

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

**THURSDAY, MARCH 12, 2026 – 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**

Chair White called the meeting to order at 7:01 pm

**A. LAND ACKNOWLEDGMENT:**

Read by Chair Egbuniwe

*"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 Roberts led the Pledge of Allegiance.

**C. ROLL CALL**

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

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

**D. APPROVAL OF THE MARCH 12, 2026 AGENDA**

The Commission was asked to approve the March 12, 2026 Meeting Agenda with a change to move item 2.A. to be the last item on the agenda, after 3.D.

**ACTION:** Approval of the March 12, 2026 Agenda as amended was **motioned by Commissioner Cortes, seconded by Commissioner Sotile, and approved unanimously.**

**E. APPROVAL OF THE FEBRUARY 12, 2026 MINUTES**

The Commission was asked to approve the February 12, 2026 Meeting Minutes.

**ACTION:** Approval of the February 12, 2026, meeting minutes was **motioned by Commissioner Egbuniwe, seconded by Commissioner Sotile, and approved unanimously.**

**F. PUBLIC COMMENT**

VICTOR OMELCZENKO, WEST HOLLYWOOD, spoke about the importance of saving LGBTQ Historic sites. He encouraged the Commissioners as individuals and the Commission as a whole to speak out to save the Brick Gym.

**2. UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

**A. RAINBOW KEY AWARDS – 2025 AWARDEES CEREMONY**

*THIS ITEM WAS HEARD AFTER ITEM 3.D.*

The LGBTQ+ Commission received an update from staff and the subcommittee and discussed the 2025 Awardees Ceremony, including program components.

The Subcommittee gave a report back on the planning of the event, and reported on the status of the video introductions. Members Cortes, Peñafiel, and Whittington agreed to help continue making the videos, and the Commission agreed by consensus to have hybrid video/no-video ceremony if not all videos were completed by the ceremony date.

Staff asked the Commission for recommendations on what organizations to send invites to, and performers for the event. The Commission requested an invitation to the City's Poet Laureate.

Staff asked the Commission to commit to presenting an award to one awardee with about a 30-second introduction following the video. The Commission agreed on the following:

Cake and Art will be presented by Commissioner White  
Fan Girl Café will be presented by Commissioner Roberts  
Abby Hall will be presented by Commissioner Egbuniwe  
Tristan Shukraft will be presented by Commissioner Peñafiel  
Trudging Buddies will be presented by Commissioner Cortes  
Angela Briskele will be presented by Commissioner Sotile  
Jaymes Black will be presented by Commissioner Whittington

**ACTION:**

1) Motion to extend meeting time to 9:20 was **motioned by Commissioner Whittington, seconded by Commissioner Cortes and approved unanimously.**

2) Motion to extend meeting time to 9:35 was **motioned by Commissioner White, seconded by Commissioner Cortes and approved unanimously.**

### **3. NEW BUSINESS**

#### **A. UCLA HEALTH BLOOD DRIVE AND PROMOTION OF UPDATED DONOR ELIGIBILITY GUIDELINES**

The LGBTQ+ Commission received a presentation from UCLA Health regarding an upcoming Blood Drive taking place on Friday, April 3, 2026 in West Hollywood and received information about updated donor eligibility guidelines.

Terri Hill, Community Liaison for UCLA Health, spoke about the importance of being a blood donor, and shared that there are new donor eligibility guidelines that no longer impose abstinence restrictions on gay men who wish to donate blood.

The Commission asked if there are any restrictions on donating blood for HIV+ individuals. The UCLA staff reported that HIV+ individuals, as well as those on PrEP or PEP are not eligible to donate.

**ACTION:** Received and filed presentation.

#### **B. HARM REDUCTION VENDING MACHINES**

The LGBTQ+ Commission received an update from staff on harm-reduction vending machines. The Commission discussed the item, including the possible appointment of a Commissioner to provide remarks at an upcoming City Council meeting.

Jennifer Del Toro, Liaison to the Commission, shared that the item in question is being reviewed by the City Council. The item will be considered at the next Council Meeting and looks at securing a location for harm reduction vending machines. She suggested to the Commission to speak at the upcoming City Council meeting to provide feedback.

