



**STATEMENT OF PROCEEDINGS FOR THE
REGULAR MEETING OF THE SHERIFF CIVILIAN
OVERSIGHT COMMISSION MEETING HELD
ONLINE AT: <https://bit.ly/3yCRGhA>
coc.lacounty.gov**



Thursday, May 19, 2022

Attachment: [Video](#)

Present: Chair Sean Kennedy, Robert Bonner, Irma Cooper, Luis Garcia, Patti Giggans, James Harris, Jamon R. Hicks, Lael Rubin, and Executive Director Brian K. Williams

1. ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS & CONSENT CALENDAR

Call to Order: Chair Kennedy called the meeting to order at 9:03 a.m., requested staff to call roll and reviewed the code of conduct. Chair Kennedy introduced newly appointed Commissioners Irma Cooper and Luis Garcia and advised the Commission is currently waiting on a commissioner to be appointed by Supervisorial District 1.

Approval of Consent Calendar: Chair Kennedy called for approval, there being no objection, the [April 21, 2022 Meeting Minutes](#) were adopted. No members of the public commented on this item, and Chair Kennedy then moved to item 2.

Family Impact Remarks: Chair Kennedy introduced Stephanie Luna, aunt of Anthony Vargas who shared remarks. Chair Kennedy thanked Ms. Luna and moved to item 2a.

2. REPORTS & POSSIBLE ACTION

2a. Chair's Report

Chair Kennedy had nothing to report and moved to item 2b.

2b. Executive Director's Report

Executive Director Brian K. Williams advised that the original agenda that included elections for chair and vice chair was inadvertently uploaded and has since been updated. He advised that nominations will be held in June and voting will take place in July. Mr. Williams reported that he is working on finding a location for in-person meetings and is seeking direction from the chair on whether to return to in-person meetings. Williams advised that staff will contact Commissioners with suggested changes to the ad hoc committee structure. Chair Kennedy then moved to item 2c.

2c. Office of Inspector General (OIG) Report

Assistant Inspector General Mahdi Mohamed announced OIG quarterly report and other reports will be released soon. Mohamed advised that the OIG's deputy gangs investigation is ongoing and several subpoenas have been issued. Mohamed also reported that the OIG will continue to assist with the Commission's deputy gangs investigation. Mr. Mohamed advised

that OIG is in support of the [Commission's motion to amend the County Charter](#). Following Mr. Mohamed's comments, Chair Kennedy moved to commissioner questions.

Commissioner Rubin inquired about recent testimony from Sheriff Alex Villanueva and asked if he will be called to testify again under oath. Mr. Mohamed reported the Sheriff testified under oath for about 90 minutes with counsel and that subpoenas have been issued to the Sheriff and his command staff.

Commissioner Bonner inquired if OIG is coordinating their deputy gangs investigation with the Commission's pro bono counsel and to what degree. Mr. Mohamed advised that OIG's investigation is running parallel and independently. Chair Kennedy inquired about the list of 41 deputy gang member names, and Mr. Mohamed reported that OIG has compiled a list and County Counsel will need to be contacted to determine if the list can be released.

Following Commissioner questions, Chair Kennedy moved to item 2d.

2d. Commissioner Comments / [Ad Hoc Committee Updates](#)

Chair Kennedy provided a brief background on the BOS directive for the Commission to develop a report and make recommendations to eliminate deputy gangs from the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department (LASD). Family Assistance Program ad hoc lead Patti Giggans reported that the Board of Supervisors (BOS) requested the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) to find permanent funding for the program, and she recommended drafting a letter to the BOS requesting interim funding to assist families.

Chair Kennedy questioned if emergency funding is available for the Family Assistance Program, and staff member Ingrid Williams provided an update on funding. Commissioner Giggans suggested developing a letter to discuss the urgency of program funding and inviting the CEO and the Department of Public Health's Office of Violence Prevention to the next meeting. Following Commissioner comments, Chair Kennedy moved to public comment.

There were 7 members of the public who commented on this item. Following public comment, Chair Kennedy moved to item 2e.

2e. Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department Update

Chair Kennedy called for LASD comments and stated that he believes the Sheriff is required to participate by law. Mr. Williams reported that LASD is invited to attend every Commission meeting. There being no LASD comments, Chair Kennedy moved to item 2f.

2f. County Counsel Updates / Reports

Alexandra Zuiderweg advised that the hearing for the "petition to enforce the Commission's subpoena issued last year for the Sheriff's testimony" is scheduled for October 17, 2022. Chair Kennedy questioned why the delay has taken a year, and Ms. Zuiderweg advised that litigation

takes time and that the calendar is managed by the courts. Following Ms. Zuiderweg's comments, Chair Kennedy moved to item 3a.

