



# City of Culver City

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## Staff Report

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File #: 24-1122, Version: 1

Item #: A-4.

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**CC: ACTION ITEM: (1) Discussion of a Culver City Commission, Board, or Committee on Women and Girls and (2) If Desired, Formation of an Ad Hoc City Council Subcommittee on the Women and Girls Committee Formation and Appointment of Two Council Members Thereto.**

**Meeting Date:** June 10, 2024

**Contact Person/Dept.:** Jesse Mays, Assistant City Manager

**Phone Number:** (310) 253-6000

**Fiscal Impact:** Yes  No  **General Fund:** Yes  No

**Attachments:** Yes  No

**Public Notification:** (E-Mail) Meetings and Agendas - City Council (06/06/2024)

**Department Approval:** John Nachbar, City Manager (06/04/2024)

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### **RECOMMENDATION**

Staff recommends the City Council (1) discuss whether to form a commission, board or committee (CBC) on women and girls; and (2) if desired, form an Ad Hoc City Council Subcommittee on the Women and Girls Committee Formation to work with staff on the formation of the CBC and appointment of two Council Members thereto.

### **BACKGROUND/DISCUSSION**

At the March 12, 2024 City Council Meeting, the City Council reached a majority consensus to request a discussion of creating a City Committee or Commission on Women and Girls. The City Council also requested that staff provide data on the ratios of men to women on the composition of the City's current Commissions, Boards and Committees.

#### ***Gender Representation Statistics for City Bodies***

Staff reviewed the list of members and identified the perceived gender identity of each member of the City's Commissions, Boards and Committees. As of March 25, 2024, there were 36 males and 39 females. A detailed list of the members is attached (Attachment 1).

#### ***State of California***

According to the [California Commission on the Status of Women and Girls webpage <https://women.ca.gov/>](https://women.ca.gov/) (https://women.ca.gov/):

“For more than 50 years, the California Commission on the Status of Women and Girls has identified and worked to eliminate inequities in state laws, practices, and conditions that affect California’s women and girls. Established as a state agency with 17 appointed commissioners in 1965, the Commission regularly assesses gender equity in health, safety, employment, education, and equal representation in the military, and the media. The Commission provides leadership through research, policy and program development, education, outreach and collaboration, advocacy, and strategic partnerships.”

### **Los Angeles County**

According to the [Los Angeles County Commission for Women webpage <https://laccw.lacounty.gov/>](https://laccw.lacounty.gov/) (https://laccw.lacounty.gov/):

On March 18, 1975, a motion was introduced to the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors to prepare a draft ordinance to establish an independent County Commission for Women. A 15-member commission was created to represent the special interests and concerns of women of all races, ethnic and social backgrounds, religious convictions, sexual orientation and social circumstances.

As part of his statement, Supervisor Edmund D. Edelman said: "Although women represent a majority of the County's population, tradition and prejudice, along with social, political and economic restrictions have resulted in women being denied by virtue of their status of being women, certain basic human rights. The denial of these fundamental rights has created inequities in economic, political, legal and social status, thereby preventing the development of women's individual potential and the ability to contribute as fully as possible to the economic and cultural well being of the County of Los Angeles.

In view of the long standing tradition of according women an inferior status in society, nothing less than a concerted effort at all levels of government will remove the barriers of discrimination and prejudice and result in true equality."

The Los Angeles County Commission for Women seeks to represent the interest and concerns of women of all races, ethnic and social backgrounds, religious convictions, sexual orientation and social circumstances.

The Commission is mandated to Advise the Board of Supervisors, County departments and agencies on needs of women and matters relating to discrimination and prejudice on account of sex, marital status and sexual orientation; Recommend programs or legislation to promote and ensure equal rights and opportunities for women; Research and Investigate conditions which allegedly discriminate against women and disseminate results of investigations; and provide a coordinating function for County departments, community groups and organizations concerned with women's rights.

The Los Angeles County Commission for Women will advocate for the lives and well-being of women

through building strong collaboration, sharing available resources, and educating and empowering through participation in the legislative process.

