

**HUMAN SERVICES COMMISSION
CITY OF WEST HOLLYWOOD
MINUTES
TUESDAY, AUGUST 13, 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 Williams
Commissioner Wyville
Vice-Chair Adolphson
Chair Eyres

Absent: Commissioner Palmieri

ALSO Wendy Barreno, Human Services Manager
PRESENT: Derek Murray, 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 August 13, 2024.

ACTION: Approved the Agenda of Tuesday, August 13, 2024, with the amendment of moving 3A after 4B. **Motion by Chair Eyres seconded by Commissioner Wyville and approved by roll call vote.** Noting the absence of Commissioner Palmieri. **Approval of Agenda motion by Commissioner Williams and seconded by Vice Chair Adolphson, and approved by roll call vote,** noting the absence of Commissioner Palmieri.

D. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The Human Services Commission is requested to approve the minutes of the July 9, 2024, Human Services Commission meeting.

ACTION: Approved the minutes of July 9, 2024, with the amendment of **Vice Chair Adolphson. Motion by Commissioner Borelli** to approve, **seconded by Commissioner Williams, and approved by roll call vote.** Noting the absence of Commissioner Palmieri.

E. PUBLIC COMMENT

YOLA DORE, CITY OF WEST HOLLYWOOD - Yola Dore, a resident of over thirty years and a liaison from the Disability Advisory Board. She highlighted that every October, the Disability Advisory Board recognizes and awards individuals and businesses that have excelled in advocating for and creating accessibility. With the nomination period closing in just two days, Yola noted that very few businesses have been nominated and encouraged the Commission to submit their nominations.

SUNITHA MENON - Sunitha Menon, Executive Director of the LGBTQ+ Commission under the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors, expressed her enthusiasm for the incredible work being done. She emphasized her eagerness to collaborate with the Human Services Commission to uplift Black, Brown, and TGI (Transgender, Gender Non-Conforming, and Intersex) communities in underserved areas. Sunitha is looking forward to working together to create strategic change and hopes to present the work the LGBTQ+ County Commission has been doing to the Human Services Commission.

2. CONSENT CALENDAR: None

3. UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

A. CITY COUNCIL LIAISON ASSIGNMENTS

The Human Services Commission discussed the continuation of City Council liaison assignments and which commissioners will speak about human services programs during the public comment period at the City Council meetings for the remainder of 2024.

August 2024- Substance Use / Overdose Awareness - Commissioner Palmieri.

September 2024- Hunger / National Food Bank Day/ Food Security - Commissioner Williams

October 2024- Disability Awareness - Commissioner Borelli

October 2024- IPV/Domestic Violence Awareness - Commissioner Borelli

November 2024- Homelessness Awareness - Commissioner Wyville

November 2024- Transgender Awareness - Vice Chair Adolphson

December 2024- World AIDS Day- Commissioner Davis

ACTION: Received and discussed.

4. NEW BUSINESS

A. LEGAL ADVOCACY PROJECT FOR SURVIORS PRESENTATION

The Human Services Commission received a presentation from Mary Case, Senior Manager (LAPS & AVP) from the Los Angeles LGBT Center's Legal Advocacy Project for Survivors about the comprehensive legal services provided to the West Hollywood community.

Commissioners thanked Mary Case presentation and followed up with a few comments and questions.

Commissioner Wyville– Inquired about the extent of law enforcement involvement in incidents they have handled. He also discussed reports of incidents involving law enforcement during PRIDE. Additionally, he asked if there has been a noticeable increase in swatting incidents.

Commissioner Wyville requested staff assistance in connecting with Mary Case. He further inquired about how community members learn about their services and whether there is anything the Commission or the city could do to help promote these services.

Commissioner Williams– Requested additional information on qualifying for California Victims of Compensation and inquired about any potential workarounds for providing assistance.

Commissioner Borelli– He expressed satisfaction with the support provided in assisting with filing police reports and inquired about the availability of hotel vouchers. Commissioner Borelli also asked about the agency's response timeframe.

Commissioner Davis– He requested additional information on relationship dissolution and asked if they offer any alternative methods, such as mediation, in addition to legal services.

Vice Chair Adolphson- She asked if this information has been presented to the Public Safety Commission and inquired whether they are offering any support to the city for Ukrainian, Venezuelan, or other refugees.

Chair Eyres- She expressed appreciation for their advocacy work and inquired if the population they currently serve includes trans-identified or gender non-conforming individuals, as that was the clientele she observed while volunteering at the youth program. Chair Eyres asked whether they see a need to expand or adjust their services.

ACTION: Received and discussed.

B. WEHO LIFE PRESENTATION

The Human Services Commission received a presentation from Chris Clarkin, Paul Chavez and Solis Gomez from the Los Angeles LGBT Center's WeHo Life Program about the harm reduction services provided to the West Hollywood community.

