



CITY OF BEVERLY HILLS
Room 280A
455 North Rexford Drive
Beverly Hills, CA 90210
Telephonic / Video Conference Meeting

**HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES**

June 17, 2021
9:00 a.m.

MEETING CALLED TO ORDER

Date/Time: June 17, 2021 / 9:01 a.m.

Chair Blumenfeld read the Civility Statement.

ROLL CALL

Commissioners Present: Freeman, Sharp, Saleh, Vice Chair Popovich Levyn, Chair Blumenfeld

Commissioners Absent: None

Staff Present: Jenny Rogers, James R. Latta, Rachel L. Evans, Enisha Clark, Linda Kyriazi

COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE AUDIENCE

Members of the public may address the Commission regarding any items not on the Agenda that are within the subject matter jurisdiction of the Commission. By State law, the Commission may not discuss or vote on items not on the Agenda.

None

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

With the concurrence of the Commission, the Chair may choose to amend the order of the items on the agenda. Chair Blumenfeld approved the agenda as presented.

CONSENT CALENDAR

1. Consideration of the Minutes of the Special Meeting of May 20, 2021

MOTION by Sharp, SECONDED by Freeman to approve the Meeting Minutes with noted correction. (5/0)

AYES: Freeman, Sharp, Saleh, Vice Chair Popovich Levyn, Chair Blumenfeld

NOES: None

ABSENT: None

ABSTAIN: None

CARRIED

REPORTS FROM PRIORITY AGENCIES

Beverly Hills Board of Education member, Dr. Amanda Stern, provided an update on the following:

- Due to school graduations, a representative was unable to attend

Beverly Hills Police Department

Acting Captain Max Subin, updated the Commission on the following:

- Officers on bicycles, in addition to patrol cars, are providing Homeless Outreach and offering services as the homeless crisis is affecting the community.

PRESENTATIONS

2. FY 20-21 CAGF Update: Westside Food Bank

Bruce Rankin, Chief Executive Officer, reviewed with the Commission how the Westside Food Bank combats food insecurity in both the local Beverly Hills community and the Los Angeles Westside. This Community Assistant Grant Fund (CAGF) funding purchases bulk food that is stored in their Westside warehouse and distributed as needed.

CONTINUED BUSINESS

3. FY 2021-22 Community Assistant Grant Fund (CAGF)

Rachel Evans, Clinical Program Coordinator, thanked the Commission for their hard work on this process and updated the Commission on the 2021 – 2022 Community Assistant Grant Fund status:

- At the June 1, 2021 City Council Formal meeting, Council approved all funding recommendations provided by the joint ad hoc committees in addition to additional funding to expand services which includes: Westside Food Bank, Step-up On Second, Jewish Family Service and the Miracle Project.
- Three new partner organizations are: Our House Grief Support Center, Collins & Katz Family YMCA and Safe Parking LA.
- Step Up On Second received additional monies to expand their hours to cover the weekend with additional staffing.
- Jewish Family Service is now funded for an additional social worker.
- Commissioner Saleh thanked staff for their hard work in addition to first time participant Commissioner Sharp and informed the Commission that City Council members also praised the ad hoc committee.
- Vice Chair Popovich Levyn additionally thanked Commissioners Saleh and Sharp.
- Chair Blumenfeld concurred with the Commissions sentiments to Commissioners Saleh and Sharp for accepting this ad hoc liaison assignment.

4. Beverly Hills Homeless Initiative

Enisha Clark, Human Services Specialist, provided an update on the status of the Beverly Hills Homeless Initiative:

- Human Services staff reached out to Los Angeles Councilmember Paul Koretz from Council District 5 to work collaboratively to address the growing homelessness issue along the City's border along Burton Way due to multiple complaints about this median. CD5 organized a community Public Safety Walk where CD5 constituents, members of law enforcement (LAPD & BHPD), representatives from his office all participated including Human Services staff.

- Strengthening partnerships with neighboring cities will allow for a more coordinated homelessness response effort when providing future referrals and resources.
- We encourage the community to continue to contact the BHOT with any issues and concerns.
- At the June 1, 2021 City Council Formal Meeting, City Council voted to support Community Assistance Grant Fund (CAGF) recommendations to expand homeless services offerings in addition to supporting the funding of a Department of Mental Health contracted clinician who can assist local law enforcement.

NEW BUSINESS

5. Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Awareness Initiative

Enisha Clark, Human Services Specialist, provided an update on the Diversity Equity & Inclusion Awareness Initiative:

- In response to the increase in hate crimes nationwide, the Commission agreed to release an anti-hate statement which has been posted on the City's website and provides information regarding the Los Angeles County Anti-Hate Hotline which can be reached by dialing 2-1-1. The HRC encouraged the community that if they see any instances of hate to report it not only to local police but also to 2-1-1 for tracking. The statement was additionally distributed to the Beverly Hills newspapers.
- Staff thanked the Commission for their contribution to the strong statement that denounces hate to provide a safe community for all.
- Staff suggested demonstrating the HRC's commitment to promoting cultural awareness by inviting community groups working with diverse populations to provide brief educational presentations during future Commission Meetings. A calendar of monthly cultural awareness events was provided for planning purposes. Commissioner Freeman suggested to rather host a series of virtual programming with support from library staff.
- Chair Blumenfeld thanked Commissioner Freeman for her contribution of the initial draft of the anti-hate statement and suggested more can be done.
- Vice Chair Popovich Levyn suggested to keep the positive conversations open with a tab on the agenda.
- Commissioner Freeman inquired if there was a designated staff person to work on Diversity Equity and Inclusion programming.
- Community Services Director, Jenny Rogers, informed the Commission that the City has a new Committee, which includes staff from various departments, called the DBI (Diversity Belonging and Inclusion). They are to receive recommendations from staff on how we can be a more inclusive work place. Staff informed the Commission that they are here to support their efforts in the project.
- The Beverly Hills Public Library (BHPL) was suggested to continue hosting events such as the Be The Change series, and adding on public lectures and forums. Commissioner Freeman added to include a section of books, audio-books and movies on this subject. The City's Library website has a section entitled, Amplifying Diverse Voices, that includes recommended digital offerings on this subject. Commissioner Saleh thanked the City's Library for always working closely and partnering with the Commission.
- Chair Blumenfeld suggested including the future Commissioners, who will be sworn in at the August Commission meeting, to be included in the sub-committee.
- Staff will provide a presentation at the August Commission meeting for the new Commissioners.