A full list of County commissions in California can be found online at

[<https://women.ca.gov/local-womens-commissions/>](https://women.ca.gov/local-womens-commissions/)

### **California Cities**

The following California cities have commissions on women: Berkeley, Carson, Compton, Glendale, Los Angeles, Pasadena, West Hollywood, and San Diego. Detailed information about the commissions in West Hollywood, Los Angeles, Pasadena, and the former commission in Santa Monica, are given below.

A full list of City commissions in California can be found online at

[<https://women.ca.gov/local-womens-commissions/>](https://women.ca.gov/local-womens-commissions/)

### **West Hollywood**

The West Hollywood Womens Advisory Board <https://www.weho.org/city-government/boards-commissions/advisory-boards/women-s-advisory-board> was created on December 7, 1992 and is comprised of five (5) members appointed by individual Councilmembers and four (4) members appointed by the Council as a whole (at-large). The Women's Advisory Board addresses matters relating to advocacy on behalf of women's rights such as economic equality, reproductive rights, violence against women and sexual harassment and makes recommendations to Council relative to the adoption of programs, policies or ordinances of benefit to the constituency. The board meets monthly.

At its most recent meeting on May 23, 2024, the agenda contained the following items: review and discussion of initiating the planning process for the City's annual commemoration of Women's Equality Day; board retreat follow-up discussion; updates regarding the City's legislative actions related to the board's priority issues; receipt of a report from staff regarding the City's annual recognition of National Sexual Assault Awareness and Prevention Month; receipt of updates regarding the City's support and participation in Equal Mean Equal's "Final Impact for the ERA", a new national multi-media campaign to pressure publication and adoption of the Equal Rights Amendment before the November elections; and subcommittee and liaison reports.

### **Los Angeles**

The [Los Angeles Commission on the Status of Women \(CSW\)](https://civilandhumanrights.lacity.gov/commissions/statusofwomen)

<https://civilandhumanrights.lacity.gov/commissions/statusofwomen> was established through Ordinance No. 147478 passed by Mayor Tom Bradley in 1975 with the mission to advance the general welfare of women and girls in the Los Angeles community and to ensure that all women have full and equal participation in City government. Since then, the ordinance has been amended to Ordinance No. 187032. The CSW engages in several different issue areas such as Gender Equality & Workforce Development, Gender Equality & Transportation, Preventing Harassment & Discrimination in the Workplace, Safe Cities L.A., Connecting Women in City Government, Cities leading Women, LA Women Mean Business and the Intersection of Domestic Violence, Human Trafficking & Female Homelessness. The Commission on the Status of Women meets bimonthly, on the third Friday of every other month.

At its most recent meeting on May 17, the agenda contained the following items: report from the Assistant General Manager of the LA Civil + Human Rights and Equity Department; presentation on City Hub and Network for Gender Equity; report on supporting survivors of gender-based violence; an update on pioneer women; an update on child care expenditures in campaign finance; a proposal to create an ad hoc committee to research and develop needed policy recommendations that address the issues surrounding menopause and support for women in the workplace in the City of Los Angeles.

### **Pasadena**

The purpose of the [Pasadena Commission on the Status of Women](https://www.cityofpasadena.net/commissions/commission-on-the-status-of-women/) is to advise the city council on the special needs and concerns of women of all ages, races, religions, ethnic and cultural backgrounds, and economic and social circumstances. The commission: studies and examine conditions which indicate discrimination or prejudice encountered by women; recommends policies, procedures, programs, and legislation to promote and ensure equal rights and opportunities for all women in the city; consults with other public agencies and commissions on matters relevant to the commission. The Commission's 2023-2024 workplan includes three ad hoc committees with different planned projects: Advise City Council (drive awareness about women's issues using data points via social media, develop a content calendar with input from the City's Public Information Officer, and monitor City Council meetings for agenda items relevant to the work of the Commission), Empower Women (invite third-party subject matter experts to educate the Commission and community on current events/issues; develop and manage annual Herstory event; sponsor citywide Women's History Month events in conjunction with the City Council), and Empower Girls (partner with local organizations to host professional skills workshops; identify citywide young women focused programs to partner and promote meaningful opportunities for growth; reimagine the Survival Guide with the intentional engagement of young women and girls; develop a brief survey to gauge the utilization of the Survival Guide and provide updates and comments. Commissioners sign-up to share the duty of observing each City Council meeting. The Commission produces a document called "The Survival Guide" which is an important resource guide and directory of information for use by individuals, families and organizations. The guide highlights organizations and services that are readily available to provide assistance to Pasadena residents and other in the surrounding areas. Topics include healthcare, childcare, employment opportunities, government programs, housing, substance abuse programs, and transportation options.

