

**COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES
HIGHWAY SAFETY COMMISSION**

MEETING MINUTES – AUGUST 2, 2023

1. Call to Order

At 9:11 am.

2. Pledge of Allegiance

Recited

3. Roll Call

Present: Chair Villalobos
 Vice-Chair Rosario
 Commissioner Chambeshi
 Commissioner Gurthrie
 Commissioner Ocanas

Excused Absence: Commissioners Overstreet and Ringler

Participants in attendance:

Staff: Elaine Kunitake, Assistant Deputy Director
 Ron Matsuoka, Senior Civil Engineer
 Jorge Galvan Rosales, Senior Civil Engineering Assistant
 Laura Jacobson, Deputy County Counsel
 Kirk Torossian, Civil Engineer

4. Approval of February 1, 2023 Meeting Minutes

February 1, 2023, HSC meeting minutes were unanimously approved.

5. Discussion/Adoption of Public Comment Time Limits for Agenda and Non-Agenda Items

Laura Jacobson, County Counsel, discussed public comment requirement parameters, stating that the public has a right to speak on agenda and non-agenda items, and it is the Chair's prerogative to establish the amount of speaking time depending on the number of people wanting to speak. Most commissions have a 3-to-4-minute time limit. The only constraint is for translation services where double the speaking time must be provided. If two minutes is the standard speaking time allowance, then 4 minutes of speaking time must be made available for translation services. The Chair can also increase the amount of speaking time if a constituent has a presentation or needs more time to express themselves. The

Chair can also set a 1-minute speaking time limit when there are a significant number of people wanting to address the commission.

Commissioner Ocanas commented that a speaker may use the full 3-minute time limit to make a presentation before the commission. She asked if there were any bounds or constraints that are set on the continuance of that conversation by the HSC after public comment.

County Counsel Jacobson commented that there is no obligation for the HSC to engage in conversation or back and forth with the public commentator. The commissioners may discuss amongst themselves and then ask for points of clarification.

6. Citizens' Appeal of Requests Denied by Public Works

None

7. Report on Business other than Appeals

- Crossing Guard Update

PW staff Kirk Torossian provided a Crossing Guard update. Since the February 1, 2023, HSC commission meeting, PW has recommended two new crossing guard deployments. The locations were both deployed in February as follows:

At the intersection of 135th Street and Cerise Avenue South for the Zela Davis Elementary School in Hawthorne, and at the intersection of Vicki Drive and Godoy Street for the Ada S. Nelson Elementary School in Los Nietos. The total number of locations with crossing guards will increase to 237. Please note that the total number of crossing guards employed by the Los Angeles County Office of Education for these 237 locations is 246 which is due to some locations being served by more than one crossing guard.

Chair Villalobos asked staff, for the sake of the new commissioners, to discuss the criteria on the selection of crossing guard locations.

PW staff Ron Matsuoka stated that PW follows Board approved criteria for the recommendation of a crossing guard, which varies depending on the nature of the control at the intersection i.e., either uncontrolled, stop controlled, or by traffic signal. A crossing guard is recommended when traffic volume thresholds are met i.e., conflicting movements through the crossing as well as the number of pedestrians using the crossing. For traffic signal locations, the amount of green time and number of pedestrian gaps available for crossing without conflicting movements are also evaluated.

Chair Villalobos commented that the commission previously discussed plans by the City of Los Angeles to install stop signs at all intersections around schools to

evaluate whether the same recommendations can be implemented within the County.

PW staff Ron Matsuoka replied that PW did move forward with modifying its multi-way stop control criteria at locations that are immediately adjacent to a school. While it has not been formally approved, PW is using the criteria in practice.

Commissioner Ocanas asked several questions including how crossing guard requests are submitted, if anyone can submit a crossing guard request, whether all approved crossing guard locations are fully staffed, and who trains the crossing guards.

PW staff Ron Matsuoka responded that members of the public, school district officials/parent groups, or other agencies can submit a request for crossing guard services. All approved crossing guard locations are fully staffed. Crossing guard training is conducted by the LACOE, who administers the program and does the training and the actual schedule for deployment.