Commissioners thanked Chris Clarkin, Paul Chavez and Solis Rosado presentation and followed up with a few comments and questions.

Commissioner Davis- Congratulated and praised the WeHo Life team as he has seen them evolving with time. He also shared that he is impressed with their presentation as reading it does not compare to seeing the table filled with resources.

Commissioner Borelli- Commissioner Borelli agreed with Commissioner Davis on how WeHo Life has significantly evolved. He acknowledged it is great seeing the progress made with the drink covers. He also requested despite their limited resources and the need to prioritize, they should consider expanding their outreach beyond Santa Monica Boulevard. Areas such as Sunset Boulevard, Beverly, Melrose, and Robertson might also have a need for these resources.

Commissioner Williams- She reminisced about watching the videos 10 years ago and noted that they were culturally inappropriate. She acknowledged the passion in the team and praised them for addressing important issues and keeping people safe across all aspects of the community. She expressed gratitude for everything the team is doing, including the education they are providing and the kits they distribute. Additionally, she encouraged the WeHo Life team to connect with Sunitha Menon, Executive Director of the LGBTQ+ Commission under the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors, emphasizing that the information they provide is saving lives.

Commissioner Wyville- He thanked the team and acknowledged that their work was truly amazing. He also noted that the WeHo Life branding is easily recognizable throughout West Hollywood. He expressed appreciation for the WeHo Life team's services, as well as the Commission's efforts on this initiative and how it serves the West Hollywood community. He emphasized that this effort not only makes a huge impact but also sends a strong message to both locals and visitors that harm reduction must be normalized.

Vice Chair Adolphson- She thanked and expressed appreciation for the work and great energy that the WeHo Life team brought to the Commission. She also acknowledged and appreciated the inclusion of female protection in the kits.

Chair Eyres- She emphasized her enjoyment of the team and gave them kudos for their sex-positive approach. She also acknowledged that they are the perfect contract service provider, having successfully adapted to the needs and trends of today.

ACTION: Received and discussed.

5. ITEMS FROM STAFF

Derek Murray informed the Commission of his promotion to Supervisor of Social Services.

The City Clerk's office is asking the Commissioners to help get the word out about a new resource called [*Get Involved: A Guide to Civic Involvement*](#). This resource includes information about how to stay informed, new ways to get involved, and information about how to participate in public meetings, including all of West Hollywood's Commissions and Advisory Boards. The City Clerk's office has ordered 5,000 copies and would love your help to distribute copies across West Hollywood. They also encourage members and the public to take a copy for themselves and an interested neighbor. For additional copies to distribute at future events, outreach opportunities, or at a City facility, please reach out to Derek Murray or Amy Valdepeña and we will connect you with Erin Taylor and Haylee Nelson.

6. PUBLIC COMMENT

CATHERINE ENG, CITY OF WEST HOLLYWOOD – Wanted to bring the Human Services Commissions attention the important work of St. Victor's Church in West Hollywood. St. Victor's has been fulfilling requests for rental relief and food, as well as offering non-denominational end-of-life services. Father Gonzalez mentioned that people often turn to the church first because they're unsure where else to go. Catherine believes this highlights an opportunity for better resource sharing. She proposed to establish a line of communication between St. Victor's and the city to ensure community members are directed to the appropriate resources we offer. Father Gonzalez also suggested forming an independent council for religious entities in the city to collaborate and share resources, which she believes is a great idea.

7. ITEMS FROM COMMISSIONERS

Commissioner Wyville- Thanked Sunitha Menon for attending the Human Services Commission meeting. He acknowledged that since she became the Executive Director of the LGBTQ+ Commission under the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors, she has been incredibly active, and he appreciated that she was able to prioritize the Human Services Commission.

He expressed confidence that she will continue to be engaged with both the city and the Commission. Commissioner Wyville also informed the Commission that LA County has been working on an ordinance to create bubble zones for events held at sensitive locations or involving sensitive communities, an effort sparked by an incident at the San Fernando Library last year. He noted that they are looking forward to the ordinance's completion and are eager to explore ways to expand beyond unincorporated LA County, in collaboration with the city. Additionally, he mentioned that planning is underway for the Harvey Milk Day event in 2025, assuring that next year's celebration will be even more fun and engaging. Lastly, Commissioner Wyville shared that he attended Vice President Harris's rally in Las Vegas over the weekend, which he found very exciting. He highlighted the upcoming opportunities for local involvement as campaign activities ramp up in the area. Commissioner Wyville mentioned that the LA County LGBTQ+ Commission recently received a presentation from the Williams Institute on their study of LGBTQ+ residents in LA County, which included a focused sub-study on the TGI (Transgender, Gender Non-Conforming, and Intersex) population. He believes this presentation would be valuable for the Human Services Commission to consider.