### ***Santa Monica***

On April 26, 2022, the Santa Monica City Council amended the Santa Monica Municipal Code to consolidate the Commission on the Status of Women, the Commission on Senior Community, and the Social Services Commissions into the newly named Human Services Commission. The goal of the Santa Monica Human Services Commission (HSC) is to advise City Council on priorities and strategies involving the well-being, equity, and needs of vulnerable, low income, and at-risk residents including youth and families, seniors, and people experiencing homelessness. The Commission acts in an advisory capacity to the City Council in all matters pertaining to the social, economic, and wellness needs of vulnerable community members including, but not limited to, marginalized populations, low-income households, older adults, women and girls (including transgender women and girls), people of color, and people experiencing homelessness. The Commission's scope is like that of the Culver City Equity and Human Relations Advisory Committee. The Human Services Commission consists of nine (9) members, all of whom are be residents of the City of Santa Monica. Members serve a 4-year term.

### ***Culver City's Equity and Human Relations Advisory Committee***

Staff recommends that if City Council creates a CBC on women and girls, the Council should provide clarity as to what that CBC's role would be in the context of the existing Equity and Human Relations

Advisory Committee (EHRAC).

EHRAC is an advisory body to the City Council and/or the City Manager, established in 2020. The Committee consists of 9 members appointed by the City Council as follows: seven Members-at-Large, one Labor Representative, and one Youth Representative. The purpose and objectives of the EHRAC is as follows:

- A. Serve as an advisory body to the City Council or the City Manager to recommend programs, policies and activities that promote positive human relations and equitable outcomes and opportunities in all aspects of community life;
- B. At the direction of the City Council or the City Manager:
  - 1. Recommend programs, policies and activities designed to promote the full acceptance of all people in all aspects of community life, without regard to race, religion, gender, gender identity, gender expression, sex, sexual orientation, age, disability, immigration status, citizenship, color, ethnicity, or national origin, ancestry, socioeconomic status, income or other protected categories or personal characteristics; and
  - 2. Recommend programs, policies and activities designed to reduce discrimination, increase cultural competency, improve intergroup relations, and promote civil and human rights for all; and
  - 3. Identify, track and report on existing and emerging related issues stemming from complaints from residents and visitors concerning interactions with City employees, elected and appointed officials, City contractors and City volunteers.
- C. Hold public meetings on community-wide problems arising in the City which may result in intergroup tensions or discrimination because of actual or perceived biases based on race, religion, gender, gender identity, gender expression, sex, sexual orientation, age, disability, immigration status, citizenship, color, ethnicity, or national origin, ancestry, socioeconomic status, income or other protected categories or personal characteristics;
- D. Prepare and disseminate educational and informational material relating to prejudice, discrimination and inequity, and ways and means of eliminating such prejudice, discrimination and inequity;
- E. Assist the general public by providing information regarding the appropriate process to file a complaint concerning perceived discriminatory interactions between City employees and the public;
- F. Prepare and submit to the City Council an annual report on its progress in accomplishing the approved workplan; and
- G. Perform such other duties, not inconsistent with the City Charter or the Culver City Municipal Code, as may be prescribed by ordinance, resolution, City Council policy or other City Council action.

### ***Committee versus Commission versus Board***

The authority for the City Council to create a commission, board, or committee, and the purpose of and differences between the different bodies are detailed in City Council Policy 3002: “City Commissions, Boards and Committees; Appointed Representatives to Outside Agencies and Boards” (Attachment 1):

The City Charter provides the City Council with the authority, by ordinance, to establish and abolish such commissions and boards as it may determine, from time to time, to be necessary for the effective and efficient governance of the City. The Culver City Municipal Code establishes the Civil Service, Cultural Affairs, Planning, and Parks, Recreation and Community Services commissions, and the Landlord-Tenant Mediation Board, as well as their respective powers and duties. The Charter further gives the City Council the authority, by ordinance, resolution or other action, to establish and abolish committees for a specified purpose. In general, the primary difference between commissions and boards versus committees are the means by which the bodies are created, including their roles and duties. Commissions and boards are created by ordinance and can only be dissolved by ordinance. Similarly, the role, and duties and authority of a commission and board are also set by ordinance and can only be modified by ordinance. Whereas, the creation, role and duties of a committee are established by City Council resolution. Each body, whether a commission, board or committee, only has the authority that is vested in the body by the City Council.

