



**CITY OF WEST HOLLYWOOD
SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES
DISABILITIES ADVISORY BOARD**

**WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 11, 2024
6:00 PM – SPECIAL MEETING**

**PLUMMER PARK COMMUNITY CENTER, ROOMS 5 & 6
7377 SANTA MONICA BLVD.
WEST HOLLYWOOD, CA 90046**

1. CALL TO ORDER: Chair Smith called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm.

2. ROLL CALL:

PRESENT: Board Member Green
Board Member Leathem
Board Member Nash
Board Member Schwartz
Board Member Semonco
Board Member Watts
Vice Chair Mann
Chair Smith

Absent: Board Member Dore

ALSO Maribel Ulloa, Social Services Program Administrator

PRESENT: Derek Murray, Social Services Supervisor
Joyce Britton, Recording Secretary, Administrative Specialist
IV

3. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE: Board Member Green led the Pledge of Allegiance.

4. APPROVAL OF AGENDA: *The Disabilities Advisory Board approved the agenda of the December 11, 2024, Disabilities Advisory Board meeting. Motioned by Vice Chair Mann, seconded by Board Member Green and approved unanimously by roll call vote.*

5. PUBLIC COMMENT:

Chuck Fisher, a longtime West Hollywood resident since 1967, shared his background and reasons for attending the meeting. He shared his extensive experience in various fields, including working in the film and real estate industries, and dealing with legal matters. Mr. Fisher resides at a 30-unit building where he

has lived for over 60 years. He noted his disability stemming from a left ankle injury in 1984, which causes balance issues and a tendency to fall. Mr. Fisher expressed interest in addressing disability-related concerns.

6. CONSENT CALENDAR:

6.A. POSTING OF AGENDA:

SUBJECT: The agenda for the special meeting of Wednesday, December 11, 2024, was posted at City Hall, Plummer Park, the Sheriff's Station, and at the West Hollywood Library on Wednesday, December 4, 2024.

ACTION: Received and filed.

6.B. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

SUBJECT: The Disabilities Advisory Board is requested to approve the minutes of the prior Board meeting.

ACTION: Motioned by Board Member Green, seconded by Vice-Chair Mann and approved unanimously by roll call vote.

7. PUBLIC HEARINGS: None.

8. NEW BUSINESS:

8.A. HARM REDUCTION PRESENTATION

SUBJECT: The Disabilities Advisory Board received a presentation on harm reduction principles and programs that are supported by the City.

ACTION: Received and discussed.

During the discussion, the Board brought up the following suggestions:

- Explore the possibility of requiring businesses that sell drug paraphernalia to distribute resource information on addiction treatment and consequences.
- Provide harm reduction training, including Narcan administration, to all city staff.
- Investigate the feasibility of a one-time registration system for accessing city-funded social services.
- Create a separate harm reduction resource booklet or visual aids like refrigerator magnets to disseminate information.
- Strengthen collaboration between the City and the VA, as well as the county's Department of Military and Veteran Affairs, to connect veterans with relevant resources.

9. UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

9.A. DISABILITIES AWARENESS MONTH DEBRIEF:

SUBJECT: The Disabilities Advisory Board reviewed the 2024 Disabilities Awareness Month activities.

ACTION: The Board provided feedback and made suggestions for 2025 Disabilities Awareness Month.

During the discussion, the Board made the following suggestions for the Health Fair:

- Explore options for better signage and visibility for the event, including the possibility of using the large digital billboard on the building.
- Provide translation support in Russian and Spanish for the event, including having additional translators available.
- Create a map or guide for attendees to help them navigate the event and locate different services/vendors.
- Follow up with vendors who were no-shows to understand the reasons and address any coordination issues.
- Investigate the feasibility of hosting the event at a larger venue, such as the Great Hall, to provide more space for attendees.

The Board made the following suggestions for the Disability Service Awards:

- Coordinate with the communications department to create a public service announcement about the event to air on cable TV in the month leading up to the event.
- Explore the possibility of having a separate awards ceremony event, rather than combining it with the regular meeting.
- Ensure that the ASL interpreter is clearly visible and that at least one screen is dedicated to displaying the interpreter for the audience.

10. EXCLUDED CONSENT CALENDAR: None.

11. ITEMS FROM STAFF:

Staff thanked the Board for their service, congratulated them on a wonderful and productive year and wished them happy holidays.

12. PUBLIC COMMENT:

Yola Doré expressed gratitude for the support she received during her recent emergency hospitalization, including assistance from the fire department, neighbors, and those who reached out to her. She wished everyone blessings for the holiday season and conveyed her appreciation for their efforts to improve the community. Although unable to attend in person or send planned treats, she emphasized her spiritual presence and continued support for their work.

13. ITEMS FROM BOARD AND LIAISON REPORTS:

Board Member Nash announced the final approval of a building in front of the New London Hotel on Sunset Boulevard, which includes 14 affordable housing units, and invited members to a Christmas party at 980 Palm Avenue, a housing facility for individuals with disabilities, scheduled next Thursday from 5–7 PM.

Board Member Watts highlighted the importance of checking in on socially isolated neighbors during the holidays, sharing a personal example. He also celebrated housemate Lee Walkup, a Vietnam veteran and LA Gay Men's Chorus member, on his birthday and invited members to the chorus's weekend performance.

Board Member Semonco announced upcoming Women's Month events in March, organized by the Women's Board and encouraged those struggling during the holidays to seek support, reflecting on the loss of a fellow board member earlier this year.

Board Member Green recapped attendance at Transgender Day of Remembrance ceremonies, World AIDS Day events, and the Paul Starke HIV Hero Awards. He highlighted a Human Services Commission presentation about Lyft partnerships, praised the City's holiday party, emphasized the value of liaison meetings, and thanked staff and board members for their support.

Board Member Leathem praised the City's Veterans Day ceremony, proposed adjourning in memory of Patrick Blood, a former board member and community advocate, and extended holiday well-wishes to everyone.

Board Member Schwartz shared updates on the Fountain Avenue Streetscape Design Committee, with the next meeting scheduled for early 2025. He thanked the Disability Advisory Board and staff for their contributions and extended holiday greetings.

Vice-Chair Mann provided updates from the Transgender Advisory Board, highlighting discussions on liaison roles and appreciation for Board Member Green. The Vice-Chair advocated for Disability Advisory Board representation on the City's LGBTQ suicide subcommittee, given the intersection of disabilities, mental health, and suicide prevention and thanked the board for a productive year and encouraged members to bring ideas for the upcoming year's work plan.

Chair Smith thanked the subcommittee and staff for their work this year. She addressed neighborhood safety concerns, including recent break-ins and threats, and thanked City Council for approving drones and cameras to combat crime. Chair Smith raised accessibility concerns about scooters and robots obstructing sidewalks, noting the City's shortfall in supporting its Aging-in-Place initiative. She announced a Disability Health Fair on January 30 and concluded with holiday wishes and a remembrance of a dear friend.

14. ADJOURNMENT: The Disabilities Advisory Board adjourned in memory of Patrick Blood and Adrian Omanski at 8 PM to its regular meeting which will be held at 6:00 pm on Wednesday, January 22, 2025, at Plummer Park Rooms 5 & 6, 7377 Santa Monica Blvd., West Hollywood, CA 90046.

APPROVED BY A MOTION OF THE DISABILITIES ADVISORY BOARD ON THIS 22nd DAY OF AUGUST, 2024.

Signed by:

184880280250456
LOUISE SMITH,
CHAIRPERSON

ATTEST: Signed by:

184880280250456
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.)