

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
CENTRAL DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA
(WESTERN DIVISION - LOS ANGELES)

LA ALLIANCE FOR HUMAN RIGHTS,)	CASE NO: 2:20-cv-02291-DOC-KESx
ET AL.,)	
	CIVIL
Plaintiffs,)	
	Los Angeles, California
vs.)	
	Thursday, April 23, 2026
CITY OF LOS ANGELES, ET AL.,)	
	(1:32 p.m. to 1:46 p.m.)
Defendants.)	(2:22 p.m. to 2:30 p.m.)

STATUS CONFERENCE

BEFORE THE HONORABLE DAVID O. CARTER,
UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE, PRESIDING

APPEARANCES: SEE PAGE 2

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Special Master: MICHELLE MARTINEZ

Also present: JUSTICE TOM GOETHALS

1 Los Angeles, California; Thursday, April 23, 2026; 1:32 p.m.

2 --oOo--

3 **THE COURT:** Okay. Then this is Case No. 20-02291, LA
4 Alliance for Human Rights versus the City of Los Angeles, et
5 al. And, counsel, just remain seated, but would you be kind
6 enough to make your appearances beginning with plaintiff.

7 **MS. MITCHELL:** Yes, good afternoon, Your Honor,
8 Elizabeth Mitchell on behalf of plaintiff LA Alliance for Human
9 Rights.

10 **THE COURT:** Good afternoon. And then the City
11 please?

12 **MS. KUMAR:** Good afternoon, Your Honor, Poonam Kumar,
13 Bardley Hamburger and Tim Biche on behalf of the City.

14 **THE COURT:** All right. Thank you very much. And the
15 intervenors please?

16 **MS. MYERS:** Shayla Myers on behalf of the
17 intervenors.

18 **THE COURT:** And the County please?

19 **MS. BRODY:** Lauren Brody from Miller Barondess on
20 behalf of the County of Los Angeles.

21 **THE COURT:** Okay. I received the docket yesterday,
22 Docket 1224, as a result of the parties' extensive mediation
23 efforts before the Honorable Andre Birotte, the parties have
24 reached significant agreement as to many of the currently
25 pending issues -- I'm sorry, pending disputes.

1 Specifically, the parties have reached agreement
2 regarding the data monitor and the scope of the City's
3 reporting obligations under 7.1 of the settlement agreement.
4 The parties' agreement is subject to the approval of the City
5 Council, of course.

6 In addition to these areas of agreement, the parties
7 continue to negotiate in good faith toward a potential
8 resolution of additional disputes between the parties,
9 including the City's shelter creation and encampment reduction
10 obligations.

11 The parties have discussed a potential framework for
12 these additional agreements, but need additional time to reach
13 and document this broader agreement. The parties are hopeful
14 that they can conclude these negotiations by early next week.
15 The City plans to present the parties' agreements to the City
16 Council as early as April 29th.

17 I yesterday I responded that the Court has received
18 and reviewed this joint status report. I think I did that
19 within ten minutes of you docketing it.

20 **MS. KUMAR:** We were all impressed, Your Honor.

21 **THE COURT:** Well, no, or vice versa. And the Court
22 appreciates and commends the parties' resolution of many of
23 these issues before it.

24 We're proceeding with the hearing as scheduled for
25 April 23rd at 1:30 in courtroom 1 and I am looking forward to

1 hearing whatever you choose to present to me today. And
2 counsel's comments as to the scope of the resolved settlement
3 and the timing and final approval of the settlement or
4 settlements, because right now you may have on the table April
5 29, it sounds like 7.1, 7.2, but I'll wait from you in just a
6 moment.

7 And if all issues are not resolved, then I will
8 proceed to solicit counsel's thoughts concerning a forthcoming
9 hearing and how the Court should proceed. So I'm really
10 asking, you know, for your wisdom. Right now I've scheduled
11 this for May 8th but -- and Mr. Szabo is back on the stand if
12 Daniel Garrie is flying back in. By the same token, if you're
13 making progress, I certainly don't want to be an obstacle.

14 But before I speak to each of you, I'd like to ask
15 LAHSA to come forward for just a moment. Is Gita here? I want
16 to start with complimenting you, because you've responded
17 quickly to my request on the last occasion and I know you're
18 trying to be at least transparent and accountable or more so.
19 And I want you to hear that.

