



CITY OF
LOS ANGELES
CALIFORNIA



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WEST HILLS NEIGHBORHOOD COUNCIL

JOINT BOARD AND GOVERNMENT COMMITTEE ONLINE AND TELEPHONIC MEETING AGENDA MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 20, 2021 at 7:30 PM

This meeting of the West Hills Neighborhood Council Government Relations Committee will be conducted online via Zoom Webinar and telephonically. All are invited to attend and participate.

To attend online via Zoom Webinar, click or paste the following link into your browser: <https://zoom.us/j/97175160378>

To call in by phone, dial (669) 900-6833, then punch in this Webinar code when prompted: **971 7516 0378**, then #

This meeting is open to the public. Comments on matters not on the agenda will be heard during the Public Comment period. Those who wish to speak on an agenda item will be heard when the item is considered.

- Call to Order
- Review minutes from August, 2021.
- Comments from the Co-Chairs
- Public Comment

OLD BUSINESS

- Discussion and Possible Action on the CIS regarding City Council File 20-0780, the hiring and utilization of MEU-SMART Teams to go out on police calls when there is a mental health problem.
- Discussion and Possible Action on the CIS regarding City Council File 21-0002-S156, RESOLUTION relative to establishing the City's position regarding the 2021-22 Federal Program for expansion of Behavior Health Benefits under Medicare/Medical.
- Discussion and Possible Action on the revision of wording of the language for the Code of Conduct.
- Discussion and Possible Action on a Zoom Event to meet with Street Services Department to discuss what is happening in their services.
- Adjournment

Public Input: The public is requested to fill out a Speaker Card to address the Board on any agenda item before the Board takes an action on an item. Comments from the public on agenda items will be heard only when the respective item is being considered. Comments from the public on other matters not appearing on the agenda that are within the Board's jurisdiction will be heard during the General Public Comment period. Please note that under the Brown Act, the Board is prevented from acting on a matter that you bring to its attention during the General Public Comment period; however, an issue raised by a member of the public may become the subject of a future committee meeting. Public comment is limited to two minutes per speaker, unless adjusted by the presiding officer of the committee.

Public Posting Of Agendas: WHNC agendas are posted for public review at Shadow Ranch Park, 22633 Vanowen St., West Hills, CA 91307 or at our website, www.westhillsnc.org. You can also receive our agendas via email by subscribing to the City of Los Angeles Early Notification System at www.lacity.org/government/Subscriptions/NeighborhoodCouncils/index.

The Americans With Disabilities Act: As a covered entity under Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act, the City of Los Angeles does not discriminate on the basis of disability and, upon request, will provide reasonable accommodation to ensure equal access to its programs, services and activities. Sign language interpreters, assistive listening devices and other auxiliary aids and/or services may be provided upon request. To ensure availability of services, please make your request at least three business days (72 hours) prior to the meeting you wish to attend by contacting via email NCsupport@lacity.org or calling (213) 978-1551. If you are hearing impaired please call 711.

Public Access of Records: In compliance with Government Code Section 54957.5, non-exempt writings that are distributed to a majority or all of the board in advance of a meeting may be viewed at the meeting where such writing was considered or by contacting the WHNC's executive director via email at Michelle.Ritchie@westhillsnc.org Requests can be made for a copy of a record related to an item on the agenda.

Reconsideration and Grievance Process: For information on the WHNC's process for board action reconsideration, stakeholder grievance policy or any other procedural matters related to this Council, please consult the WHNC Bylaws. The Bylaws are available at our website, www.WestHillsNC.org.

Servicios De Traducccion: Si requiere servicios de traducción, favor de avisar al Concejo Vecinal 3 días de trabajo (72 horas) antes del evento. Por favor contacte Michelle.Ritchie@westhillsnc.org

IT'S OUR NEIGHBORHOOD. LET'S BUILD A COMMUNITY.



West Hills Neighborhood Council

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JOINT GOVERNMENT RELATIONS COMMITTEE/BOARD MEETING MINUTES

Telephonic and Online
Thursday August 16, 2021

Revised August 26, 2021

Attendance: Aida Abkarians, Faye Barta, Steve Randall, Myrl Schreibman, Joan Trent, Brad Vanderhoof, and Joanne Yvanek-Garb

Other Board members in attendance: Mark Neudorff

1. Call to Order: Committee Co-chair Joanne Yvanek-Garb called the meeting to order at 7:37 PM. A quorum was established.
2. Review minutes from July 2021: Item tabled to September.
3. Comments from the Co-Chairs: Joanne said holding these meetings has become tough and it is worse when people make caustic comments. She said the committee's energy would be better spent on items to benefit the community.
4. Public Comment: Chris Rowe and Zach Volet spoke.

