

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

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 13, 2025 – 7:00 P.M.

**WEST HOLLYWOOD CITY HALL
1ST FLOOR – COMMUNITY MEETING ROOM
8300 SANTA MONICA BOULEVARD, WEST HOLLYWOOD CA 90069**

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Whittington called the meeting to order at 7:03 pm

A. LAND ACKNOWLEDGMENT:

Read by Chair Whittington

“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.”

B. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Commissioner Sotile led the Pledge of Allegiance.

C. ROLL CALL

Present Commissioner Ron Cortes
Commissioner Chiedu Egbuniwe
Commissioner Shane Ivan Nash
Commissioner Michael Roberts
Commissioner Renee F. Sotile
Commission Chair Amber Whittington

Absent: Commissioner Shane Ivan Nash
Commission Vice Chair Alec White

Also Present: Commission Liaison Jennifer Del Toro
Recording Secretary Moya Márquez

D. APPROVAL OF THE FEBRUARY 13, 2025 AGENDA

The Commission was asked to approve the February 13, 2025 Meeting Agenda as posted.

ACTION: Approval of the February 13, 2025 Agenda as posted was **motioned by Commissioner Cortes, seconded by Commissioner Roberts, and**

approved unanimously.

E. APPROVAL OF THE DECEMBER 5, 2025 MINUTES

The Commission was asked to approve the December 5, 2025 Meeting Minutes.

ACTION: Approval of the December 5, 2025, meeting minutes was **motioned by Commissioner Egbuniwe, seconded by Commissioner Cortes, and approved unanimously.**

F. PUBLIC COMMENT

Ed Woodham, New York City, Founder of Art in Odd Places, which provides visual and performance art in public spaces in NYC, in a variety of sites. They are back in West Hollywood in recognition of their 40th anniversary and are bringing a festival this summer with the theme of "Voice" – featuring a variety of regional/international art elements.

Robin, New York City, Art in Odd Places, shared that there is an information session taking place on Saturday, Feb. 15 from 1-4 p.m. at the West Hollywood Library Community Meeting to learn more about the festival taking place this summer.

West Seegmiller, West Hollywood, shared that WeHo Pride was fun last year. He shared that he is a survivor advocate for sexual abuse. He discussed how last year West Hollywood supported platforming a well-known sexual predator who performed as a headliner at the festival. He encouraged the City to do due diligence to avoid this happening again.

Bamby Salcedo, Los Angeles, founder of the Translatin@ Coalition, made a specific request for this body to consider supporting the GARRAS event with the City serving as a major sponsor.

Carla Santiago, Los Angeles, supported Bamby's comments and talked about the success of the GARRAS event and how it can be a tentpole event for the City of West Hollywood.

Liza Ceballos, Los Angeles, TRANSLATIN@ coalition, supported Bamby's comments about the City sponsoring GARRAS at a higher level.

2. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

A. PRESENTATION FROM THE L-PROJECT ON LESBIAN AND QUEER WOMEN'S VISIBILITY WEEK

The LGBTQ+ Commission received a presentation from the L-Project on a proposed partnership and itinerary for the Commission's celebration of Lesbian and Queer Women's Visibility Week.

Chris Baldwin, L-Project, shared three events that L-Project would like to propose: a mini film festival, a mixer at a local café, and a day of art in the park.

Staff reported that the budget is unchanged from last year, at \$5k for the week.

The Commission also read public comments received via email about a proposed event to be organized by Nancy Mancini for the week, and had a discussion about what using two producers could look like.

The Commission decided to move forward with programming that includes one event hosted by the L-Project and another sports-related event led by Nancy Mancini. Staff will return next month with a follow-up item to finalize the programming, confirm event dates, allocate budgets for both events, and establish a subcommittee for the programming.

ACTION: Recommend that Council approve a City Co-sponsored Lesbian and Queer Women's Visibility Week featuring the L-Project (to host one event) and Nancy Mancini (to host a second, sport-related event) was **motioned by Commissioner Cortes, seconded by Commissioner Roberts and approved unanimously.**

B. RAINBOW KEY AWARDS – 2024 AWARDS CEREMONY

The LGBTQ+ Commission received an update from staff on the 2024 Rainbow Key Awards Ceremony including potential new dates.

