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MINUTES
WRAC Meeting of the Board of Directors
May 17th 2021 – 6:00pm

Webinar link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85804559642>
Or Dial 888 475 4499 (Toll Free) Webinar ID 858 0455 9642

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1. Welcome/Introductions

- a. The WRAC Board conducted its regular monthly meeting by on-line video and audio on May 17, 2021. Chair Matt Wersinger called the meeting to order at 6:01pm
- b. Representatives present: Matt Wersinger (DRNC), Christina Spitz (PPCC), Robin Greenberg (BABCNC), Ira Koslow, (VNC) Barbara Broide (WNC); Stephen Resnick (WWNC), Andrew Lewis (NWWNC), Steve Sann (WCC), Larry Watts (BCC), Stacy Shure (MVCC) Jay Handal (WLASNC) (*11 present*) (*3 Absent: SORONC, PNC, NCWP*)
- c. Nonvoting Alternates present: James Murez (VNC)
- d. Also present: Kay Hartman (WRAC LUPC Co-Chair), Nancy Matson & Selena Inouye (WRAC MTC Co-Chairs); Fipe Leilua from LA City Planning and LAPD Chief Michel Moore
- e. **Chair Updates**
- f. **Upcoming Guests –**
 - i. **June** – State Redistricting Commissioner Ahmad; LA City Redistricting Commissioner Prichard
 - ii. **TBD** – LA Council President Nury Martinez, LA County Supervisor Holly Mitchell, LA City Controller Ron Galperin in the summer months & Mayor Eric Garcetti in the fall

2. Government Report -

- a. **LAPD – Chief Michel Moore** noted that the department has been facing increased challenges over the past year and a half since the pandemic, recalling that in January 2020, he had reported that it was the 10th year in a row with fewer than 300 homicides and a reduction in property and violent crimes not seen for decades. He noted that the rising humanitarian crisis of homelessness that has been “Job One” for the city and region and as part of the shared responsibility, LAPD wants to have a positive impact on the individuals experiencing homelessness and communities in which encampments and communities exist. He is grateful to see a vaccine developed in record time with an immediate impact on our health and safety, and that 14 months into this we are beginning to exit with infection rates below single digits, death rates plummeting, and hospitalizations under 400, when those numbers were in the thousands. He acknowledged the uncertainty we face as we exit the pandemic, regarding the vaccine, how we get our annual flu shot, tasks on masks, social distancing, and opening up society, while simultaneously seeing an exponential increase in homeless encampments impacting every community in LA.

He discussed the city budget and revenue sources, with cutbacks in every city service including policing, and, in the aftermath of George Floyd's death, the calls for further reforms in policing, which he feels have not gone far enough or fast enough. He mentioned the civil unrest that sprang from George Floyd's death and efforts to counter the violence, facilitate the marches but hold those accountable that would commit acts of arson and violence towards the police in various parts of the city. An analysis of the LAPD's response to that has identified areas where we should or could have done better, as well as the good things that happened. He remains proud and committed to further reforms as we move to public safety here in LA.

He discussed downsizing of the organization, from 10,100 to 9505 sworn officers today, and a reduction in the civil workforce from over 3000 men and women to 2750 in professional classes, the reengineering and downsizing of the organization's responsibilities because they do not have enough personnel to do everything they were doing a year and a half ago. They have heard clearly from elected leaders on the need to establish alternative services, which he and every one of the men and women in his organization fully support and will continue to support locally. It is important to have alternative services out there and LAPD continue to respond. This last year, they identified less essential jobs that they no longer do or do in alternate ways, e.g., online reporting of traffic collisions, referring more calls to 211 & 311, as the officers are simply not there for lower-level cases. A year and a half ago, they were proud of their results in reducing crime but this last year they have seen a tremendous increase in violent crimes with 95 additional homicides, up to 355 homicides this last year, while the year before it was 258-260. It is the first time in more than a decade they were above 300 homicides.

He noted that there have been a couple hundred extra shooting victims after the reduction and this year that violence continues in our streets. Districts in LA with increased violence have the greatest socioeconomic challenges, impoverished areas and areas impacted by gang and street violence. We are seeing an impact into some of our commercial areas with street and commercial robberies, brazen attacks that we hadn't seen in a decade. The effort of working on this in a downsized department and the challenging issues of budget, is to focus our resources on our most central function, which is to reduce violent crimes. Specialized detail staffing has been reduced, however, the PD continues to rally resources at the local station to protect our most primary function, our basic patrol, gang investigators & violent crime investigators locally. The Chief is proud of the work of their people. He noted that the Mayor's budget for this fiscal year will be heard on Thursday by City Council. He spoke at a Budget & Finance meeting a couple weeks ago about the Mayor's budget for LAPD, which he describes as "barebones" but begins to help with the staffing level. They've not hired from the Academy for six months, have fallen by more than 250 officers below scheduled cutbacks for this year. The budget that the Mayor has proposed with the support of Federal stimulus money allows us to start rehiring immediately. We will start Academy classes at the beginning of each month, to begin to restore our rank and hope we will have applicants to hire to get back to the staffing level of last year.

The Chief is asking for our support for the Mayor's budget noting that last week there were proposals to increase civilian hiring by an additional 105 personnel, important as often members of the civilian class are absent and have to be substituted by police officers. There is a recent budget amendment, not in the Mayor's budget, that the Council has added, that he asked our support for. There is also support for Personnel Departments to hire background investigators and the gang reduction youth development, an additional seven million dollars to expand intervention and prevention workers, a crucial element as this pandemic has caused isolation, frustration, depression and the youth and those in at-risk ages have been compounded five-fold. Added prevention services will help stem the trials that we are seeing.