NEW BUSINESS

1. CIS regarding City Council File 20-0780, the hiring and utilization of MEU-SMART Teams to go out on police calls when there is a mental health problem.

Yes – 6, No – 0, Abstention – 1, Absent – 1, Recusal – 0
A CIS is support is approved.

2. CIS regarding City Council File 21-0002-S156, RESOLUTION relative to establishing the City's position regarding the 2021-22 Federal Program for expansion of Behavior Health Benefits under Medicare/Medical: Item tabled to September.
3. Revision of wording of the language for the Code of Conduct: Item tabled to September.
4. Zoom Event to meet with Street Services Department to discuss what is happening in their services: Item tabled to September.
5. Adjournment: Committee Co-chair Joanne Yvanek-Garb adjourned the meeting at 8:40 PM.

The next meeting of this committee is September 20, 2021, online and telephonic.


MOTION


The Police Department's (LAPD) Mental Evaluation Unit (MEU) is one of the first and largest law enforcement-mental health co-response operations in the nation. The LAPD deploys MEU resources to the field to assist officers on calls where mental health issues are suspected, in order to ensure that police officers respond to these calls for services appropriately. However, the demand for these services means that these resources are not always available to officers in the field who need them.

The MEU has a number of subunits, including its Systematic Mental Assessment Response Teams (SMART). SMART is co-supported by the Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health (LACDMH), and helps uniformed officers effectively respond to and link people in crisis to appropriate mental health services. While the City has made a significant investment in these resources, more can be done. Mental health is a factor in a number of calls fielded by LAPD, and officers responding to these calls should always have assistance from specialized units trained for these instances.

I THEREFORE MOVE that the Police Department be directed to report on the resources needed to expand the Department's Mental Evaluation Unit (MEU) and its System wide Mental Assessment Response Teams (SMART), in order to ensure that police officers in the field can call SMART or other MEU resources anytime there may be a need.

PRESENTED BY: 
MARQUEECE HARRIS-DAWSON
Councilmember, 8th District


CURREN D. PRICE, JR.
Councilmember, 9th District


HERB J. WESSON, JR.
Councilmember, 10th District

SECONDED BY:  *In
trust Page*

ORIGINAL

JUN 17 2020

jwd 

RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, any official position of the City of Los Angeles with respect to legislation, rules, regulations or policies proposed to or pending before a local, state or federal governmental body or agency must have first been adopted in the form of a Resolution by the City Council with the concurrence or the Mayor; and

WHEREAS, there are significant gaps in coverage in the U.S. health care system for individuals with serious mental illnesses that often lead to homelessness; and

WHEREAS, Medicaid is the largest payer of mental health services in the country and it is necessary to expand Medicaid coverage; and

WHEREAS, it is important to provide in-patient beds to individuals experiencing mental health crises who, without the services, often end up in the prison system or on the streets; and

WHEREAS, currently pending in Congress is a bill, H.R. 2611, the Increasing Behavioral Health Treatment Act, which would repeal the Medicaid Institutions for Mental Disease (IMD) payment prohibition and would require states to submit a plan to increase access to outpatient and community-based behavioral health care; and

WHEREAS, the IMD payment prohibition is a policy that prohibits the federal government from providing Medicaid matching funds to states for services delivered to certain Medicaid-eligible individuals who are in hospitals or nursing facilities that provide diagnostic services, treatment, or care to people with mental diseases; and

WHEREAS, the Increasing Behavioral Health Treatment Act will remove the IMD exclusion for states that have submitted a plan to increase access to outpatient and community-based behavioral health care services, increase availability of crisis stabilization services, and improve data sharing and coordination between physical, mental health, and addiction treatment providers; and

WHEREAS, Los Angeles County supports H.R. 2611 and, if the federal legislation passes, the County will be able to develop the necessary inpatient and care services for people with serious mental illnesses; and


WHEREAS, it is in the City's interest to support the Increasing Behavioral Health Treatment Act because it would provide vulnerable populations in the City who have mental illnesses with the necessary care and services they need and potentially help reduce the number of individuals who fall into homelessness;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, with concurrence of the Mayor, that by adoption of this Resolution, the City of Los Angeles hereby includes in its 2021-22 Federal Legislative Program SUPPORT of H.R. 2611, Increasing Behavioral Health Treatment Act, which would repeal the Medicaid Institutions for Mental Disease payment prohibition and help provide adequate inpatient and or residential mental health treatment beds for individuals in need of critical services.

