESENT: Commissioner Borelli
Commissioner Davis
Commissioner Palmieri
Commissioner Williams
Vice-Chair Adolphson
Chair Eyres

Absent: Commissioner Wyville

ALSO PRESENT: Wendy Barreno, Human Services Manager
Diane Kahn-Epstein, Strategic Initiatives Supervisor
Rebecca Lubin, Strategic Initiatives Program Administrator
Maribel Ulloa, Social Services Program Administrator
Amy Valdepeña, Commission Secretary, Human Services Specialist

- B. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:** Chair Eyres led the Pledge of Allegiance.

C. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

The Human Services Commission is requested to approve the meeting agenda for September 10, 2024.

ACTION: Approved the Agenda of Tuesday, September 10, 2024.
Motion by Commissioner Borelli, seconded by Commissioner Williams and approved by roll call vote. Noting the absence of Commissioner Wyville.

D. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The Human Services Commission is requested to approve the minutes of the August 13, 2024, Human Services Commission meeting.

ACTION: The minutes of August 13, 2024, with the correction to Item 7.

Motion by Commissioner Davis to approve, **seconded by Vice Chair Adolphson, and approved by roll call vote.** Noting the absence of Commissioner Wyville.

E. PUBLIC COMMENT

YOLA DORE, CITY OF WEST HOLLYWOOD - Yola Dore informed the Commission that October is Disability Awareness Month. The Health and Wellness Event will take place on Tuesday, October 1st, from 10:00 AM to 1:00 PM at the Plummer Park Community Center, Rooms 5 & 6.

JIM ZENNER - The Director of the LA County Department of Military and Veteran Affairs, a proud Army veteran and LCSW. He outlined several ways they provide support, including assessing eligibility for VA services, offering guidance and encouragement to those hesitant to use VA services, and linking them to County resources and legal aid for discharge upgrades or restoring VA healthcare eligibility.

2. CONSENT CALENDAR: None

3. UNFINISHED BUSINESS: None

4. NEW BUSINESS

A. WEST HOLLYWOOD RECOVERY CENTER PRESENTATION

The Human Services Commission received a presentation from the West Hollywood Recovery Center. Paulo Murillo provided an overview of the support groups provided to the West Hollywood community.

Commissioner Borelli inquired whether the WeHo Recovery Center operates as a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization, and if it has a Board and staff. They also asked if meetings would be moved entirely to the Log Cabin or if they would continue to operate out of the Werle Building. Additionally, they inquired about the involvement of volunteers in assisting with the operations of meetings. Regarding parking, they questioned whether the City provides any form of parking validation.

Commissioner Palmieri inquired about the specific challenges anticipated during the transition. He also asked whether, during the construction of Rooms 1 and 2 at the Log Cabin, any meetings would need to be dissolved or rescheduled. Additionally, he inquired if the City is providing assistance with alternative meeting spaces, even on a temporary basis, to accommodate the impacted meetings.

Chair Eyres inquired about the cost of renting the space. She also encouraged staff to explore alternative meeting areas, such as Kings

Road Park, the West Hollywood Library Community Meeting Room, and other options.

ACTION: Received and discussed.

B. AGING IN PLACE INITIATIVE UPDATE

The Human Services Commission received an update from Diane Kahn-Epstein, Strategic Initiatives Supervisor and Becca Lubin, Strategic Initiatives Program Administrator on activities of the aging in place initiative related to the quality of life, health, and well-being of older adults.

Commissioner Williams thanked Diane and Rebecca for their outstanding work and offered her support.

Commissioner Borelli inquired if there have been any requests from an older adult to move from the second floor to the first floor. They also expressed appreciation for the consideration of open space in the planning.

Commissioner Davis also inquired if a resident's rent would remain the same if they were to move from a second-floor unit to the first floor. He further stated that aging in place is a challenge and expressed appreciation for the City's efforts.

Commissioner Palmieri shared that in conversations with people from other cities, they are amazed when they hear about this initiative in WeHo. He also mentioned that in his own building, residents have the flexibility to move around as units become available. Regarding rental assistance, he inquired if the amount is \$2,000 per year for the Aging in Place Rental Subsidy program. He also shared that he has been involved since the inception of this program and is thoroughly impressed. He extended a tremendous amount of praise to Diane and Rebecca for their outstanding work and expressed confidence that great work will continue with such an exceptional team.

Vice Chair Adolphson also praised the excellent work being done, emphasizing that it encourages community members to remain and age in place here with a sense of protection. She requested additional information regarding emergency preparedness and how residents can assist their older adult neighbors in the event of an emergency.

Chair Eyres shared that she completed the City's certification training and found it enjoyable. One key protocol emphasized was checking your own safety first, then assessing the safety of household members, followed by neighbors, prioritizing those who may need the most assistance. She inquired whether the City could enhance communication about the Aging

in Place program, suggesting the use of signage and more visible information displays.

ACTION: Received and discussed.

C. DISABILITIES AWARENESS MONTH

The Human Services Commission received an update from Maribel Ulloa, Social Services Program Administrator on the activities and programs planned in recognition of Disabilities Awareness Month in October 2024.

ACTION: Received and discussed.

5. ITEMS FROM STAFF

Maribel Ulloa shared that the City of West Hollywood recognizes National Suicide Prevention Awareness Month in September. Community members experiencing a behavioral health crisis are encouraged to call 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline to get support.

