



**STATEMENT OF PROCEEDINGS FOR THE
REGULAR MEETING OF THE SHERIFF CIVILIAN
OVERSIGHT COMMISSION MEETING HELD
ONLINE AT: <https://bit.ly/3JW0IsX>
coc.lacounty.gov**



Thursday, April 21, 2022

Attachment: [Video](#)

Present: Chair Sean Kennedy, Robert Bonner, Patti Giggans, Jamon R. Hicks, Lael Rubin and Executive Director Brian K. Williams

Absent: James P. Harris

1. ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS & CONSENT CALENDAR

Call to Order: Chair Kennedy called the meeting to order at 9:03 a.m. and staff took roll.

Consent Calendar: Chair Kennedy called for approval, there being no objection, the [March 17, 2022 Meeting Minutes](#) were adopted. No members of the public commented on this item, and Chair Kennedy then moved to item 2.

2. REPORTS & POSSIBLE ACTION

2a. Chair's Report

Chair Kennedy recalled the Commission's [April 2021 proposed policy on deputy gangs](#) and the request that the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department (LASD) adopt the anti-deputy clique policy. He advised that more information about deputy gangs would be provided during ad hoc committee reports and moved to item 2b.

2b. Executive Director's Report

Executive Director Brian K. Williams advised he is working with the Board of Supervisors (BOS) on the appointment of two new Commissioners and hopes to have a full Commission by June. Williams advised that the Budget ad hoc committee and staff have been working diligently on the LASD budget review and the [staff report](#) will be forwarded to the BOS and the Chief Executive Office (CEO) with the Commission's approval. Mr. Williams announced the Civilian Oversight Commission (COC) is exploring a collaboration with the Sybil Brand Commission and the Office of Inspector General (OIG) to monitor the issue of LASD in-custody deaths and more information is forthcoming.

Commissioner Rubin inquired if enough community input was received on the LASD budget. Mr. Williams confirmed sufficient public input was received, and Chair Kennedy advised he and Commissioner Harris hosted a conference on the LASD budget and additional community

input was received. Commissioner Bonner inquired if there would be an opportunity to review recommendations prior to them being submitted to BOS. Mr. Williams advised that staff would draft a letter to the Chair for approval. Chair Kennedy then moved to item 2c.

2c. Office of Inspector General (OIG) Report

Inspector General Max Huntsman announced that Sheriff Alex Villanueva is scheduled to testify under oath in a private setting on Friday, April 22, 2022 regarding LASD deputy gangs. Mr. Huntsman advised OIG is assisting Pro Bono Counsel Bert Deixler upon request with his investigation on deputy gangs and that OIG is experiencing staffing issues and will meet with the CEO and the BOS Executive Office to discuss the staffing budget. Mr. Huntsman advised two new reports are available, including a [Deputy Involved Shooting without an Administrative Investigation](#) and [Body Worn Cameras](#), where access to footage continues to be a problem. Mr. Huntsman reported the LASD Inmate Reception Center continues to have horrible conditions, with the longest wait time documented at 30 hours. Following Mr. Huntsman's comments, Chair Kennedy moved to commissioner questions.

Commissioner Giggans asked what the process would be after the Sheriff testifies. Mr. Huntsman advised that it is dependent upon the Sheriff's cooperation or lack thereof, and he stated information will be collected, evaluated and presented to the Commission and that litigation may take place.

Commissioner Rubin questioned if the Sheriff requested the testimony questions in advance. Mr. Huntsman advised questions were not requested in advance but that copies of all evidence was requested by his lawyers and was denied. Following commissioner questions, Chair Kennedy moved to item 2d.

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

Chair Kennedy discussed the [BOS directive](#) for the Commission to develop an report with recommendations to eliminate LASD deputy gangs. The Deputy Gangs ad hoc lead, Commissioner Rubin then introduced Pro Bono Counsel Bert Deixler, who shared an overview of the investigation he is conducting on deputy gangs. Mr. Deixler shared the law firms assisting with the investigation and that 20 interviews have taken place thus far. He advised that Measure R subpoena power will be utilized as needed, and he expressed disappointment over County Counsel's slow response to his requests for information. Mr. Deixler advised that more witness interviews will take place this week and that multiple witnesses have expressed concern over the Sheriff's retaliation and physical attacks by their peers if they were to testify.

Commissioner Rubin asked when testimony would be heard before the COC. Mr. Deixler advised that two witnesses should be available by the next COC meeting.

Commissioner Bonner expressed a concern about witness intimidation and discussed the process for the entire Commission to vote to issue subpoenas. He then [moved to authorize the chair or vice chair](#) to sign off on requests to issue subpoenas to prevent delays into the

investigation. Commissioner Rubin expressed a concern over the motion and the need for the deputy cliques ad hoc committee to review subpoenas related deputy cliques.

Commissioner Bonner asked if Mr. Deixler is still having conflict waiver issues and if an expedited subpoena process would be beneficial to the investigation. Mr. Deixler stated he is working with County Counsel to resolve the conflict waiver issues and confirmed the expedited subpoena process would be helpful. He stated that multiple witnesses are willing to testify if they are subpoenaed.

Chair Kennedy requested clarification if the motion requires the deputy cliques ad hoc to review subpoenas before they are submitted to the Chair. Commissioner Bonner clarified that subpoenas will be approved by the subpoena ad hoc and submitted to the chair for signature, and then they will be ratified by the Commission at the next scheduled COC meeting.