PRESENTED BY: 
JOE BUSCAINO
Councilmember, 15th District

SECONDED BY: 

ORIGINAL


AUG 10 2021
pa

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CALIFORNIA

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ERIC GARCETTI
MAYOR

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Department of
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RAQUEL BELTRÁN
GENERAL MANAGER

www.EmpowerLA.org

July 19, 2021

TO: President Eli Lipmen, Members of the Board of Neighborhood Commissioners

FROM: Raquel Beltrán, General Manager

SUBJECT: Proposed Amendments to the Code of Conduct Policy

BACKGROUND:

Over the years, the Board of Neighborhood Commissioners became aware of a rise in relationship and board dynamic challenges involving Neighborhood Council board members and stakeholders. Particularly alarming were challenges reaching acute levels of concern. Increasingly, board member and stakeholder public testimony at Commission meetings, requested action be taken to provide Neighborhood Councils with policies and implementing rules that would make it possible resolve these challenges. In 2018-2019, the Board of Neighborhood Commissioners initiated a process to review policies related to board conduct, engagement, and leadership development. The policies selected were adopted or revised between 2016 – 2019. They included the Leadership Orientation (2020-01), Censure (2020-03), Removal (2020-04), and the Code of Conduct (2014-2(2)) policies.

Through a town hall engagement review process, the Commission started with the Censure and Removal policies. These two policies were revised in March and April 2020 respectively. A new Leadership Orientation Policy was adopted in February 2020.

On March 3, 2020, the Board of Neighborhood Commissioners adopted a motion calling for amendments to the Commission's Code of Conduct Policy. The action was deemed necessary to provide additional language and updates to the Commission's Code of Conduct Policy. Two members of the Commission were appointed to an Ad Hoc Committee to work with the Department to prepare draft amendments to the Policy. They include Commissioners Len Shaffer and Quyen Vo-Ramirez.

SUMMARY:

In partnership with the Commission's Ad Hoc Committee, the Department led a Neighborhood Council Code of Conduct Work Group of City Department leaders with neighborhood council experience. They set out to review current policy, implementing procedures and processes, and current and anticipated City policies. The Work Group members included representatives of the Personnel Department's Division, the City Attorney's Labor Relations and Neighborhood Council

Advice Divisions, and EmpowerLA's Leadership Team. Additionally, the Work Group included representatives of the City of Los Angeles Civil, Human Rights, and Equity Department (LA Civil Rights). EmpowerLA is grateful to these seasoned professionals for their dedication to this project.

The Work Group began meeting in October 2020 on an accelerated schedule. They met twice a month to review the Code of Conduct Policy's history, the [City of Los Angeles Draft Workplace Equity Policy](#), and the numerous authorities representing the regulatory framework of the Neighborhood Council System. The Work Group presents these proposed amendments as reasonable considerations necessary to address the escalating incidents of acts that do not comport with the City of Los Angeles's expectations for representatives of City employees, advisory bodies, commissions, and volunteers. The draft amendments advance the mission, desired characteristics, and foundational mandates of the Neighborhood Council System.

FISCAL IMPACT: Staff time required to oversee and manage the administration of the Code of Conduct and related proceedings.

REQUESTED ACTION:

The Ad Hoc Committee and Department of Neighborhood Empowerment respectfully request the Commission:

1. Approve the attached DRAFT amendments to the Code of Conduct Policy adopted in 2018 solely to circulate to the Neighborhood Council System for education, discussion, and comment.
2. Approve the Department's Neighborhood Council and City Department review schedule:
 - a. Include the DRAFT Code of Conduct Policy Amendments on the Commission's agenda once per month until the conclusion of the review schedule.
 - b. Maintain a report on comments and community impact statements filed on the DRAFT Code of Conduct Policy Amendments on the Commission's webpage.
 - c. Administer a minimum of four workshops (two weekday evenings and two weekends) to introduce the DRAFT Code of Conduct Policy Amendments and to respond to questions. Weekday workshops will be held on a Monday - Thursday evening when Neighborhood Councils are not having regular board meetings.
 - d. After the review period, the Department will summarize the most commonly asked questions and comments.
 - e. At the conclusion of the review period, the Department will prepare a summary of the most commonly asked questions and comments.
3. At the end of the review period, the Department's report will include recommended amendments to regulatory authorities that guide administration of the Neighborhood Council System, including but not limited to the Los Angeles Administrative Code (which incorporates portions of the Plan for a Citywide System of Neighborhood Councils) and Commission Policy(ies).
4. As a courtesy, once revisions to the Code of Conduct Policy have been approved, the Department will return to the Commission and present the procedure the Department will follow to implement the new Code of Conduct Policy. The presentation shall include how the Department proposes to:
 - a. Support Neighborhood Councils with the application of the policy to Committee Members,
 - b. Assist Neighborhood Councils with roster management, including that of Committee Members in compliance with the policy,