Staff will include an agenda item for the October meeting to discuss the Human Services Commission's request for televised meetings.

Staff acknowledged the request made at the last meeting to add a budget item for discussion at a future meeting and will address this request in alignment with the City's budget timeline.

6. PUBLIC COMMENT

None.

7. ITEMS FROM COMMISSIONERS

Commissioner Davis- Suggested extending the Cooling Centers hours or provide alternative options during periods of extreme heat.

He reported on his recent attendance at the HIV and Substance Use Prevention Providers meeting. He praised Dee'Ana Saunders for her exceptional leadership during the session. Commissioner Davis expressed his admiration for the progress Being Alive has made and was impressed by their new services brochure. He also noted Los Angeles County Department of Public Health's FLEX Card program that provides \$400 gift cards each month for up to six months. To qualify, individuals must be living with HIV, be at least 18 years old, and reside in Los Angeles County. Commissioner Davis conveyed his dissatisfaction with an email he received about the cancellation of the Annual Congress of Boards and Commissions.

Commissioner Palmieri- Reported on his attendance at the City Council meeting expressed frustration that he was not allowed to provide at least a

brief update at Public Comment and suggested that Commissioners should be given four minutes and be given priority at the beginning of Public Comment. He highlighted that September is National Recovery Month, with September 20 dedicated to recognizing professionals in the recovery field. Since its inception in 1989, National Recovery Month has been a time to reflect on new services and methods in the field and to acknowledge the challenges of maintaining recovery.

Commissioner Palmieri echoed Commissioner Davis's concerns regarding the cancellation of the Annual Congress of Boards and Commissions.

Commissioner Williams- Inquired whether the City could partner with local hotels during periods of extreme heat to assist older adults and those who may not have the financial means to afford alternative accommodations.

Reminded the Commission that tomorrow is 9/11 and to take a moment in remembrance for all. Commissioner Williams stressed that we need to enhance our marketing strategies to ensure that our vital social services are recognized and utilized. Commissioner Williams mentioned she will be meeting with a Board member from Russian-Speaking Advisory Board (RAB) to discuss our social services, with the goal of sharing this information with the RAB Board members. She highlighted the need for a dedicated place to archive medals of Russian World War II Veterans. Many of these Veterans are in their 80s and 90s, and she inquired about who is responsible for their care, specifically asking if Aging in Place is involved. Commissioner Williams motioned to have Jim Zenner, the Director of the LA County Department of Military and Veteran Affairs, come to the Human Services Commission, and provide a full presentation.

Commissioner Borelli- Requested statistics on the number of people who utilized the Cooling Centers. He also emphasized the importance of enhancing communication related to the Aging in Place Initiative and he suggested incorporating more diverse messaging about accessing mental health and rental services.

Reflected on last summer's Heilman gathering, where the focus was on improving communication strategies. He pointed out that, while the City issues numerous lengthy press releases, it's essential to ensure vital information, like rental assistance, reaches the public. While praising the staff's excellent work, he emphasized there's room for improvement in how we market and communicate services. He also inquired about the frequency of the Social Services Brochure mailings. In October, he plans to give public comment and noted that he edits his script to ensure his timing is precise. Commissioner Borelli acknowledged Jim Zenner's public comment, highlighting how the LA County Department of Military and Veterans Affairs supports veterans and expressed gratitude that street teams are helping care for them.

Vice Chair Adolphson – She also addressed the unusual email regarding the

cancellation of the Annual Congress but hopes it will be rescheduled. Vice Chair Adolphson shared that she reached out to Melissa, suggesting it would be a great opportunity to introduce other Commissioners to the work being done in Human Services. She proposed the idea of incorporating a nightlife safety kit packing activity, which would engage Commissioners while highlighting some of the important work the City does.

She also mentioned previous discussions about site visits and acknowledged the complexity involved. She expressed interest in scheduling a tour of Holloway House.


Chair Eyres - Informed the Commission that the next meeting, scheduled for Tuesday, October 8, coincides with the grand opening of the Being Alive Harm Reduction Center on Santa Monica Blvd. Chair Eyres mentioned California Assembly Bill 620, she highlighted Yola Dore’s significant advocacy for the bill, noting that she worked closely with the Assembly member, then-Mayor Shyne, and Vice Mayor Erickson. She is always eager to hear updates about the Holloway project. She recently learned from Commissioner Palmieri that when the City contracted with Ascencia for temporary housing services for people experiencing homelessness, they ensured that individuals with pets would be allowed to bring their pets, following certain guidelines. She inquired whether the Holloway project would adopt a similar policy.

8. ADJOURNMENT

The **Human Services Commission** will adjourned at 7:25 pm, to its next Regular Meeting on **Tuesday, October 8, 2024**, at 6:00 pm at the Plummer Park Community Center, Rooms 5 & 6.

Notice: Written materials distributed to the Human Services Commission within 72 hours of this meeting are available for public inspection immediately upon distribution at the Department of Human Services and Rent Stabilization, 8300 Santa Monica Boulevard, West Hollywood, California, 90069, during normal business hours. They will also be available for inspection at the staff liaison’s table during the Commission meeting.

APPROVED BY A MOTION OF THE HUMAN SERVICES COMMISSION ON THIS 8th DAY OF OCTOBER 2024.

Signed by:


KAREN EYRES,
CHAIRPERSON

ATTEST:
DocuSigned by:


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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.)