Chair Wersinger asked the Chief, what is his vision for LAPD 10 years from now; how does it fit in with the Mayor's track and everything that has happened in the past year? Chief Moore mentioned the debate this past year about "defunding" or "abolishing" policing or reform. He noted that the Mayor stated in his State of the City address that he is not a mayor who will support defunding the police nor does President Biden support defunding police. He noted the need for policing in America to continue to improve and assure that it builds trust and addresses reforms that are needed. There is not a single description of policing. The Chief noted that there are 750,000 police officers in the US, 17,000 agencies... yet something that happens in Brooklyn impacts what happens in the LAPD. Eight out of 10 Angelenos want community policing, seven out of 10 want and need us to protect & serve. Even those interested in "defunding" are interested in expanding mental health & social services and getting those out of a 9-5 M-F business. He finds it embarrassing that we allow mental health professionals and social services to be limited to 9-5 business hours as that is not when people have crises and need services and hopes we will come to terms with that in the coming years.

He discussed the need for policing in a free society in regards to public safety, as "the police are the public and the public are the police" and that there is not a civilized government in the world without a police force except those that have a military in place of a police force, such as totalitarian regimes, which are not democracies. He related that the police officers are well trained, hold a high standard and are servant leaders, and we hire that way. At the other end of the spectrum is social services outreach engagement for people in crises, a spectrum of crises, from youth to elderly, emotional crises, housing, food and mental health crises. He hopes LAPD can complement the work of that outreach engagement.

The Chief noted that in the middle segment, you have a team of a police officer with a mental health clinician. There are a lot of situations that mental health clinicians will not be able to handle because of the threat of violence and danger to their personal safety. Police officers wear a bullet proof vest for a reason. Last year 362 officers were killed in the line of duty in this country; 125 year to date this year, 25 by gunfire. He finds that the thought that policing is going to get out of the work of dealing with violent offenders and that you are going to replace them with unarmed individuals to do a better job is destined for doom. In the middle ground there are many disciplines together. He is proud of LAPD because in the early '90s, they began "Smart

Teams” where a mental health professional and police officer respond to people experiencing mental health crisis. Those two professions working together in the field has improved outcomes to us as a department in public safety. We have to prepare for the Olympics and Paralympics in 2028 among other things. He concluded that our North Star is that we are here to build trust, representing the communities that we serve and need to be responsive to their needs.

Chair Wersinger asked what is different now from when he was first a police officer in the ‘80s and what can he talk about with regard to training, extending the time that they have, and making sure they are better equipped? He noted that Officer Tom was with us, and was involved in the officer involved shooting taskforce, and showed us numbers; he asked how to get the numbers down further, and to include mental health as well. Chief Moore noted that Chair Wersinger is absolutely right and that we have to have world class recruit basic training. He related that in-service training for a recruit officer is 900+ hours for six months at our Academy, an additional year in the field, then back for two more weeks of training to give officers a pretty good start. Now, on average, an officer after that period of time spends 50 hours a year in training in totality. The state requires 24 hours every two years, which he feels is not enough. Historically, the shortfall happens when you then have to say, we have protests this weekend, a fire in the Palisades, people encamped causing burglaries, thefts in vehicles in the Venice area increased in double digit rates, he needs patrol officers, and at the same time needs to send them for seasonal refresher training. He noted that we saw that last summer. We saw riotous conditions we haven’t seen in 30 years, and saw a breakdown in some of our command and control; there were people who lost track of their basic primary command-control strategy objectives and how to deal with these type of disturbances. They hadn’t done the training on it, because in the last five years they were focused on lowering the instances of deadly force. They invested heavily to have officers deescalate and establish strategies so they do not resort to the use of deadly force. The results have shown we hardly spent any time on crowd control and management. He noted that there are less lethal tools... allow us standoff distance on individuals armed with knives, and rocks and bottles which kept us from having to resort to deadly force. He noted that we also use tools for crowd control but never trained for how to use the less lethal tools for crowd control. We trained them to deal with one person in the street in a conflict and saw the outgrowth of that when we looked back and someone confronted us on the uses of those less lethal tools. The Chief noted that we do not have as an organization enough persistent ongoing and recurring training of our in-service people. The profession has people in their 20s, 30s, 40s and 50s, and there is a life cycle of training that needs to be occurring across all those years... and we need to change the model so that rather than depending on existing workforce, ... either grow to be large enough ... or pay for it on a supplemental basis.

Chair Wersinger asked where we are at with the current staffing at Pacific and WLA. The Chief related that Pacific Division has 32 more officers this year than last year. WLA is down about 10 officers... Pacific last year had 213 officers last year and this year 235. WLA has about 210 officers, about 10 officers below what their employment numbers should be. We are 250 officers below what our stated deployment numbers should be. So in 21 areas on average, every

area will be down 10-15 from where they should be, in part because we haven't had employees coming out of the Academy; when people come out of the Academy it gives them an opportunity to rebalance the organization, and, WLA had five resign in the last two weeks to go to other *jobs* or leave the profession entirely or go to other departments outside of the LA area, that slows his ability to put officers out there. Chief Palazzolo has command of five geographic areas, and he expects they can loan resources to balance the competing needs of the divisions out there.