- c. Clarify the steps Neighborhood Council will be expected to take to address Code of Conduct issues,
 - d. Provide resources to assist Neighborhood Councils in their efforts to manage board dynamic challenges to avoid the necessity to suspend or remove Board and or Committee Members,
 - e. Manage Neighborhood Council rosters and compliance notification.
5. Once revisions to the Code of Conduct have been approved and the implementing procedures developed, the Department will hold workshops for Neighborhood Council Board and stakeholder Committee members to review expectations.

PUBLIC COMMENT: Community Impact Statements and letters filed are available on the Commission's EmpowerLA webpage.

CONCLUSION:

The proposed amendments to the Board of Neighborhood Commissioners Code of Conduct Policy are consistent with the envisioned desired characteristics of the Neighborhood Council System and values expressed in current Mayoral Executive Directives. These amendments provide clear guidelines of expected behavior in the Neighborhood Council System.

The recommendations include a well-defined process to involve Neighborhood Councils and their stakeholders in a notice of proposed rule-making comment period. By advancing a transparent and inclusive process, the Ad Hoc Committee and Department believes Neighborhood Councils will be more likely to integrate the final version of the Code of Conduct Policy into the Neighborhood Council System's meeting and decision-making culture.

Respectfully,



Raquel Beltran, General Manager
Department of Neighborhood Empowerment

**NEIGHBORHOOD COUNCIL BOARD MEMBER
CODE OF CONDUCT POLICY
2021-1**

WHEREAS, on June 19, 2020, Mayor Eric Garcetti issued Executive Directive No. 27 calling for efforts to ensure fairness, diversity, equal opportunity, and transparency in City government;

WHEREAS, the Board of Neighborhood Commissioners (the Commission) adopted a Code of Conduct Policy in 2016 and an amended Code of Conduct Policy in 2018, to govern the conduct of Neighborhood Council members;

WHEREAS, the Workplace Equity Policy protects volunteers, including Neighborhood Council board members from harassment, sexual harassment, hazing, bullying, and inequitable conduct, as defined in the Workplace Equity Policy, thus superseding and/or expanding the type of conduct encompassed by the Commission's current Code of Conduct policy;

WHEREAS, the Commission has long recognized that a Neighborhood Council System that is physically and emotionally safe and secure for all Board Members promotes good social responsibility, increases Stakeholder attendance and supports community engagement;

WHEREAS, the Commission recognizes that improper conduct may occur within the Neighborhood Council System, the Commission expects Board Members and Committee Members (including stakeholders serving on committees) to conduct themselves in a manner in keeping with the Commission's Code of Conduct and with a proper regard for the rights and welfare of other Board Members, Stakeholders, Committee Members, and volunteers;

WHEREAS, Section 902 (b) of Article IX of the City Charter provides that the Commission "shall be responsible for policy setting and policy oversight and the promulgation of rules and regulations but not be responsible for day to-day management;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Commission amends the Code of Conduct policy to implement and administer the [City of Los Angeles Draft Workplace Equity Policy](#).

NOW, THEREFORE, IT IS FURTHER RESOLVED that the Commission amends the Code of Conduct POLICY NUMBER: 2014 2(2) to say:

POLICY NUMBER: 2021-(1)

1. Neighborhood Council Board Members and Committee Members are required to affirm acceptance of this policy (Exhibit "A") in the manner established by the Department. Neighborhood Council Board Members and Committee Members shall reaffirm acceptance of this policy every two years. This policy and the City's Workplace Equity Policy apply regardless of whether or not a Board Member or Committee Member has affirmed acceptance.
2. The Neighborhood Council shall have the responsibility for informing stakeholder and board Committee Members of their obligation to affirm and accept this policy as a condition of committee service. Maintaining a record of their completion shall be the responsibility of the Neighborhood Council.