Each Commission, Board and Committee (CBC) acts in an advisory capacity, providing findings and recommendations, to the City Council on matters pertaining to policies, procedures, rules and regulations within the subject matter jurisdiction of that CBC. The City Council gives great weight to a CBC’s advice and recommendations when making policy decisions for the governance of the City.

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In addition to advisory roles, CBCs may advise on, plan, host or produce an event that has been approved by City Council, in accordance with Section VII of this Policy, or periodically, may take on other roles as authorized by the City Council, in its sole discretion.

As a result of the different objectives of an advisory body versus a policy-making body, the Council may periodically override a CBC. This does not reflect negatively on the capabilities or integrity of any CBC or any individual Commissioner or Board or Committee Member (CBC Member). Rather, it is the natural course of the City Council’s overall responsibilities.

Each CBC Member has a role in the evaluation and analysis of issues, contributing to the overall mission of providing quality public services and being responsive to community needs and sensitivities. Once appointed, however, a CBC Member no longer acts solely as a private individual, but a representative of the City. Their

conduct must be consistent with the obligations of public office.

#### IV. GENERAL ROLE OF THE CITY'S COMMISSIONS, BOARDS AND COMMITTEES:

The City of Culver City prides itself on the participatory nature of its local government and encourages civic engagement by members of the public. The City's CBCs play an important role in the efficient governance of the City and provide interested community members with the opportunity to serve the public.

As advisory bodies to the City Council, the CBCs' advice on topics within their purview, combined with factual research performed by City Staff, provide the City Council with a more complete picture of many issues. In the role of advisors to the City Council, CBCs make recommendations concerning City policy, and may administer policies adopted by the City Council. However, unless expressly authorized to do so by the City Council, CBCs shall not make policy.

Each Commission's and Board's specific powers and duties are set forth in the Culver City Municipal Code. A Committee's specific powers and duties may be established by resolution or other action of the City Council. Each CBC may establish its own bylaws, which must be approved by the City Council. To the extent any CBCs' bylaws are in conflict with this Policy, this Policy shall control.

Pursuant to and consistent with Culver City Municipal Code Section 3.03.035, the City Council retains jurisdiction on all items which may otherwise be considered by the various CBCs. Either the City Council or the City Manager, in their sole discretion, may determine to have any item heard directly by the City Council.

#### ***Staff Impacts***

The fiscal and staffing requirements of a CBC depend on the scope of the mission and composition of the CBC, as well as the CBC's workplan and the types of recommendations it makes and programs it initiates. A CBC typically requires minimum annual staff time equivalent to one-half to one full time employee. This is in addition to support from staff in the City Clerk, IT, and other departments before and during meetings.

The staff member for West Hollywood's commission reports that she spends 10-15 hours a month on work related to the West Hollywood Women's Advisory Board.

Culver City EHRAC is staffed by 1 FTE, in addition to additional staff for oversight and meeting support. Although the EHRAC is only required to meet quarterly, it typically meets once a month. During non-meeting weeks, time is spent speaking with or meeting with the Chair and/or subcommittees on pending items, interacting with other City staff to address legal or background questions, assisting subcommittees, planning for future discussion items, and background research.

If the City Council decides to create a new CBC, the Council should also provide direction on whether the City should hire new staff to support the commission, or alternatively which City programs or

services should be displaced in the workplan of existing staff.

### **FISCAL ANALYSIS**

There is no fiscal impact to discuss this item. The fiscal impact will depend on the City Council's direction.

### **ATTACHMENTS**

1. 24-06-10 ATT Commission, Board, and Committee Gender Details

### **MOTIONS**

That the City Council:

1. Discuss formation of a Culver City Commission, Board, or Committee on Women and Girls;  
and,
2. If Desired, Form of an Ad Hoc City Council Subcommittee on the Women and Girls Committee Formation and appoint two Council Members thereto; and,
3. Provide additional direction to the City Manager as desired.