Commissioner Ocanas commented that since the City of Los Angeles does not have enough crossing guards to meet the demand, the city implemented an engineering-based prioritization so that crossing guards are placed in the areas of highest exposure for risk. The city found that traffic signal locations had a higher incident of crashes versus intersections with all-way stop controls.

Commissioner Chambeshi asked what LACOE stands for.

PW staff Ron Matsuoka responded LACOE stands for the Los Angeles County Office of Education.

8. Public Comments on any matter not on the Agenda

No public comments.

9. Special Orders

None

10. Continuation of Business from Prior Agenda

- Update on installation of Multi-Way Stop Signs at the intersection of Humphreys Avenue and Dozier Street in the East Los Angeles area

PW staff Jorge Galvan Rosales provided a summary of events that led to the approval of the all-way stop controls at the intersection of Humphreys Avenue and Dozier Street. On February 1, 2023, the commission heard an appeal on PW's denial of multi-way stop controls at the intersection of Humphreys Avenue and Dozier Street as the criteria was not met. The commission subsequently approved a motion recommending installation of multi-way stop controls at the intersection. A traffic regulation order for the installation of multi-way stop controls at the

intersection is scheduled for the August 8, 2023, meeting of the County Board of Supervisors. Funding for the multi-way stop controls has been secured and the design is expected to be completed by the end of August 2023, with installation to be completed by the end of September 2023. Regarding other traffic control recommendations, red curb installation at the intersection was completed in May 2023 and the speed cushion study for Humphreys Avenue is on hold as traffic patterns are expected to change following the installation of the multi-way stop controls. A crossing guard is in place at the intersection.

Commissioners made comments regarding the type of school located adjacent to the intersection, school population, and when school is expected to be opened.

Commissioner Ocanas added that it is very helpful to include the existing conditions and the context (traffic volume, elementary or high school students crossing, adjacent senior centers etc.) when reviewing multi-way stop controls adjacent to schools.

11. New Business

Commissioner Rosario inquired whether it was the intent to adopt public comment time limits under New Business.

County Counsel Jacobson stated that the commission can make a simple motion to establish a 3-minute time limit for public comments on agenda and non-agenda items.

Chair Villalobos asked for a motion. Commissioner Rosario made a motion, and the motion was seconded and approved.

Chair Villalobos stated he received a copy of a motion by Supervisor Holly Mitchell relating to a fatal accident that took place at the intersection of Slauson Avenue and La Brea Boulevard a couple of years back. As a result of the loss of life caused by the accident, the CEO's Office was tasked to evaluate and study the county's measures and commissions in place to deal with transportation, traffic issues and safety in the County roadways. The CEO's study was completed and some of the recommendations were incorporated in Supervisor Holly Mitchell motion, to be placed on the Board of Supervisors September 9, 2023, agenda. That motion made a recommendation to dissolve the Highway Safety Commission and create a new commission that would be named the Transportation Commission. The CEO's report, however, did not include the recommendation to dissolve the HSC. The Chair stated he contacted the First District Office with his concerns, that dissolution of the HSC is a disservice to the County and its residents as the Highway Safety Commission is set up to be an appeals body for constituents to be able to bring traffic control requests denied by PW for reconsideration.

Commissioner Chambeshi asked if the proposed committee would totally remove the functions of the HSC.

Chair Villalobos stated it would remove the HSC as a body to review citizen appeals.

Commissioner Ocanas commented while there is a role and a place for the appeals process, she supports the proposed new transportation commission because there are much bigger challenges in the realm of mobility and transportation in the County, such as Vision Zero.

Chair Villalobos stated he agreed and proceeded to provide a brief discussion on the history of the HSC and its purpose, serving as an appeal body for citizens requesting roadway striping, parking signage, safety control measures, traffic signals, stop signs installation, beside hearing crossing guard appeals. That the public has a group to hear PW denials for traffic control requests is a good thing. While the HSC may not always agree with PW, the HSC tries to provide a win-win for all concerned. The Chair encouraged the commissioners to contact their supervisor and give them their perspective on how they feel about the upcoming motion.

12. Next meeting date November 1, 2023.

13. Adjournment – 9:48 a.m.