Chair Wersinger asked about staffing of Venice Beach and Pacific Palisades beach details. Chief Moore noted that there are 26 officers at Venice Beach; we've loaned them an additional 13 officers for the summer months. They are at 40, deployment above and beyond what is budgeted. So they have robbed Peter to pay Paul, recognizing the importance of Venice Beach. That number used to be 60... You had 10,100 officers and now 9,505. Hollywood Entertainment used to have 60 and now has 30. The Chief noted that they have had to shave organization units across the city to make up for the reduction in work force. The specialized units have been negatively impacted because the core function is that we have to have responder calls for service that can handle a multitude of responsibilities. The Chief noted that the HOPE team is another example of growth in the last five years, where they established dedicated teams of a supervisor and 10 officers in each of the 4 geographic bureaus, which was absolutely important to be able to form important relations with people experiencing homelessness, identify the criminal element and provide outreach and supportive environment for those experiencing homelessness who were not criminally involved. It doesn't exist in any part of the city today.

Chair Wersinger asked, with homelessness the #1 issue of the city and perhaps the state, how do you see LAPD being involved? You said the HOPE teams are not there to help engage, but we have issues like ADA clearance on sidewalks, other ongoing issues in various encampments. Is LAPD is the right agency to be involved with or want to be involved with these things regardless of the staffing? The Chief responded that the answer to the last question is "no," we should find someone other than police officers and we should be the last resort. We need outreach and engagement that's effective. Today he was at a Palisades command post and met a St. John's representative doing outreach with people along the hillsides to offer placement. He would like to see that on major steroids. He doesn't think those individuals are working at 3:00 in the morning or on Saturdays and thinks that that needs to change. He noted that in the interim, we have become the resources at the fire. There is in the budget proposed before the Council today an added \$8 million for increased LAPD patrols and support around a bridge home sites across the city. That will allow us to augment patrols, to bring officers in on days off and allow them to add increased visibility and problem solving efforts around bridge home sites. The Chief noted that CM Mike Bonin set aside, in his district, \$1.4 million for added police patrols in the Venice beach area and it is his preference that they not be cut and not see the workforce reduction that they did, because if we had not lost 500 to 600 officers we would not have to have these officers working overtime; and would have the officers working in the field; in the interim and short term, while they attempt to restore at least the cuts imposed last year with added overtime, staffing will allow the public and us to have more resources available for public safety.

Chair Wersinger asked, when we talk about enforcement of various things citywide, how much do you and your officers on the ground take the lead from City Council or Mayor? The Chief related that we enforce the laws uniformly and constitutionally; however, prioritize, per, our elected officials, e.g., the daytime ban on enforcement of 56-11, implemented after CDC guidance that people experiencing homelessness should not be disrupted. The Chief disagrees with that, and is asking the elected officials as we move through the tiers of the pandemic, that we open up and revisit the need for us to prohibit the enforcement of daytime camping.

The Chief related that the fact homeless individuals are not required to deconstruct their shelters has promoted those shelters to become large and bulky, and symbols of resistance that now are harboring individuals involved in narcotic trade and distribution, thwarting the ability of the public to move about these public areas. Previously in the daytime people were to deconstruct the structures which accomplishes: 1) people get access to those public areas that they deserve to have; 2) keeping to a limit the size of structures persons are capable of deconstructing. When they are not required to do that, for various reasons, sometimes just trying to protect space, they add items to that, collect debris, pallets and pieces of furniture, fortifying them so others cannot take that space. This has exacerbated the public health issue and has caused deterioration in public safety. He is asking Council to remove that moratorium. As we come to the June 15th date that Governor Newsom is opening business and activities in California, he is hopeful that Council will follow suit & see it is no longer a necessity. As to 63-44, overnight use of tents or sleeping in the parks, Chief Moore noted that is an area where last June or July with criticism by Councilmember Bonin for our enforcement efforts, the Chief told him fine, give me the zones, at your request, on behalf of communities in which you serve, that are not to be enforced. That lasted two weeks and CM Bonin decided he is the Councilman and we should be the Police; if we see the need to enforce 63-44, we should do that. The challenge in the COVID environment, when the encampment is not required to leave the boardwalk is, how will we enforce? This creates turmoil and a challenge for our officers. Moving forward, as to enforcement action, he regularly visits and speaks with Mayor Garcetti. The Mayor is committed to public safety and believes Mike Bonin is committed to public safety but that we see things differently as to how that public safety is achieved. The Police Department recognizes that this is a department that serves at the desires of our community and under the oversight of our elected officials.

Chair Wersinger opened the floor to questions from the board. Member Sann (WCC), thanked the Chief and deferred to Vice Chair Spitz, as the Palisades is dealing with a crisis. **Vice Chair Spitz (PPCC)** expressed her gratitude to Chief Moore, saying she can't thank him enough, he was at the press conference today, their officers have been tremendous, and we appreciate all they did and are still doing to protect us during this event, and, of course apprehending the suspected arsonist was a huge relief. She asked about the retention of special units, if we can we can be assured that we can keep the Palisades' Beach Patrol for next year, at least the two that we now have, to which Chief Moore related that the challenge he has is that the staffing level in WLA is razor thin, with the resignation of those individuals. He noted that they

will prioritize the patrol and the investigative resources and his task to Captain Tom is that he has internal loans, about 15, and believes he is augmenting his detective units with them, and may be using the beach patrol, which is actually in the hillsides, in support of the Pacific Palisades Homeless Taskforce as a means of outreach to have people come out of the hills to make sure outreach services are reaching them. He expects Captain Tom to allocate resources to that; however, he noted that they are constantly balancing competing needs within the area, e.g., an area south of Westwood and southeast of the Veterans Hospital, with a high concentration of residential complexes having thefts of vehicles, sometimes homeless related and sometimes narcotic use, and they assign resources there on a surge basis. He cannot give assurance to have that person but says that he gives the Captain a great deal of autonomy to use the resources that he or she has, to the best interest of the entire community. He noted that WLA has some of the best response time in the city to routine calls of services. It's about 50-52 minutes across the city, while WLA is just over 37 minutes. He noted that looking at the averages, their work, given the size of that command, they are one of the most efficient because they are so small.

