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INSIDE

- BH approves homelessness plan. pg. 3
- wayOUTLA benefit. pg. 6

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Bosse says ‘yes,’ and then determines how

■ Connecting with community is key to third term

BY RANCE COLLINS

Six months into her third term as mayor of Beverly Hills, Lili Bosse said it is the connection with people that energizes her approach to the job.

“[Being mayor is] very much about being accessible,” Bosse said. “It’s about being somebody that really wants the connection, that really welcomes the connection. It takes everybody to create change, [and] people feeling that you’re around like-minded, like-hearted people.”

After she was first elected in 2011, Bosse took on the title of mayor in 2014 and 2017. This time around, in a post-COVID world, she said the job is decidedly different.

“I think dealing with a global health pandemic – which nobody could have ever expected – changed all of us. I think, for me, as somebody who loves connection with people, [it was hard] having to be separated from one another, to



photo courtesy of the city of Beverly Hills
Lili Bosse began her third term as Beverly Hills mayor in April.

not be able to be together, to not be able to hug people that we love, to not be able to connect. It was a very, very, very challenging time for all

See Mayor page 26

Mayor Bosse outlines goals for city

From page 1

of us individually and collectively. So, I felt that when I became mayor in 2022, even though the world started to open up, that there was still a lot of feelings that we all carried from it, and a lot of challenges from it. And the increase in crime that was happening, the increase in the unhoused was happening, [so] there were new challenges. I’m very action oriented. It was imperative to me that the day that I became mayor, [I had] programs in place, and we have solutions,” she said.

With more than a decade of council experience, Bosse hit the ground running on the night of her installation in April. She immediately launched programs like Real Time Watch, a crime surveillance initiative that is already being used as a model for other cities.

“I start with ‘yes.’ And then we figure out how,” Bosse said.

She also announced that evening the beginning of her ongoing community events, Live with Lili and Business with Bosse. In the former, Bosse meets directly with Beverly Hills residents, hears their feedback and works with them on finding solutions.

“I want to get ideas from the community as to what they see, because they’re the eyes and ears. What I do at each Live with Lili [is after] the ideas come up, at the next meeting, I give a follow up as to what happened with those ideas, what we can implement, what we have implemented, what might take

some time, why something might not work, or if it’s in the process. Because I think what’s frustrating for anybody is to throw out an idea, and then you just feel it’s out in the universe but nobody ever does anything. I’m very much a follow through person,” Bosse said.

Business with Bosse events are held weekly, with Bosse visiting and highlighting local businesses.

Bosse polls the crowd at the events and asks how many people are visiting that business for the first time. Sometimes there are quite a few, she said.

“And then they stay. They stay for dinner or stay for breakfast. They come back,” she said.

Bosse also has put an emphasis on mental wellness, something she views as particularly important in the wake of the pandemic. She has implemented a series in which mental health experts discuss mental wellness with the community.

“I do believe that all of us have been affected by these last number of years. So, I feel that having these experts come and speak to us has been important,” she said.

At the Nov. 15 City Council meeting, Bosse put forth an item to deal with the unhoused and mental illness that is affecting that community, introducing a 24-hour hotline for people to call when they encounter a person dealing with mental problems. The number will be (310)285-2468.

“It’s a number that everyone can remember,” she said. “I’m very

proud that we are really tackling the reality of the unhoused.”

Most personally, Bosse’s tenure has come at a time of social unrest worldwide, with the Sept. 16 death of Masha Amini in Iran prompting a series of protests in the city of Beverly Hills. The City Council was among the first in the nation to issue a proclamation condemning the Iranian government.

“Any form of hate, in my mind, is something that I feel it’s part of the fiber of my being that I have to speak out against. Because I feel that it’s really fighting for the soul of humanity, that no matter what, religion, no matter what race, no matter what color of skin, no matter your sexual preference, that we all share the same sense of responsibility to speak out for each other.” Additionally, waves of antisemitism have hit close to home in Beverly Hills. Recently, a series of flyers containing hate speech were found scattered across residents’ windshields and lawns. A daughter of Holocaust survivors, Bosse took an immediate stand.