The Commission selected Sunday, March 30, and Sunday, April 6, as the primary options for the event date, with Saturday, April 5, approved as an alternate date.

ACTION: was **motioned by Commissioner Roberts, seconded by Commissioner Cortes and approved unanimously.**

3. NEW BUSINESS

A. ITEM WEHO PRIDE 2025 PLANNING UPDATE

The Commission received an update on WeHo Pride 2025 planning, provided input on selection priorities for the Community Group Grant program, and appointed two Commission members and an alternate to participate on the evaluation panel for the Community Group Grant Program for WeHo Pride 2025.

Kerry McCormick, Event Services, led the presentation that provided information on WeHo Pride. She shared that the free Friday night at OutLoud Music Festival will continue this year, and that although the event is free, it will require an RSVP as capacity is limited to about 17,000.

She also shared that the weekend will consist of the both the OutLoud music festival and the community fair component. Applications to be an exhibitor were released in January. The application deadline is April 15th. The Women's Freedom Festival, Dyke March, and WeHo Pride Parade will also take place during the weekend.

Events staff asked for input on the Community Group Grant Program, which will give free community booth and/or grants to community members to exhibit or create programming in WeHo City for WeHo Pride. Applicants will be asked to propose events that are free and open to the public. Staff is working on comprehensive guidelines about the program and will announce a Q&A event for interested applicants before they apply.

Events staff asked the Commission to provide input on what groups (either identity or need-based) that they should focus on supporting through the Community Grant Program. They also asked the Commission to select two Commissioners and one alternate to serve on the evaluation panel for the Community Grant Programs.

The Commissioners provided the following recommendations:

- For Community group grants, prioritize funding for trans organizations, groups advocating for LGBTQ+ rights, HIV/AIDS support services, mental health services, legal services, and workshops focused on legal and citizenship/immigration issues, particularly for LGBTQ+ individuals.
- Pricing for the Outloud event is too expensive. Recommend providing a discount for West Hollywood residents.
- Relocate the Women's Freedom Festival to one of the main stages.
- Include trans artists and women artists as performers in the overall festival lineup.

Additionally, the Commission selected Commissioners Cortes and Whittington and Sotile (alternate) to serve on the evaluation panel for the Community Group Grant Program for WeHo Pride 2025.

ACTION: Selection of Commissioners Cortes and Whittington (with Commissioner Sotile as an alternate) to serve on the evaluation panel for the Community Group Grant Program for WeHo Pride 2025 was **motioned by**

Commissioner Whittington, seconded by Commissioner Roberts and approved unanimously.

B. SOCIAL SERVICES PROGRAM PRIORITIES 2025-2028 FUNDING PROCESS

The LGBTQ+ Commission discussed social services priorities for the 2025-2028 Human Services funding process.

The Commission identified the following key priorities:

What are the most significant challenges or unmet needs currently faced by the community your Commission represents?

- Access to HIV medications and drug assistance programs
- Availability of grief support and therapy
- Federal funding cuts, the impacts of executive orders, and politically motivated misinformation
- Homelessness and lack of available shelter beds
- Legal challenges that include immigration and asylum, employment discrimination, and protecting marriage and domestic partnership
- Navigating adoption services
- Support for companion animals and wildlife, particularly for unhoused community members with companion animals
- Training for staff of bars and nightclubs on safety and overdose prevention

What specific factors or obstacles make it difficult for your community to access existing social services in West Hollywood?

- Community members are not able to contact social services providers because they are not available or answering the phone
- Duplication of intake and registration processes among City partners creates a significant barrier
- False or misleading advertising on bus shelters and billboards i.e. shower availability for unhoused people
- Lack of knowledge of what services are available, noting that the City's communications need improvement
- Shelter beds are not inclusive of LGBTQ+ community and unhoused LGBTQ+ people feel unsafe

If additional resources were available, what new or expanded social services would you prioritize for West Hollywood?