Commissioner Bonner's motion was seconded by Commissioner Giggans, and then Chair Kennedy moved to public comment. There were 7 members of the public who commented.

Following public comment, Chair Kennedy opened the floor for additional Commissioner comments. Commissioner Rubin requested clarification if Pro Bono Counsel would submit requests for subpoenas to the Chair or to the Subpoena ad hoc. Commissioner Bonner advised requests can be submitted either way, whichever works best for Mr. Deixler.

Commissioner Giggans questioned if the witnesses names would remain confidential, and Commissioner Bonner confirmed they will remain confidential throughout the entire process.

Commissioner Rubin suggested Commissioner Hicks be appointed to the Subpoena ad hoc, and Commissioner Hicks accepted. Mr. Williams requested subpoena requests be forwarded to the Executive Director for tracking purposes.

Following commissioner comments, Chair Kennedy called for a vote on the [motion regarding the Subpoena Process](#). The motion passed unanimously, with Commissioner Harris being absent. Chair Kennedy then moved to item 2e.

2e. Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department Update

There being no LASD comments, Chair Kennedy moved to item 2f.

2f. County Counsel Updates / Reports

County Counsel's Alexandra Zuiderweg highlighted Mr. Huntsman's comments and announced that Sheriff Villanueva will testify under oath to answer questions related to deputy gangs. Ms. Zuiderweg advised that three COC subpoenas from last year are pending and an update will be provided in May. Chair Kennedy then moved to item 3a.

3. DISCUSSION & POSSIBLE ACTION

3a. Family Impact Remarks

After Terry Lovett, mother of Jalani Lovett shared her remarks, Chair Kennedy expressed condolences and requested staff follow up to assist with concerns. Commissioner Giggans requested that Family Assistance Program information be forwarded to Ms. Lovett. Mr. Williams reported that the [BOS fully funded the program](#) and Commissioner Giggans requested an update at the next COC meeting.

Following Family Impact Remarks, Chair Kennedy moved to item 3b.

3b. Conditions of Confinement at the Century Regional Detention Facility (CRDF)

Chair Kennedy introduced LASD's Assistant Director of Gender Responsive Services Dr. Melissa Kelley, who provided an overview of the education services and rehabilitation programs available to the women at Century Regional Detention Facility (CDRF). Dr. Kelley advised LASD is collaborating with College of the Canyons to offer incarcerated women the opportunity to take college courses.

Following Dr. Kelley's comments, Chair Kennedy called for a 15-minute recess, from 10:53 to 11:08 a.m. Upon reconvening, present were Chair Sean Kennedy, Robert Bonner, Patti Giggans, Jamon R. Hicks, Lael Rubin and Executive Director Brian K. Williams.

Following the break, Chair Kennedy continued with item 3b and reported that in-custody deaths have increased as noted in the [staff report](#), and he introduced LASD Custody Division Chief Sergio Aloma, Correctional Health Services Director Dr. Timothy Belavich and Assistant Inspector General Cathleen Beltz.

Chief Aloma requested Ms. Lovett's contact information so he could follow up to assist with her concerns. He reviewed the in-custody deaths process, corrective action plans in place and possible reasons for increased deaths. Chief Aloma stated that 44% of the population have mental health issues, and Fentanyl overdoses are responsible for 34% of in-custody deaths.

Commissioner Rubin inquired about LASD's protocol for notifying the families and attorneys of records following in-custody deaths. Chief Aloma advised that the current process requires LASD to notify the Family Assistance Program, who then contacts the family. Aloma also stated that all in-custody deaths are handled by Homicide Bureau detectives.

Dr. Belavich provided in-custody deaths statistics, which included data on COVID-19, suicides and overdoses. He reported an increase in overdoses at Men's Central Jail and stated Narcan has been distributed throughout the facility. Belavich reported a significant increase in the mental health population, with 6,400 individuals currently in the program. Dr. Belavich discussed limited staffing and stated he is working with BOS and CEO regarding the issue.

Assistant Inspector General Cathleen Beltz discussed [information on in-custody deaths](#) and the role OIG plays in the process. Ms. Beltz shared systemic issues identified following in-custody deaths and preventative measures to help reduce the problem.

Chair Kennedy then called for Commissioner questions. Commissioner Giggans asked how often OIG visits the jail facilities. Ms. Beltz reported that visits are conducted at least weekly. Chair Kennedy inquired about solutions to the rising deaths, and Ms. Beltz advised the jails are overpopulated and understaffed. Beltz recommended alternatives to incarceration whenever possible, highlighted the Forensic In-Patient (FIP) Step-down program and discussed the issue of valuing Custody as a separate workforce.

Mr. Huntsman reported that the LASD jails are grossly overcrowded, which results in the lack of care to incarcerated people. Executive Director Williams recommended collaborating with OIG to develop a multi-agency collaboration to address care for people in the jails.

There were 11 members of the public who commented on this item.

Following commissioner comments, Chair Kennedy moved to item 4, general public comment.

4. GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENTS

There were 10 people who provided general public comment. View the [written comments submitted online](#). Following general public comment, Chair Kennedy adjourned the meeting.

5. ADJOURNMENT

Chair Kennedy announced deputy gangs will be discussed at the next COC meeting on May 19, 2022 and adjourned the meeting at 12:40 p.m.