Member Sann (WCC) echoed our deep appreciation, and praised Captain Tom. He hopes the nonsense that he read in the LA Times gets flushed away because the guy is a “rock star” and an amazing representative of the department. Member Sann has been the co-chair of the Homeless Count since 2009, and PATH was founded in Westwood in the 1980s. He asked, what we can do as a group to support him, the PD and these goals, and to amplify the discussion on the need to amp up these social and mental health services so they are 24/7 and weekends. He noted that Councilmember Paul Koretz is a big supporter but there are some other councilmembers that are not so much. The Chief replied that we live in a Zoom society now and unfortunately the few voices on it are having disproportionate impact on public policy. Since Member Sann is supportive of Captain Tom, he encouraged him to call in to the Board of Police Commissioners tomorrow morning and express his remarks about the performance at WLA and the work being done, and to do the same before City Council along with a letter-writing campaign.

Chief Moore related that last week was “National Police Week,” and 262 men and women died in this country protecting and serving in this nation. We lost three individuals last year and seven this year, all but one to COVID. He noted that he would have enjoyed seeing more support of public safety explicitly by members of our elected officials. Their voices are needed and elected officials need to support public safety, in word, actions and deeds. He thinks that the vast majority of Council recognizes and is supporting LAPD but he would welcome a more visual aspect to that. He'd ask that all 15 of the council members show support of public safety, and asked what flags are you flying, not referring to “blue” but what symbols do you present? How is public safety being represented? He noted that we are not a perfect organization... We have led law enforcement in the country with 330 million, both good and bad, but that the public gets that; 8/10 support community policing and 7/10 want policing to protect and serve... He thinks that the quietness of the public is that too many elected officials tend to believe that they will not be supported if they come out with a public safety agenda and that's not to say that we don't need to do reforms but don't need to continue to hold ourselves to higher standards and be critical

when we fall short. It has become demoralizing to our people. He noted as an example, we were supposed to have lost 500 personnel from July last year to June this year to retirement. We're going to lose 600. The extra 100 people are leaving LAPD to go to another job, generally outside of this region, because it is so demoralizing. He thinks the budget proposal is going to help because we will start making promotions and hiring which we haven't done in months "and when we fall short, call us on it, and we do, but the vast majority of the time our people are out there doing a hell of job."

Member Handal (WLASNC) asked how much the LAPD spends annually on homelessness issues, what can we do to boost morale of the department now at the lowest it's been in 20 years, and what can we do to let troops on the ground know we appreciate what they do every day, risking their lives? The Chief responded that this has been a year of trauma for all of America if not the world and it got compounded with police because as essential workers we couldn't stay home. What hurt him the most was to hear that a husband died because he couldn't stay home; he could have opted out with his health issues, but didn't due to his sense of responsibility as a police officer. The Chief thinks taking the opportunity to recognize that service and acknowledge it, simply say hello and encourage their heart at a community level, cannot be done too much. He acknowledged the campaign that this alliance (WRAC) is doing, having looked at our minutes, he sees the need to get back to the things that we are asking and pursuing with public safety. Public safety is the primary responsibility of local government. Housing, mental health and outreach engagement all need to happen too, but you cannot sacrifice public safety staffing in order to achieve the other; it's not one or the other; it's a combination. He noted that the petition that goes before the Council is to realign resources away from public safety, away from police and into these services and he shares with those advocates the frustration with not enough housing, not enough social services or availability and access to those services but he doesn't support fixing that by pulling things out of public safety. All we have to do is look at what we did this last year and a half as people, with COVID, to realize it doesn't have to happen that way. This city has spent a billion dollars on the pandemic response. That billion dollars didn't exist a year and half ago.

The city found a way for mass testing sites... because the Mayor submitted and supported the health and welfare of community members. We found a way of doing it without jeopardizing public safety. The same with resources of Project Room Key and shelters. If we have an earthquake tomorrow, we would move heaven and earth (as we have done) in regards to this pandemic but shouldn't do it at the expense of local law enforcement. He encouraged us to continually stress the need when you see something coming away from the department... if you are taking staffing away and the responsibilities are still there, you get worse policing because policing operates from a reactive position rather than a proactive position.

Member Lewis (NWWNC) thanked the Chief for joining us tonight and asked about folding in non-law enforcement personnel to handle other kind of crises, e.g., mental health, etc., and asked if there is any movement in the current budget, to get that going and bringing those folks into a

program or social workers? The Chief answered “yes,” there are a couple programs in the Mayor’s budget to establish outreach, support services, street work, and he hopes it goes to scale quickly. There is money in this budget specifically for that.

Member Broide (WNC) noted that we have often felt very heartbroken when someone is promoted, and while it is wonderful, it tears apart other folks within the system, and results in people who have established trust and relationships in the community from staying in the community. She asked whether there is a way for promotions to be granted in a way to allow those officers to stay where they are, rather than be moved around and suddenly stolen away from us, to which the Chief noted that on the police officer level, you can become a Police Officer III, which is a two-stripes with a star and all stay within your local command. Once you make Detective or Sergeant you are moved to another command because of your own development, and you are playing a different role with added responsibilities. Those individuals can come back to the division where they were a police officer after about a year and a half. We want them to go get a fresh start... He noted the concern that you can get a popular individual and they start developing an outside influence on the relationship that can be detrimental, where Johnny becomes “untouchable” so they try to move people around in career development; this is most impactful at Captain rank. (He provided a detailed explanation on this.)

