

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

THURSDAY, JULY 10, 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 7:00 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 White led the Pledge of Allegiance.

C. ROLL CALL

Present Commissioner Ron Cortes
Commissioner Chiedu Egbuniwe
Commissioner Steve Penafiel
Commissioner Michael Roberts
Commissioner Renee F. Sotile
Commission Chair Amber Whittington
Commission Vice Chair Alec White

Absent:

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

D. APPROVAL OF THE JULY 10, 2025 AGENDA

The Commission was asked to approve the July 10, 2025 Meeting Agenda as posted.

ACTION: Approval of the July 10, 2025 Agenda as posted was **motioned by Commissioner Egbuniwe, seconded by Commissioner Sotile, and**

approved unanimously.

E. APPROVAL OF THE JUNE 12, 2025 MINUTES

The Commission was asked to approve the June 12, 2025 Meeting Minutes.

ACTION: Approval of the June 12, 2025, meeting minutes was **motioned by Commissioner Roberts, seconded by Commissioner Cortes, and approved unanimously.**

F. PUBLIC COMMENT

None.

2. CONSENT CALENDAR

None.

3. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

None.

4. NEW BUSINESS

A. ELECTION OF CHAIR AND VICE-CHAIR

The Commission nominated and elected a new Chair and Vice Chair.

Renee Sotile was elected as Vice Chair and Alec White was elected as Chair

ACTION: Renee Sotile was elected as Vice Chair, and Alec White was elected as Chair.

B. PRESERVING LGBTQ+ HISTORY

The LGBTQ+ Commission received information related to the City's efforts for the preservation and promotion of LGBTQ+ history in West Hollywood.

The Commission received a presentation from Rebecca Ehemann, Arts Manager, about the AIDS Memorial coming to West Hollywood Park, and the history component of the AIDS Memorial. She also shared information about the WeHo Arts Program.

They also received a presentation from Joshua Schare, Director of Communications, on the StoryCorps team coming to West Hollywood in November to collect information and oral histories to help preserve additional stories of West Hollywood.

Erin Taylor, Manager of Media and Marketing, shared information on City photography and videography that is available online as a resource for the Community.

Steve Peñafiel asked about the LGBTQ+ history tour, and shared a suggestion to partner with Visit West Hollywood and tour buses to highlight the history of West Hollywood.

Amber Whittington shared a suggestion to collaborate with YouTubers or influencers to promote the City's cultural history.

Renee Sotile asked about the City's archive space and how the public can contribute. Rebecca Ehemann shared that there isn't storage space or an archivist yet accept new information.

Steve Peñafiel asked if there was a location for tree memorial plaques.

Laura Biery shared that information related to marketing and promotional campaigns to promote businesses in the Rainbow District, will be discussed further at the Commission's August meeting.

ACTIONS: None.

C. BI-VISIBILITY WEEK

The LGBTQ+ Commission received information related to the City's programming for Bi-Visibility Week.

Jennifer Del Toro, Staff Liaison, shared the information about the City's Bi+ Visibility Week programming, which this year will be produced by ReWrite the BiLine. The organization has helped the City draft new City policy to make sure we don't exclude non-nuclear families and expanding our domestic partnership policy to make sure the City accommodates all family types.

DAVID TIKTIN, Los Angeles, spoke about supporting the event in past years.

STEPHANIE CIFUENTES, Los Angeles, shared information about the history of the Bi+ Pride event that took place in West Hollywood in 2019. She shared that they feel disappointed about having this one event in comparison to the events in 2019.

Jennifer Del Toro, shared that the City, since 2022, has a Co-Sponsorship policy that allows the City to partner with a leading community group. ReWrite the BiLine was the only organization that submitted a Co-Sponsorship application to produce an event for Bi+ Visibility Week.

Jennifer Del Toro also shared that the City could create a proclamation for Bi+ Visibility Week, and that staff could connect with AmBi to create a Co-Sponsored event in the future, should they wish to proceed with another celebratory event at some other point in the year.

ACTION: None.

D. RAINBOW KEY AWARDS - TIMELINE FOR OPENING OF NOMINATION PERIOD AND AWARDS CEREMONY

The LGBTQ+ Commission discussed and established a timeline for the opening of the nomination period and the scheduling of the Rainbow Key Awards ceremony.

ACTION: Approval of Scenario B was **motioned by Commissioner Whittington, seconded by Commissioner Egbuniwe and approved unanimously.**

5. PUBLIC COMMENT

None.

6. ITEMS FROM COMMISSIONERS

Commissioner Cortes congratulated incoming Vice Chair Sotile and Chair White. He shared information about upcoming poetry arts events from former City Poet Laureate Brian Sonia-Wallace.

Commissioner Egbuniwe thanked his fellow Commissioners, staff and City Council. He asked to adjourn in memory of Jewel Thais-Williams. He also congratulated incoming Vice Chair Sotile and Chair White.

Commissioner Peñafiel congratulated incoming Vice Chair Sotile and Chair White. He talked about how this is a time for the community to come together.

Commissioner Roberts congratulated incoming Vice Chair Sotile and Chair White. He shared he's proud of the City for joining the lawsuit against the recent immigration enforcement raids across Los Angeles County.

Commissioner Sotile congratulated incoming Chair White for being elected, but also for completing this MBA. She asked to adjourn in memory of Jewel Thais-Williams and also for Baby Boy, a community cat. She shared she attended the Women's Advisory Board meeting and shared information related to upcoming events and programs. She also shared that the Human Services Commission will be recommending new contracts for social services at an upcoming meeting.

Vice Chair White shared he attended the No Kings Rally, and stopped by the City's Juneteenth event, and participated in a fundraising race. He also thanked outgoing Chair Whittington and shared that he is excited to be elected as Chair and continue to work with the Commission.

Chair Whittington congratulated incoming Vice Chair Sotile and Chair White.

She also thanked the Commission for letting her serve. She also shared that she would like to adjourn in memory of Jewel Thais-Williams.

7. ITEMS FROM STAFF

Jennifer Del Toro, Staff Liaison, shared that tomorrow at 10AM the City and the Chamber will provide a special meeting of information for employers and employees on rights in regards to immigration enforcement and resources available. She also shared that at next month's meeting, the Commission will receive updates from staff in the City's Community Safety and Economic Development Departments

8. ADJOURNMENT

The LGBTQ+ Commission adjourned in memory of Jewel Thais-Williams and the community cat Baby Boy at 8:34pm to its regularly scheduled meeting on Thursday, August 14, 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 14TH DAY OF AUGUST 2025.


Alec White | Commission Chair

Moya Márquez | Recording Secretary