6. Public Service Employee Recognition

At the May 20, 2021 meeting, the Commissioners agreed to further discuss the possibility of the Human Relations Commission recognizing public service workers. Commissioner Sharp presented her idea of how the Commission could activate kindness on a day-to-day basis and recognize people for extraordinary kindness. After a discussion, the following motion was made:

MOTION by Sharp, SECONDED by Saleh, move to reinstate the Kindness Tab that has been used in the past. (4/1)

AYES: Freeman, Sharp, Saleh, Vice Chair Popovich Levy
NOES: Chair Blumenfeld
ABSENT: None
ABSTAIN: None
PASSED

7. Inter-Commission Collaboration

Next-Gen, Arts and Culture and Human Relations: Vision of the Future Proposal
Enisha Clark, Human Services Specialist, provided an update on the Inter-Commission collaboration: Embrace & Celebrate Culture Initiatives:

- Jenny Rogers, Director of Community Services, provided an update on the events for The Summer of Art which includes the Activation of Storefronts (public spaces) and Sing For Hope pianos. These projects, Embrace and Celebrate Culture, are shared with the Arts & Cultural Commission and the Beverly Hills Next Group.
- June 21, 2021 is Make Music Day which is sponsored by the Community Services Department and their Commissions. It's an international celebration of music and anyone can become a music maker.
- Sing for Hope is a project with the combined Commissions and also includes the Wallis Annenberg Center for the Performing Arts, and the non-profit Sing For Hope. The event begins on August 5, 2021.
- Commissioners Saleh and Freeman updated the Commission on the activation of storefronts where diverse works are displayed throughout the City. The first installation is located the 445 N. Canon space next to Wally's Beverly Hills. It's a neon display and the lights are turned on from 10pm to midnight.
- Commissioner Saleh announced that June is Pride Month and displayed photos of the City's projection on City Hall.

STATUS REPORTS

8. Beverly Hills Ambassador Program

Johnthon Hunter, Operations Manager, reviewed the May statistics, with the Commission which included the Beverly Cañon Gardens Park detail.

- Due to panhandling being reporting in Beverly Canon Garden Park, Ambassadors have been reassigned to patrol that garden in addition to the parking structure.
- Reports of additional panhandling and smoking violations on Cañon Drive due to the restaurants being open with outside dining. Ambassadors have been making contact with the panhandlers advising them of the Ordinances and offering services. The police are contacted if the panhandlers do not comply.

- Soft enforcement continues in the area. Staff has made contact with the managers of the businesses making them aware of the Commission's concerns. Code Enforcement has been made aware of the activity.
- The staff's response time has been within 10 minutes. If an Ambassador can't respond within that time frame, a call is made to the business or individual with an update.

COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE COMMISSION

9. Chair Report

- a) Mayor's Cabinet Meeting
 - Meeting Minutes
 - Commissioners are to review
- b) Review Commission Meeting dates
 - All agreed that the July 2021 meeting will be cancelled
- c) Good and Welfare
 - Vice Chair Popovich Levin gave a shout-out to the Fire Department for having to deal with the heat and potential fires.
 - Vice Chair Popovich Levyn and Commissioner Saleh's end of term
The Commissioners, along with staff, thanked Vice Chair Popovich Levyn and Commissioner Saleh for their service to the Commission, wished them well and know they'll continue their service to the City in other ways.
 - Retirement of James R. Latta
The Commissioners, along with staff, thanked Jim Latta for his service to the City and wished him enjoyment during his retirement.

COMMUNICATIONS FROM STAFF

10. Administrator's Report

James R. Latta, Human Services Administrator, reviewed James R. Latta, Human Services Administrator, updated the Commission on the following:

- Farewells and Updates
 - o Vice Chair Karen Popovich Levyn, Term: 05/15/14 - 06/30/21
 - o Commissioner Annette Saleh, Term: 04/08/15 – 06/30/21
 - o Human Services Administrator James R. Latta, Retired: 06/30/21
 - o Rachel Evans – Interim Human Services Administrator
 - o Enisha Clark – Interim Clinical Program Coordinator

11. Overview of Current and Pending Agenda Items

- The Embrace Civility Award for 2021 will be announced by the Chair at the July Mayor's Cabinet meeting. The deadline for submission will be September 6, 2021.
- The Commission will discuss the promotional details at the August Commission meeting.

ADJOURNMENT

June 17, 2021 at 12:50 p.m.

Passed and Approved this 19th day of August, 2021



Ori Blumenfeld, Chair