- Centralized intake procedure for all City partners, where community members register for available services in one session

- Companion animal services, including veterinary care, pet food, cat litter, and other supplies
- Counselors and trained staff to handle intake and provide quick referrals
- Enhanced communication of mental health resources, modeled after the security ambassador program, to provide a clear and easily accessible point of contact
- Filtered water that is accessible to any member of the public
- Financial assistance for gaps in medical and dental care coverage
- Foster youth housing and support services
- Grief support and therapy
- Healthcare services, including mobile medical visits
- Mobile showers for unhoused community members
- Supplies for the Block-by-Block security ambassadors, such as blankets and water

(ACTION: A motion to extend the meeting to 9:10PM was **motioned by Commissioner Cortes, seconded by Commissioner Whittington and approved unanimously.**)

4. PUBLIC COMMENT

BAMBY SALCEDO, Los Angeles, expressed concerns that WeHo Pride has shifted into a music festival, which may not align with its original intent. She highlighted the issue of entry fees, noting that the City of San Francisco does not charge for entry to its Pride events. Salcedo also emphasized that the City's current social services funding is insufficient to meet the growing needs of the community, particularly in the current political climate and its impact on the livelihood of trans individuals. She pointed out that Los Angeles County recently announced a \$7 million investment in organizations supporting the trans community and encouraged the City to increase its investment in support of trans West Hollywood residents.

JOE GREEN, West Hollywood, a Commissioner on the Los Angeles County Commission on HIV, shared that he was re-elected unanimously today and is enthusiastic about continuing to serve in this role.

5. ITEMS FROM COMMISSIONERS

Commissioner Cortes congratulated the Commission on the progress made with the Lesbian and Queer Women's Visibility Week item, noting that it reflects a compromise aligned with the Commission's feedback. He also shared that he participated in the subcommittee meeting for the LGBTQ+ Suicide Memorial Project and requested to adjourn the meeting in memory of Charles Anteby.

Commissioner Egbuniwe highlighted the Youth Ambassadors for Queer History Exhibition Opening hosted by the One Institute, taking place this Saturday, February 15, from 3 PM to 5 PM. He also expressed his support for increased assistance to the TransLatina Coalition.

Commissioner Roberts acknowledged those still recovering from the recent fires and addressed the challenges posed by the current political climate, specifically opposing the removal of queer and transgender terminology from federal resources.

Commissioner Sotile expressed appreciation for Bamby Salcedo's comments during the meeting and shared her hope that the City can find ways to better support the GARRAS Fashion Show. She also requested to adjourn the meeting in memory of Norm, a community cat who recently passed away.

Chair Whittington congratulated Mayor Byers on her new role as Mayor and recognized Black History Month. She emphasized the Commission's responsibility to ensure that Pride remains as inclusive as possible.

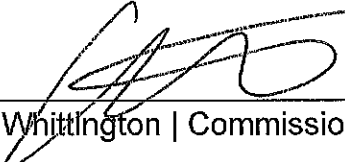
6. ITEMS FROM STAFF

Jennifer Del Toro, Staff Liaison, shared that next month the Commission will receive a legislative update and staff will share relevant bills the City is tracking. As it relates to the current political climate, the City is also working on hosting a Community Group Town Hall, so community partners will have an opportunity to discuss how federal actions affect our community and the resources available to community members. Staff also shared general information on how the City supports the GARRAS event in alignment with the City's Co-Sponsorship Policy at the \$10,000 level.

7. ADJOURNMENT

The LGBTQ+ Commission adjourned in memory of Charles Anteby and Norm the cat at 9:20pm to its regularly scheduled meeting on Thursday, March 13, 2025, at 7:00 p.m. to be held in West Hollywood City Hall - 1st Floor Community Meeting Room at 8300 Santa Monica Boulevard, West Hollywood, CA 90069.

APPROVED BY A MOTION OF THE LGBTQ+ COMMISSION ON THIS 13th DAY OF March 2025.


Amber Whittington | Commission Chair


Moya Márquez | Recording Secretary