Chair Wersinger noted that we have had good relations with Captain Embrich & Sergeant Cook as well as the staff at Pacific. We don’t always agree on everything but they are always there for a dialogue, they pick up the phone, the Captain calls directly saying lets chat, and that is what we need. Chair Wersinger appreciates that in the frame of the whole last year. He thanked the Chief for joining us and hopes we can do this again in the future. The Chief thanked us for our service and appreciates WRAC, noting this type of citizenship and stepping in and making a difference is what makes Los Angeles great.

b. Mayor Eric Garcetti – Brad Fingard gave brief updates:

Palisades Fire: As of 5pm containment is at 23%; acreage remained approximately 1300 acres still. The evacuation order has been rescinded for this portion LA County (LAC); has not been extended to the City of Los Angeles; great news. We are hoping to make progress containing that fire in the next few hours. He’ll keep us updated.

Budget: Brad noted that Chief Moore covered a lot, e.g., budget process and the CLA report with a number of items relating to public safety and homelessness. Please tune into the Budget & Finance Committee meeting which will be presenting recommended changes to the budget.

COVID-19: Angelenos under 18, and last week 12-15 became eligible for vaccines. As of today all nine standing city sites are operating Monday through Saturday 8:00am to 8:00pm, and people can choose from any of the three vaccines currently available, provided at all sites. The City's Mobile Outreach for Vaccine Equity (MOVE) program <https://corona-virus.la/MobileVax> Tuesday through Saturday. Vaccines at all of these sites are free. For those under 18, between 16 and 18, you must bring a signed consent form from a parent or legal guardian; 12-15 who can’t visit with their parent must be accompanied by responsible adult, with permission from parents.

Member Shure (MVCC) asked Brad regarding the Eviction order, if there is some way that we can effectuate an emergency addendum to the eviction moratorium, to address an ambiguity that a Superior Court Judge is using, that if there was an Ellis action notice given prior to the moratorium, this judge believes she has the power to evict anyone right now. Would the Mayor be interested in addressing this immediately to prevent some evictions taking place this week under this court order? Brad responded that this is deeply concerning, and invited Member Shure to send him the information which he will pass on to the appropriate people. Member Shure noted that Councilmembers Bonin's and Koretz's staff were made aware this morning.

c. Council Reports TBD

d. Additional Government Reports

Fipe Leilua from LA City Planning related that project hearing notices have been newly designed for development projects in a format to provide more clear and consistent information, emphasizing key project details from location of the project to the hearing details, along with a clear description to assist residents and stakeholders to make an informed decision about whether they want to attend or participate in the hearing. If you have questions, email the project planner or send Fipe an email and she'll be happy to walk you through.

Private Detention Center Ban: On April 15th the PLUM Committee approved the Department's Draft Ordinance to ban the local operation and construction of private detention centers. This ordinance will also prohibit accessory uses or incidental activity related to community detention facilities for unaccompanied minors and the private detention centers. The next step for this is for City Council to consider the PLUM Committee's report prior to instructing the City Attorney's office to prepare the final version of the ordinance. The council file is **19-0742**. In there you can find the staff recommendation report and the draft ordinance.

<https://cityclerk.lacity.org/lacityclerkconnect/index.cfm?fa=ccfi.viewrecord&cfnumber=19-0742>

Wildlife Corridor: You may have received email blast announcement of the upcoming webinar. The Wildlife Pilot study released webpage and informational video on the website; highlights the release of the ordinance for public review and feedback. Look at the fact sheet. The wildlife pilot study was formed with the creation of the draft ordinance to support the city's sustainability goals to conserve and protect important habitats and connections between them. This effort identifies areas of ecological value for wildlife in LA and proposes regulations for new development that can be more compatible with land, water, plants and animals, to make our city world class nature environment. Any questions on this, feel free to contact Lena Mik at: mik@ourla240@lacity.org Sign up on the department website as well for updates from the wildlife team. Any questions, feel free to email her at fipe.leilua@lacity.org

3. Board Member Updates – None

4. Committee Reports –

- Marlene Savage (WRAC LUPC Co-Chair) noted that they had guest speaker Matthew Glesne from Planning Department who gave a nice presentation on the Housing Element. You can look at it on the Planning Department website. Kay Hartman (WRAC LUPC Co-Chair) noted that this month we will be having people from the Planning Department coming to talk about the Community Plan.
- Member Handal (WLASNC) (WRAC Homelessness Committee) noted that over the next two months guest speakers will be 1) Dr. Jonathan Sherin, Director of County Mental Health and the woman who is the head on the Westside Mental Health; 2) The following month we will have Officer Deon Joseph, 15 years SLO on Skid Row, along with Officer Rusty Redican from the Palisades & SLO Jimmy Lavenson, from WLA who is focusing on homelessness under Deon for the last six months.
- The committee's next project is to work on a blueprint to eliminate homelessness, to tell the city, these are the components to fix homelessness, not just housing, not just give them tents and money; there's mental health, there's physical health, job training, so many things that have to happen.
- Nancy Matson & Selena Inouye (WRAC MTC Co-Chairs) reported that they have the three motions this evening, a motion with a possible letter of support to prioritize UCLA campus stop for the Sepulveda Pass Line, and three motions from last time. They want to establish priorities for the group and are finally having that discussion.
- Chair Wersinger thanked everyone for what they are doing and that it is great to see the motions starting to work their way through here from the committees.

