



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### **Historic Civilian Oversight Commission**

Implementing historic criminal justice reform, the Board of Supervisors appointed the first-ever Civilian Oversight Commission for the Sheriff's Department, with a mandate to promote transparency in law enforcement and restore public trust.

Supervisor Mark Ridley-Thomas, principal author of the motion that created the Commission, said, "Civilians must play a critical role in holding law enforcement to the highest standards of constitutional policing. This Commission will bring new ideas to the forefront, establish new discourse, and bring new urgency in finding solutions."

"With the Commission, the public will have a dedicated forum to promote accountability and build partnership with the Sheriff's Department (LASD), the Office of Inspector General, and the Board of Supervisors," Supervisor Ridley-Thomas added. "If law enforcement is to be effective in the context of 21<sup>st</sup> century policing, it must have civilian input."

The Board seated the Commission's executive director and nine members, including legal scholars, former law enforcement officials, civil rights activists, religious leaders, and an advocate for victims of violence. Executive Director Brian K. Williams said, "I'm looking forward to working with the other member agencies to make what I think will be the model law enforcement agency in the nation."

Sheriff Jim McDonnell embraced the Commission, saying, “I anticipate that our working relationship will be very much a partnership.”

”We at the LASD understand that to build community relations, we must also build community credibility,” Sheriff McDonnell added. “We will be stronger and more effective, and be viewed with greater trust, when we welcome outside eyes.”

Inspector General Max Huntsman called the Commission a “game changer” that would “allow the public to interact with the Sheriff’s Department in a very robust way – not to shout at each other, but to really come together and talk.”

“Healing must occur, but for that to happen, our citizens must have reason to trust,” Supervisor Ridley-Thomas said. “This Civilian Oversight Commission will play a critical role in the rebuilding process.”

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