AN EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY – AFFIRMATIVE ACTION EMPLOYER

3. Newly elected, selected, appointed or re-elected Neighborhood Council Board Members and Committee Members shall have a grace period of 30 days from the date the board member begins assuming their duties and responsibilities to comply with this policy as indicated in Item #1. Neighborhood Council Boards shall be responsible for informing appointed board and committee members of their responsibility to sign the Code of Conduct affirmation. Board Members and Committee Members should consult the applicable funding guidelines to determine their eligibility to vote on funding matters.
4. In such circumstances where a Neighborhood Council Board Member or Committee Member fails or refuses to comply with item #1, the Department shall proceed to suspend the Board Member or Committee Member from their Neighborhood Council. Said Board Member or Committee Member shall not be eligible to act on any matter that comes before their Neighborhood Council and shall not be counted for the purpose of establishing a quorum of the Neighborhood Council or Committee.
 - a. The Department shall notify the Board Member (or Committee Member) of their suspension by sending a letter to their last known email address and/or physical mailing address.
 - b. The Department shall also notify the remainder of the Board Members by email and/or U.S. mail of the suspension of the Board Member (or Committee Member).
5. If within 30 days of being suspended the Neighborhood Council Board Member or Committee Member does not comply with the provisions of item #1 above, they shall be removed as a Neighborhood Council Board Member or Committee Member by the following procedures:
 - a. The Department will notify the individual of their removal by sending a letter to their last known email address and/or mailing address.
 - b. The Department will also notify the Board by email and/or First-Class U.S. mail regarding the removal of the Board Member or Committee Member and that the Board Member or Committee Member's seat or position shall be considered vacant.
 - c. Any Board Member [or Committee Member removed pursuant to this policy shall have the right to present to the Department evidence that he or she has in fact complied with this policy. The Department shall be the sole and final decision maker.
6. If a Board Member or Committee Member is alleged to have violated either the City's Workplace Equity Policy or the Commission's Code of Conduct, the Department, with written approval from the General Manager, may immediately suspend the Board Member or Committee Member for a period of up to 90 days. Said Board Member or Committee Member shall not be eligible to act on any matter that comes before their Neighborhood Council Board or Committee and shall not be counted for the purpose of establishing a quorum of the Neighborhood Council Board or Committee.

The Department will notify the Board Member or Committee Member of their suspension by sending a letter to their last known email address and/or mailing

- a. The Department will also notify the Board by email and/or First Class U.S. mail regarding the suspension of the Board Member and that the Board Member's position shall not be deemed vacant during the suspension period.

- b. The Department shall be the sole decision-maker with respect to a suspension. The Board Member or Committee Member may not appeal the suspension decision.
 - c. The Neighborhood Council shall retain its authority to remove Committee Members for failure to affirm this policy or for failure to adhere to its provisions.
7. The Department may petition the Commission to remove the Board Member for a violation of the Workplace Equity Policy or this Policy pursuant to the process for Declaring a Board Vacancy in Los Angeles Administrative Code 22.810.1(e)(3).

ATTACHMENT A

1. Neighborhood Council Board Members and Committee Members shall conduct themselves in a professional and civil manner.
2. This Policy and the City’s Workplace Equity Policy apply at all times and locations referenced within Section 2.2 of the City’s Workplace Equity Policy, including at all Neighborhood Council meetings, events, activities, online and at social events when interacting with City employees, contractors, and Neighborhood Council Board Members, Committee Members and volunteers.
3. Neighborhood Council Board Members and Committee Members shall promote and, if necessary, enforce a safe and equitable environment. If other Board Members or Committee Members become disruptive or violate the Code of Conduct or the City’s Workplace Equity Policy, Neighborhood Council Board and Committee Members have agreed to abide by, Board Members and Committee Members should demand that the offending Board Member or Committee Member conduct themselves in a respectful and orderly manner. In the absence of the board taking action to do so, employees of the Department may intercede to do so.
4. By signing this document, I affirm that I have received, read, and understand the Code of Conduct. I acknowledge that I have been informed of the expectation to abide by the Code of Conduct at the time of my appointment or election to the Board. I understand that if I fail to provide the Department of Neighborhood Empowerment with a signed and dated copy of this Neighborhood Council Board Member Code of Conduct, I may be subjected to suspension and/or removal from my Neighborhood Council Board.

I also understand that if I am found to have violated the signed Code of Conduct, I may be subject to censure and/or removal by my Neighborhood Council board and suspension and/or removal by action of the Department.

SIGNED

DATE