5. Public Comment – None

6. Approval of Minutes

- a. **Motion (Matt Wersinger)** – Approval of April 2021 meeting minutes
Moved by Chair Wersinger (DRNC); **seconded** by Member Handal (WLASNC); **passed 11-0-0**

7. New Business

- a. **Motion (WRAC Homeless / Jay Handal)** – Severely mentally ill persons in Los Angeles, who are unable to avail themselves of current public services, are dying on our streets. WRAC demands the City of Los Angeles collaborate with the County of Los Angeles to fully utilize the Lanterman-Petrus-Short Act, including section 5150 and fast-track conservatorships of these individuals, to enable life-saving care. Further, we ask that the city add to its legislative program a demand that the State Legislature provide funds to the county to create as many fully-staffed psychiatric beds as necessary to properly house and treat these individuals.
Moved by Member Handal (WLASNC); **seconded** by Vice Chair Spitz (PPCC); Member Watts (BCC), asked what is the “fast track conservatorship” as constitutional issues make it difficult to get conservatorship. Member Handal related that we are asking them to enact the fast track. One of the members of the committee works for the County Mental Health. Member Shure asked regarding the fast track, would there be a way to deal with those with mental health diagnoses who refuse medications which could result in physical harm to themselves or others, and if this would alleviate the currently required documentation, to which Member Handal replied “yes.”
10-0-1: Member Lewis (NWWNC) abstained; **passed.**

b. Motion (WRAC LUPC / Barbara Broide) - WHEREAS businesses referred to as “cloud kitchens” or “ghost kitchens” represent a fairly new form of commerce and land use concept, and,

WHEREAS this new business model has the potential to create significant impacts on neighboring business and residential communities, and

WHEREAS the City of Los Angeles has not established a specific zoning classification for such businesses, thus creating potential inconsistencies, uncertainty and lack of transparency for applicants, City staff, and those seeking to review these proposed projects, and

WHEREAS the absence of clear classification for cloud/ghost kitchens can result in some being treated as commercial and/or retail uses, while others may be grouped as light manufacturing, and WHEREAS none of these classifications accurately captures the true nature of these operations, and

WHEREAS cloud kitchen/ghost kitchens are being established in many areas across the City of Los Angeles,

Therefore, be it moved that the Westside Neighborhood Council requests that the City, represented by our Council District, PLUM, the City Council, in coordination with the Departments of Planning and Building and Safety:

- define what constitutes a Cloud/ghost kitchen, including possible different categories of such operations based upon numbers of kitchens and/or square footage involved,
- identify criteria for the evaluation of their applications for build out and permitting, including a process to evaluate potential impacts on their surroundings (noise, odor, traffic and requirements pertaining to factors
- assess needed infrastructure (adequacy of electric service to area), parking and/or loading zones,

WRAC believes that providing this needed clarification will remove uncertainties as and contribute to the establishment of successful enterprises by creating the structure needed to guide the city’s review and decision-making process.

Member Broide (WNC) introduced this, noting that Ghost Kitchens or Cloud Kitchens are a fairly new land use form that have been looked at by the City differently in different places, sometimes as a drive-through restaurant, sometimes as manufacturing, sometimes as retailing, and that the experience in our community has led us to believe is that the Dept. of Planning needs to look at these and determine how they should be reviewed and approved, e.g., with conditions, by right, and that there may be a difference in how they are considered depending on their size, etc. She noted that we see a need to look at this not only as an individual project but also as a generic type of use, because it is being seen across the city.

Moved by Member Broide (WNC); **seconded** by Member Shure (MVCC) who noted secondary considerations are because we do not have uniform LADBS codes or clear rules from Planning and we are asking the department to take a look at this and come up with rules to protect our

business and residential communities in assessing what the needs and consequences are. Member Murez wonders if this could include the Department of Health Services, who permit mobile kitchens, as well as LADOT. Member Shure would work with Member Broide if an amendment is needed. Member Spitz recommended addressing that in a separate motion.

Vice Chair Spitz (PPCC) noted that we need a background report, written document with a one paragraph summary for the councils to better understand this. Member Sann appreciates the issue that Member Murez brought up but thinks it is tangential to this motion. This issue on Ghost Kitchens is a big issue. If we pass this, we are talking about the language that is before us. What we are voting on is on our agenda. We have not crafted language to add anything and don't have time to do that. Member Broide noted that this motion is not against ghost kitchens; it is just looking for a framework to evaluate and review them. **11-0-0; passed.**

- c. **Motion (WRAC LUPC / Jay Handal)** - WRAC requests that the City Council direct City Attorney Mike Feuer to provide a legal opinion as to whether or not the City Planning department and commissions have the legal right under State and City laws and ordinances to consider the financial interests of the developer when considering entitlements.

Member Handal (WLASNC) related that this is a WRAC LUPC motion brought by Jay Ross, asking the City Attorney provide an opinion on whether the departments, commissions and/or boards, whomever has the legal authority, can make a judgment on a project based on the developer saying "it doesn't work for me." Member Handal noted that financial considerations of the developer should not determine whether or not they get a variance, zone change, etc.

Moved by Handal (WLASNC); **seconded** by Member Broide (WNC). Member Sann (WCC) is in total support and thinks that claiming "financial hardship" forbidden by state law. He suggested adding "consider entitlements and/or financial hardship." Member Handal responded that if you want to add it in, it is okay with him; just make sure the City Attorney opines based on the definition of a hardship but not be able to use financial hardship because they screwed up and paid too much. They shouldn't be able to get any accommodations based on the sole fact that they paid too much money. (There is a good background report on our drive on this.)

