

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

**THURSDAY, JUNE 12, 2025 – 7:00 P.M.**

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

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

Vice Chair White called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm

**A. LAND ACKNOWLEDGMENT:**

Read by Vice Chair White

*"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 Cortes led the Pledge of Allegiance.

**C. ROLL CALL**

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

**Absent:** Commissioner Michael Roberts

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

**D. APPROVAL OF THE JUNE 12, 2025 MEETING AGENDA**

Staff shared that there were typos in the meeting agenda regarding the date for this meeting and the date of the next meeting. The Commission was asked to approve the June 12, 2025 Meeting Agenda as amended.

**ACTION:** Approval of the June 12, 2025 Agenda as posted was **motioned by Commissioner White, seconded by Commissioner Cortes, and approved**

**unanimously.**

**E. APPROVAL OF THE MAY 8, 2025 MINUTES**

The Commission was asked to approve the May 8, 2025 Meeting Minutes.

Recording Secretary Márquez shared that they had spoken with Boardmember Sotile about modifying the minutes as sent with an edit to include Commissioner Sotile's proposal about re-naming Lesbian and Queer Women's Visibility Week.

**ACTION:** Approval of the May 8, 2025, meeting minutes as amended motioned by Commissioner Cortes, seconded by Commissioner Sotile, and approved unanimously.

**F. PUBLIC COMMENT**

DAVID TIKTIN, WEST HOLLYWOOD, founding member of AmBi+, spoke about AmBi+ being excited to participate in this year's Bi+ pride event.

STEPHANIE CIFUENTES, LOS ANGELES, representative of bi+ organizations, AmBi+ and the LA Bi+ Task Force, talked about their history in participation of Bi+ pride events in the City and shared excitement about this year's Bi+ pride event in the City.

JOE GREEN, WEST HOLLYWOOD, liaison from the Disability Advisory Board, spoke about the upcoming health and wellness event on October 9.

KAREN EYRES, WEST HOLLYWOOD, liaison from the Human Services Commission, shared that she and fellow Commissioner Jimmy Palmieri were disappointed in the reduced footprint of the Vibe sober space in West Hollywood Pride this year.

**2. UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

**A. LIAISON APPOINTMENTS**

The LGBTQ+ Commission received a schedule of the City's Advisory Board and Commission meetings and discussed which bodies the Commission is interested in appointing liaisons to.

Chair Amber Whittington arrived at 7:06PM.

Staff Liaison Del Toro commented on the role of a Commissioner liaison and asked if the Commission was interested in becoming a liaison to another Board.

Commissioner Cortes shared his experience being the liaison to the Arts and Cultural Affairs Commission.

Commissioner White shared his interest in being liaison to the Business License Commission.

Commissioner Egbuniwe shared his interest in being liaison to the Planning Commission.

Commissioner Cortes shared his interest in being liaison to the Arts and Cultural Affairs Commission as well as the alternate to the Public Facilities Commission.

Chair Whittington shared her interest in being liaison to the Women's Advisory Board and the Social Justice Advisory Board.

Commissioner Penafiel shared his interest in being liaison to the Public Facilities, Recreation and Infrastructure Commission as well as the Historic Preservation Commission.

Commissioner Sotile shared her interest in being liaison to the Human Services Commission.

Commissioner Egbuniwe shared his interest in being liaison to the Transgender Advisory Board.

**ACTION:** Approval of the list of liaisons above was **motioned by Commissioner White, seconded by Commissioner Whittington and approved unanimously.**

### **3. NEW BUSINESS**

#### **A. PRESERVING LGBTQ+ HISTORY**

The Commission received a presentation about the WeHo Stories Project, a community project to document and digitally archive West Hollywood's oral history and supporting materials.

Barbara Grover shared a report on the WeHo Stories Project, which collected oral history interviews from community leaders and activists. Originally a plan from then-Councilmember Lindsey Horvath, the WeHo Stories Project's book is currently waiting to be published soon. The main focus of the plan is to capture narratives and stories.

Mrs. Grover shared that she's still collecting photos for this project specifically of West Hollywood. She reported that she looked in many archives, including ONE Archives, and didn't find many photos to help. She also shared that the City has hired an archivist in the past.

Staff Liaison Del Toro shared that next month, the Commission will hear from City Staff about the process of archiving.

Mrs. Grover shared that the book isn't intended to be a factual narrative – but rather a collection of people's stories and narratives on the City's early history, sometimes with contradictory stories, but often about how different people work together.

**ACTION:** None. Received and filed.

## **B. REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF RAINBOW KEY AWARD NOMINATION FORMS**

The Commission reviewed and edited language for the 2025 nomination forms for the Rainbow Key Awards, including the newly added Melissa Etheridge Award, and the Audre Lorde Award, and discussed a timeline for both the opening of the nomination forms and the awards ceremony.

The Commission reviewed the nomination forms and made changes as necessary. They agreed to discuss a timeline for the next Ceremony at the July meeting.

**ACTIONS:** Approved changes to the nomination forms was **motioned by Commissioner White, seconded by Commissioner Roberts and approved unanimously.**

## **4. PUBLIC COMMENT**

None.

## **5. ITEMS FROM COMMISSIONERS**

Commissioner Cortes congratulated Commissioner Sotile in graduating the WeHo Civic Leadership Academy. He shared how pleased he was with the Friday opening of the WeHo Pride. Adjourned in memory of Edmund White, an LGBTQ+ novelist, most known for *Charlotte's Web*, but also known for his LGBTQ+ activism.

Commissioner Egbuniwe will be attending the Huntington Library's LGBTQ+ Party. He asked to adjourn in memory of Edmond Egbuniwe, his father, who passed on May 31<sup>st</sup>.

**ACTION:** Motion to extend the meeting until 9:10PM was **motioned by Commissioner White, seconded by Commissioner Roberts and approved unanimously.**

Commissioner Penafiel talked about the bi+ community, and their underrepresentation within the LGBTQ+ history. He also wanted to highlight the upcoming HIV testing day, June 27, which is also the eve of the Stonewall Riots.

He also shared about ideas for beautification of the Matthew Shepard triangle.

Commissioner Sotile shared about her experience at WeHo Pride. She also shared about recent cats she's rescued. She also wished to adjourn in memory of Edmon Egbuniwe, and Nicole Simpson and Ron Goldman, given the anniversary of their deaths.

Vice Chair White offered his condolences to Commissioner Egbuniwe. He shared information about the Children's Hospital of LA losing their transgender health care program. He also shared his excitement with participating at WeHo Pride.

Chair Whittington thanked everyone for participating in WeHo Pride, and for contributing their knowledge to the Commission. She also asked to adjourn in memory of Edmond Egbuniwe.

#### **6. ITEMS FROM STAFF**

Jennifer Del Toro, Staff Liaison, shared that the organization Rewrite the BiLine submitted a co-sponsorship request to host an event during Bi-Visibility Week in September. Staff also noted that this group recently advocated for an amendment to the City's Non-Discrimination Ordinance to ensure protections for non-traditional family structures. This advocacy led to an item initiated by the Mayor, which was approved by the City Council for further evaluation and possible recommendations. Staff indicated that an item will be presented to the Commission with additional details about this event.

#### **7. ADJOURNMENT**

The LGBTQ+ Commission adjourned in memory of Edmond Egbuniwe, Edmund White, Nicole Simpson, Ron Goldman at 9:15pm to its regularly scheduled meeting on Thursday, July 10, 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 10th DAY OF JULY 2025.

  
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Amber Whittington | Commission Chair

  
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Moya Márquez | Recording Secretary