“Growing up, I always heard, ‘Never again, and never forget.’ Well, here we are. And so that’s why ... I’m gonna speak out louder. I have no fear. Because as soon as we stop speaking out and saying, ‘No, it’s not OK,’ that’s [when] our world and our humanity is going in the wrong direction.”

For Bosse, the struggle toward equality will always be a central mission of Beverly Hills.

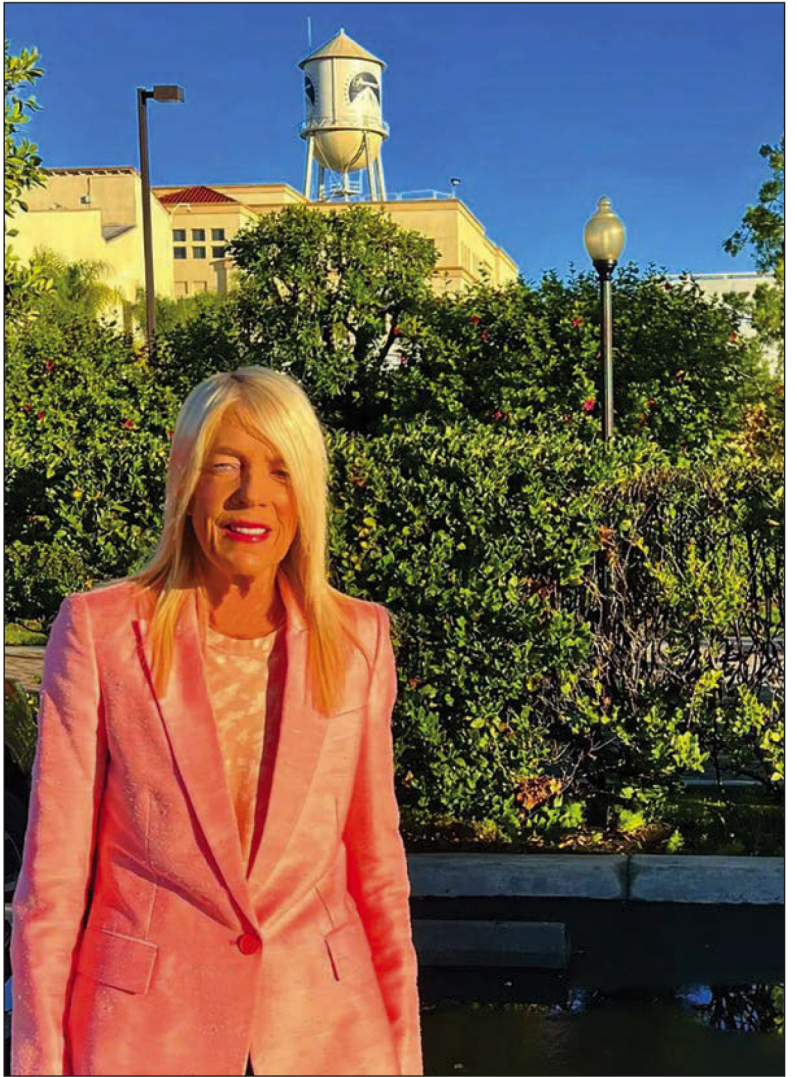


photo courtesy of Lili Bosse

Beverly Hills Mayor Lili Bosse visited the Paramount Studios lot to appear on “Dr. Phil” to discuss antisemitism.

“I think the fact that people do pay attention to Beverly Hills, to what we do here, that people need to see that Beverly Hills, as world famous as it is, that we are a city that stands up for human rights, that

we stand up for humanity,” she said.

At its heart, Bosse said the fight for justice aligns with the heart of the city, which she said is grounded in “community, vision and soul.”