Vice Chair Spitz (PPCC) related that she worked on the draft document originally prepared by Jay Ross, looked at the law, and it is clear that financial law alone is not sufficient; it must be tied to some aspect of the property and you can't say doesn't "pencil out." It is very clear in California law. We have a paragraph that will go on the website. You would think that's clear but Jay Ross went to the hearing and the commissioners were confused about what was meant by financial interest and apparently, even the City Attorney wasn't clear. That is why we need some definitive legal opinion on this. Member Koslow (VNC) related that we have over the years faced this issue a lot, but it is anathema to economic reasoning... Because you paid too much you penciled out your report based on what you paid for the land, as one of the considerations; it is the opposite: you paid too much for it. This is a good motion.

Member Watts (BCC) asked if this only arises when developers are buying the land or is it limited to the cost of the land, to which Handal noted that there shouldn't be any financial consideration in the decision making.

Member Shure likes the motion and thinks that there is precedent law in which financial hardship would only arise if there was a substantial change of use or zoning on the property after the property had been acquired. She recommended that we shore this motion up a little bit. Member Handal appreciated that but noted that we are asking the City Attorney to look at all the state laws and city ordinances and come back with an opinion of what can and can't be done under "financial hardship." He noted that the way it is written now opens the door for the City Attorney do the homework and give an opinion. Member Broide suggested adding specific questions to the background piece.

Member Murez related that the cost of construction has gone up 150% over the last year. He wonders if that becomes a condition of hardship and if we need language in there on a material change because it's not just the land of the overall project. Member Handal noted that we could come up with a hundred different scenarios but the question is are they allowed to claim this is a hardship or not. It is up to the City Attorney to lay down what they are or not allowed to do.

Vice Chair Spitz (PPCC) noted that she totally agrees with Member Handal. She looked into this, it took her 45 minutes. The City Attorney will take 45 minutes. She has something similar to what Member Shure said as a background document. Let the CA tell us what everyone is saying. He will come back with an opinion. That needs to be made clear because the Commissioner or whoever was at the hearing doesn't understand that. **12-0-0; passed.**

- d. **Motion (WRAC Transportation)** – WRAC requests that the City of Los Angeles improves signage in electric vehicle charging locations to discourage non-charging vehicles (both ICE and EVs) from parking there. It further requests that the city issue a warning ticket and subsequent fine to any vehicle owners who repeatedly park in these spots illegally once adequate signage is installed.

Member Murez (VNC) introduced this and **moved** to approve; **seconded** by Chair Wersinger. Members Murez and Broide (WNC) are on the Transportation Committee. Member Murez noted that he has owned an electric vehicle since 2003. Once your car is fully charged you should move it away. Member Sann asked what regional issue arises that we want to bring this motion forward to the 14 councils. He doesn't disagree with what the motion says but has a couple of questions. If this is a problem, why wouldn't individuals or councils send a letter or email to DOT and whomever is operating these facilities? We are telling the city the most basic things they should be doing. He asked how many letters or emails or letters or phone calls in that time do we need to send to get something to happen? It seems to him to be a very minute point that doesn't need to be brought to the level of 14 councils and he thinks it is an inefficient way to make a point to the city.

Member Resnick (WWNC) asked if these charging stations are on public property, to which Chair Wersinger noted that these are the ones you've seen on light poles or on the street, mostly city owned. Member Koslow (VNC) noted that you have to vote on it to have your council send a letter anyway. Member Lewis (NWWNC) thinks it is a good motion. He is considering getting an EV and noted that the Mayor or Governor has a directive to get us off diesel. He thinks it may seem small but these things help to people to possibly switch and allow them to know where the charging stations are. **10-1** Member Sann (WCC) opposed; **passed**.

- e. **Motion (WRAC Transportation)** – WRAC supports motions (City Council File: 20-0584 and 20-0498) introduced by Councilmember David Ryu/Koretz and O'Farrell/Martinez to create incentives for employees of businesses and for government officials and employees to work from home.

While remote work is not a panacea for the climate crisis, making the practice more widespread and available in Los Angeles could help to reduce commuter traffic, which would have the benefit of reducing vehicle air pollution and greenhouse gas emissions. Teleworking is just one of many tools in our toolbox that we must utilize to fight the climate crisis and create sustainable air quality improvements to our region.

By improving air quality, we also create healthier Angelenos. Air pollution is linked to a host of health problems and makes people more vulnerable to COVID-19. A recent UCLA study found that approximately 14,000 premature deaths could be avoided annually if California decreases greenhouse gas emissions to net zero by 2050. Underserved communities who suffer the most from air pollution would see disproportionately higher level of benefits from cleaner air, the study also found.

WRAC actively supports the City studying these issues further and exploring their timely implementation in the City of Los Angeles.

Moved by Member Watts (BCC) and **seconded** by Chair Wersinger. Member Sann (WCC) spoke on this, noting he doesn't think we need to tell people; companies know that the world has changed and is already doing it. **8 yes; 2 no**: Members Handal (WLASNC) & Sann (WCC); **1 abstention**: Vice Chair Spitz; **passed**

- f. **Motion (WRAC Transportation)** - WRAC supports Councilmember Paul Koretz's motion to ban parked vehicle idling. It is necessary to address the issues of poor air quality in Los Angeles due to the increasing concerns over the climate emergency.

Car idling puts 3 million tons of CO2 into California's atmosphere annually. At least one-third of greenhouse gas emissions in Los Angeles is from the transportation sector.