3. DISCUSSION & POSSIBLE ACTION

3a. Update on the LASD Deputy Gangs investigation

Chair Kennedy reported that on September 2021, the Commission was tasked by the BOS to develop an implementation plan for the BOS to address the issue of deputy gangs. The Deputy Cliques ad hoc Chair Commissioner Rubin reported that the ad hoc committee is working with pro bono counsel and announced a special hearing scheduled for Tuesday, May 24, 2022.

Chair Kennedy advised that witnesses were subpoenaed to testify at the special hearing. Commissioner Bonner reported that pro bono counsel has confirmed several witnesses have been subpoenaed and that testimony relevant to the investigation of deputy cliques will be provided. Commissioner Bonner advised that pro bono counsel issued letters dated [March 25, 2022](#) and [May 6, 2022](#) to Sheriff Villanueva requesting him to voluntarily appear at the special hearing to address his policy on deputy cliques and a [May 16, 2022](#) response stating "the Sheriff will not be able to attend the May 24, 2022 meeting."

Chair Kennedy called for Commissioner questions. Commissioner Rubin made a motion to ratify the subpoenas, seconded by Commissioner Harris.

Chair Kennedy moved to public comment, where 9 members of the public commented.

Following public comment, Chair Kennedy called for a vote to ratify the four subpoenas issued for the public hearing on May 24, 2022. Motion passed unanimously.

Following the vote Chair Kennedy called for a 15-minute recess, which began at 10:48 a.m. and open session reconvened at 11:03 a.m. Present were Chair Sean Kennedy, Robert Bonner, Irma Cooper, Luis Garcia, James P. Harris, Jamon R. Hicks, Lael Rubin and Executive Director Brian K. Williams. Chair Kennedy then continued with item 3b.

3b. Resolution in support of amending the Los Angeles County Charter

Chair Kennedy acknowledged staff member Erick Montalban who provided information on the Commission's October 2020 [resolution of no confidence](#) and discussed the proposed [resolution in support of amending the Los Angeles County Charter](#).

Melanie Ochoa, Director of Police Practices at the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) provided a detailed background on the charter amendments and requested the Commission include "policy making authority" to the charter. Following Ms. Ochoa's comments, Chair Kennedy called for Commissioner questions.

Commissioner Bonner agreed that a removal mechanism is needed but may be subject to legal challenges and suggested having a permanent oversight authority instead, and he also questioned if it's possible to amend the policy making authority. Ms. Ochoa advised that the

California court of appeals has already held that the removal mechanism is legal, and she that there's no proposal put before the voters at this time, giving the BOS time to make changes.

Commissioner Bonner advised stronger oversight of the Sheriff and suggested following the model of the LAPD commission, which is a policy setting commission. Commissioner Rubin made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Hicks to expand the policy and urge the Board to adopt the resolution and place the amendment on the November ballot. Commissioner Harris agreed that a vehicle to impeach and remove is necessary. Commissioner Cooper commented that accountability is needed and expressed concern about the issue being tied up in litigation. Chair Kennedy agreed that a removal mechanism is needed and shared information from Loyola Law School's Policing LA forum that addressed the issue. Following Commissioner comments, Chair Kennedy moved to public comment.

There were 20 members of the public who commented on this item.

Chair Kennedy called for a vote on the motion for the Resolution in Support of Los Angeles County Charter Amendment. Commissioner Rubin read the motion. Commissioner Bonner suggested the Chair and Executive Director revise the draft to include empowerment of this Commission with policy making authority and present it to the Commission at the next meeting." Following Commissioner comments, Chair Kennedy called for a vote on the amendment.

On a 5-2 vote, the motion passed to approve the final [Resolution in Support of Los Angeles County Charter Amendment](#) with the absence of Commissioner Giggans.

4. GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENTS

There were 8 people who provided general public comment.

Following general public comment, Commissioner Bonner expressed concern over the delay of subpoenas issued to the Sheriff and inquired if anyone on the Commission is briefed or consulted regarding enforcement of the subpoenas. Bonner requested County Counsel meet with the Subpoena ad hoc members to provide updates. Ms. Zuiderweg advised that the petition to enforce the subpoenas was filed at the beginning of the year and that she would be happy to meet with the Commission to provide updates as often as necessary. Ms. Zuiderweg advised that the courts are backed up and hearing dates are limited.

5. ADJOURNMENT

Chair Kennedy announced that the Commission will be hosting a special hearing on Tuesday, May 24, 2022 from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m., and the next regular monthly Commission meeting is scheduled for June 16, 2022. The meeting was adjourned at 12:50 p.m.