Commissioner Williams- Commissioner Williams thanked Sunitha Menon for attending and speaking during public comment. She acknowledged the fantastic work she has been doing. Commissioner Williams mentioned that she had recently attended the Equality California LGBTQ+ Elected Government Officials Conference in Sacramento, where she spent time with Sunitha Menon. She also attended several panels at the conference, including one that addressed extremism and safety for public servants, which she found fascinating and valuable. She expressed her enjoyment of the concerts at Plummer Park, describing them as fantastic. She appreciated seeing the diverse mix of culture and community present at the events and encouraged others to attend. She also shared that she is looking forward to CicLAvia event on Sunday and encouraged everyone to participate. Commissioner Williams suggested/motioned that the Los Angeles County LGBTQ+ Commission be invited back to present to the Human Services Commission in a more formal manner. She proposed that Sunitha, along with some of her commissioners, could share more about the important work they are doing. Finally, Commissioner Williams expressed her strong desire for the Commission to be televised. She reflected on her previous experience as a commissioner, noting that the debate about televising meetings has persisted since then. She emphasized the importance of broadcasting the meetings, as it could help someone in need by providing them with information about available resources.

Commissioner Borelli- Expressed his appreciation for the quality of the meeting minutes discussed at the last meeting. He mentioned that a council member thanked him for bringing up the issue of budget. He emphasized the importance of ensuring the minutes are accurately reflecting what was said

during meetings. He expressed gratitude that their discussions were not only being documented but also noticed by higher-ups, which could lead to more funding in the future. Commissioner Borelli also mentioned his attempt to make a nomination for the Disability Advisory Board awards but respected the individual's kind declination. He noted that the nominations, focusing on the keyword "ability," were still open for two more days and encouraged others to submit their entries, especially for businesses. Lastly, he addressed the public speaker who had brought up the topic of faith and St. Victor's Church. He sees this as a great opportunity to reach many more people, acknowledging that there is often pride among residents, even in West Hollywood, who don't want others to know they are participating in affordable housing and food programs due to the stigma. He stressed that societal attitudes need to change and recognized the important role clergy could play in reaching more people. He thanked the speaker for raising the issue.

Commissioner Davis- Reminded the Commission and echoed on Commissioner Borelli point that he had brought up, about the budget. He mentioned that he had initially raised the issue and wants to have it agendaized. He expressed his desire to see it placed on the agenda so that it could be properly discussed. Commissioner Davis noted that there were some issues that needed to be addressed, particularly regarding how the budget would relate to Human Services and the financial impact. He emphasized that there were various concerns that people were worried about, making it important to have an agenda item dedicated to this discussion. He also thanked the staff for using a larger font size on the agenda packet, though he requested that it be made slightly smaller. Additionally, he congratulated Derek, acknowledging his long tenure and noting that the recognition was well-deserved.

Vice Chair Adolphson- Began by congratulating Derek, acknowledging that the recognition was well-deserved. She then addressed the public comment about St. Victor's Church, agreeing that many people go to places of faith because they feel comfortable, safe, and part of a community. She also emphasized that it is an excellent opportunity for spreading the word about the city's incredible services. She also agreed with Commissioner Davis's earlier comment about the importance of televising meetings and suggested that the budget should be agendaized for discussion. She formally requested that this item be added to the agenda. (All Commissioners were in consensus)

Chair Eyres- She requested when staff bring back the televised meeting item, she would like to see some optional dates for the televised meetings, noting that they don't necessarily have to align with the regular meeting dates. She congratulated Derek on his promotion, stating that the Human Services Division is in very good hands. She also thanked everyone who attended and provided public comments that evening. Chair Eyres expressed her appreciation regarding Catherine Eng's comment on outreach to church

leaders. She acknowledged that for many people, church has long been a place to seek help, including social services, so it was not surprising that congregation members and general community members were turning to churches when they didn't know where else to go. However, she raised a concern that church leaders need to be informed that some of the services provided by the City of West Hollywood are intended specifically for its residents. She pointed out that those who live outside the city, such as in Los Angeles or elsewhere, might need to seek assistance elsewhere. Chair Eyres welcomed any church leaders who wished to speak to the Commission about the needs they were encountering with residents of West Hollywood, as this would help the Commission better understand what is needed in the community. She concluded by thanking everyone.

8. ADJOURNMENT

The **Human Services Commission** adjourned at 7:50 pm, to its next Regular Meeting on **Tuesday, September 10, 2024**, at 6:00 pm at the Plummer Park Community Center, Rooms 5 & 6.

APPROVED BY A MOTION OF THE HUMAN SERVICES COMMISSION ON THIS 10th DAY OF SEPTEMBER 2024.

Signed by:

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KAREN EYRES,
CHAIRPERSON

ATTEST:
Signed by:

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STAFF LIAISON

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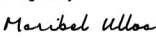
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Carbon Copy Events	Status	Timestamp
Witness Events	Signature	Timestamp
Notary Events	Signature	Timestamp
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Envelope Sent	Hashed/Encrypted	9/16/2024 4:55:30 PM
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