The Los Angeles region has received an on-going annual failing grade from the American Lung Association's "State of the Air" report. Los Angeles is considered the most ozone-polluted metropolitan area in the United States.

Air pollution poses significant dangers to public health, including risk of premature death, reproductive and developmental harm, cardiovascular disease, lung cancer, and asthma. Over 250,000 children and 1.1 million adults in the Los Angeles metropolitan area reportedly have asthma, with low-income communities of color particularly at risk.

Sensitive locations all over Los Angeles, such as schools, hospitals and senior centers, as well as emissions choked areas such as garages, parking lots and travel hubs are most at risk. Distracted Idling is increasing as we sit in our cars to charge and talk on phones, as ride-hailing and delivery services leave parked vehicles engines running.

Idling is a zero MPG activity which creates 3 million tons of unnecessary CO2 and other pollutants in CA annually. It is counterproductive to be concerned about car MPG standards and completely ignore this zero MPG behavior.

At least 7 states, and many cities, have already implemented a parked vehicle idling ban. For example, NYC has had one of the strongest all-vehicle parking idling laws for decades. We are in support of adopting the best practices from these states and cities.

There are exemptions for extreme temperatures, the health and the well-being of passengers, safety or emergency vehicles and commercial vehicles. This will not hurt low-income or homeless people, it will not be enforced in any way if the health or wellness of vehicle occupants are at stake, it will not interfere with necessary emergency and safety vehicle functions, and it will not interfere with commercial vehicle functions that require a parked idling engine.

Research has consistently found that it's less polluting and more fuel efficient to turn off a modern, fuel-injected vehicle than let it idle for more than 10 seconds long. Limiting needless vehicle idling to one minute or less will protect everyone.

This motion would raise consciousness to turn off parked idling vehicles. WRAC calls on LA City Council to support Koretz's parked vehicle idling ban and post "Clean Air Zone - No Idling Allowed" signs in sensitive areas.

We need an effective ordinance coupled with a good educational campaign by LADOT. We ask that before any final City Council action, this motion be amended to set context sensitive time limits for idling. And when this proposed ordinance gets implemented, we ask for clearly defined criteria be established for enforcement.

Chair Wersinger **moved**; Member Murez (VNC) **seconded**; Issues discussed include whether this is enforceable, it is already illegal, whether to have the AQMD involved, with the city coming out with a statement saying we want this enforced if we can carry it to a higher level of government; if there was a way of perhaps modifying older vehicles; that it is not a good idea to give the police another excuse for picking on people from economically disadvantaged communities; it could be another excuse to give a ticket to a black guy but on the other hand, it may be a way to raise this to people's attention to be more cautious about that.

There is a council file: 19-0604; however, Member Spitz noted she hasn't seen this. She'll have to vote no for that reason. She agrees with some of the comments.

<https://cityclerk.lacity.org/lacityclerkconnect/index.cfm?fa=ccfi.viewrecord&cfnumber=19-0604>

Other questions included what is the enforcement mechanism and this may give an excuse for cops to pick on lower-income cars, thinking of the students in Westwood. This doesn't seem to be a fully built-out motion, and is "idling" defined, as to time, types of vehicles, etc. Chair Wersinger would check the background, and look at the council file.

1 yes: Chair Wersinger; **10 no: motion failed**. Selena & Nancy can rewrite this if they like and bring it back if different.

8. Old Business

- a. **21-05 Oppose Use of Beaches, Beach Parking Lots & Public Parks to House the Unhoused**
April 19, 2021 (*passage deadline July 2021*); 8 councils adopted: BABCNC, BCC,* MVCC,* NCWP,* PPCC,* WLASNC, WNC, WWNC (**modified version*). [MAJORITY PASSAGE]
Chair Wersinger noted that he and Vice Chair Spitz will work on a letter. It is going before City Council. Member Shure related that last Thursday *calls* were dropped or folks not called upon. She is concerned that when this progresses to City Council that we can press upon our councilmembers that we all represent the community and have CISs on file and should be entitled to speak. She is disturbed by this, and doesn't feel that last Thursday properly reflected the viewpoints of the constituents and stakeholders on the Westside. Vice Chair Spitz related that she was shocked and couldn't understand why the NCs weren't being called at all.
- b. **21-06 Enforcement of Crimes In or Near Homeless Encampments** – April 19, 2021
(*passage deadline July 2021*); 6 councils adopted: BABCNC, BCC, PPCC, WLASNC, WNC, WWNC.
- c. **21-07 Abate and Correct Unsafe and Unhealthy Conditions In Homeless Encampments** – April 19, 2021 (*passage deadline July 2021*); 6 councils adopted: BABCNC, BCC, PPCC,* WLASNC, WNC, WWNC* (**modified version*).
- d. **21-08 Increase Funding to Support Additional Safe Parking Program** – April 19, 2021
(*passage deadline July 2021*); 7 councils adopted: BABCNC, BCC, DRNC, PPCC, WLASNC, WNC,* WWNC* (**modified version*).
- e. **21-09 Enforce Laws Prohibiting Blockage of Public Right of Way** – April 19, 2021 (*passage deadline July 2021*); 6 councils adopted: BABCNC, BCC, PPCC, WLASNC, WNC,* WWNC (**modified version*).

Get these out in front of your councils. If you have opposition, send that to Chair Wersinger.

9. **Adjourn:** Chair Wersinger closed the meeting noting that we are glad to see Member Handal back in person. Meeting adjourned at 7:58pm.

Next meeting will be held on June 21st 2021 at 6pm.