VICTOR OMELCZENKO, shared information on similar programs in Las Vegas and Palm Springs. He recommended selecting either the library parking garage, or restrooms in West Hollywood Park as a location for the vending machines.

Melissa Crowder, City Clerk, shared updates on the item and explained that the City Council is reviewing the item at the next meeting and expressed that the Commissioners could speak as individuals. The Commission expressed that they would like to provide public comment as a body.

Some Commissioners shared that their concerns were with the original location, and that the space wouldn't be accessible 24/7 if it was at a private business.

Other Commissioners shared that locating it in a bar could be beneficial to tourists or out-of-towners.

Commissioner Cortes motioned that the Commission should make a public comment to recommend that the initial location be placed in a public location that is easily accessible to the entire LGBTQ+ population, as well as the immigrant and unhoused community. Commissioner Whittington was selected to attend the meeting and give public comment in person, and Commissioner Cortes was selected to email the public comment to Council.

**ACTION:** Motion for Commissioner Whittington to deliver public comment in-person and for Commission Cortes to deliver public comment via email was **motioned by Commissioner Cortes, seconded by Commissioner Sotile and approved unanimously.**

#### **C. REVIEW OF THE LGBTQ+ COMMISSION'S PURVIEW**

The LGBTQ+ Commission received a presentation from the City Clerk's Office on the Commission's purview.

Melissa Crowder, City Clerk, shared information on the Commission's purview and core duties. She explained that staff has been discussing how to best clarify some of the more ambiguous areas of the Commission's core duties.

**ACTION:** None. Receive and filed.

#### **D. LEGISLATIVE UPDATE FOR YEAR 2 OF THE 2025-2026 LEGISLATIVE SESSION OF THE CALIFORNIA LEGISLATURE.**

The LGBTQ+ Commission received a legislative update from the City's Governmental Affairs Liaison on LGBTQ+-related legislation introduced in Year 2 of the 2025-2026 legislative session of the California Legislature.

Hernan Molina, the City's Governmental Affairs Liaison spoke about how the City tracks State legislation. He shared that there are over 4,000 bills, of which about 3,000 are assembly bills and about 1,000 are state senate. He shared a report of some bills that the City is tracking and specifically called out bills that were particularly harmful to the trans community. He shared that the City

considers supporting transgender rights and healthcare as a priority. He shared information on how the legislative process works.

VICTOR OMELCZENKO, WEST HOLLYWOOD, thanked Hernan for his service. He also suggested that the Commission form a legislative subcommittee.

**ACTION:** Motion to form a Legislative Subcommittee composed of Commissioners Egbuniwe, Penafiel, and Whittington, was **motioned by Commissioner White, seconded by Commissioner Sotile and approved unanimously.**

#### 4. PUBLIC COMMENT

KYLE BRAZEAL, WEST HOLLYWOOD, thanked the commission for their work and shared his opinion on the Harm Reduction vending machine item.

STEPHEN POST, WEST HOLLWOOD, provided updates on the Public Safety Commission. He encouraged the Commission to make public comment on the Flock Cameras item that is on the upcoming City Council agenda.

#### 5. ITEMS FROM COMMISSIONERS

Commissioner Ron Cortes shared information on the WeHo Pride Community event for the sober and elder community.

Commissioner Chiedu Egbuniwe adjourned in memory of Rev. Jesse Jackson and shared he has profound respect for everyone on the Commission.

Commissioner Steve Peñafiel shared information on the WeHo Pride Community event for the sober and elder community.

Commissioner Michael Roberts thanked everyone for the discussion.

Commissioner Amber Whittington thanked everyone for the discussion.

Commission Vice Chair Renee F. Sotile acknowledged Women's History Month and appreciated all the public commenters. She reported on a public safety incident and expressed support for public cameras. She asked to adjourn in memory of Javier "Cher" Ozuna.

Commission Chair Alec White shared events he attended.

#### 6. ITEMS FROM STAFF

None.

#### 7. ADJOURNMENT

The LGBTQ+ Commission adjourned in memory of Revered Jesse Jackson and Javier "Cher" Ozuna at 9:41 pm to its regularly scheduled meeting on Thursday, April 9, 2026, 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 9th DAY OF April 2026.



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Alec White | Commission Chair



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Moya Márquez | Recording Secretary