20 Any progress we can make, I think we have to ask
21 ourselves always the question, what's good for the citizens of
22 Los Angeles including the homeless and are we making progress,
23 in terms of accountability, transparency and even increasing
24 the services and the numbers, that's the ultimate question.

25 So if there's anything that you'd like to say I would

1 welcome that. I've read your report. I want to thank counsel
2 for submitting it to me. I got it last night. I read it
3 immediately. I think I've absorbed most of it, but I'll turn
4 that over to you, Gita, and thank you for being here.

5 **MS. O'NEILL:** Sure. Thank you for having us,
6 Interim CEO Gita O'Neill. We're happy that the Court sees that
7 we're really -- LAHSA's really trying to be transparent. We're
8 at a crossroads with our funding streams, with our personnel,
9 we are doing several layoffs, but we are still trying to
10 maintain the same, you know, a good level of quality and
11 transparency for all the County and the City.

12 We're working closely with the County on the
13 transition and on the recoupment of the Measure H dollars.
14 This recoupment process will go to the County after June 30th,
15 but until then, we will keep working with the County to make
16 sure that the money's accounted for.

17 **THE COURT:** Gita, I have just two quick questions --

18 **MS. O'NEILL:** Uh-huh.

19 **THE COURT:** -- and I'm not going to go any further
20 today. Help me understand, because in June of 2026 there was
21 30.4 million still owing from the initial 50.8 million.

22 **MS. O'NEILL:** Uh-huh.

23 **THE COURT:** And although that's a part of the concern
24 that the Court had, I focused on this early on, that 28.4
25 million is still owed, does that mean that the 2 million that

1 was collected in about three months came from 20 providers and
2 I'm trying to understand, is that on track with what you expect
3 to finally recoup this money?

4 **MS. O'NEILL:** You know, I think that we will be
5 recouping it at a faster rate. I do think that -- these are
6 the same providers that are having some monetary shortfalls due
7 to some of the accounting practices --

8 **THE COURT:** Right.

9 **MS. O'NEILL:** -- that we have given the advances. I
10 think that's all been in the media. So I think we're -- the
11 County and LAHSA are trying to work in partnership with those
12 providers so they don't -- they still are able to provide
13 services, even though through financial strain.

14 So I think, you know, really the County is leading
15 this and I think they're trying to lead it in a way that they
16 get the money back, but that we make the providers still whole
17 so they can still operate. So I think there's that balance.
18 But I do believe the County will be able to recoup all of this
19 money.

20 **THE COURT:** Okay. And that's all that transition
21 that will take place in July.

22 **MS. O'NEILL:** Yes.

23 **THE COURT:** Or is it June?

24 **MS. O'NEILL:** June 30th, Your Honor.

25 **THE COURT:** June 30th, thank you.

1 The other and only other question I had, let's see, I
2 wrote this down. What was -- do you have a copy of Question 9?
3 Mia, do you have a copy of Question 9?

4 Give me just one second. I wrote down a couple of
5 questions, but there's only two that I want to ask you today.

6 The last time we left, I'd asked for -- well, I've
7 got it memorized. I asked how that recoupment was being or was
8 taking place. Were these in kind services, cash back, I didn't
9 expect cash back, but I wasn't certain if they were in kind
10 services that were being counted towards the recoupment, I
11 expect that they were. And how is that being measured? How is
12 that in kind service, so I don't know if this \$2 million what's
13 cash versus in kind service and what the in kind services look
14 like.

15 **MS. O'NEILL:** It's my understanding that it's money
16 back, Your Honor.

17 **THE COURT:** Money back?

18 **MS. O'NEILL:** I can double-check that, but it's my
19 understanding that it's money back.

20 **THE COURT:** Well, come on over, just -- she's double-
21 checking with you, counsel. Money back?

22 **UNIDENTIFIED:** No, that is correct, it's --

23 **THE COURT:** So it's actual cash back?

24 **UNIDENTIFIED:** Yeah. There's no in kind --

25 **MS. O'NEILL:** Absolutely. Because it would be really

1 difficult to measure that, so it's just money back.

2 **THE COURT:** Let me just start with thank you because
3 you've inherited a heck of a job part-way through, Gita.

4 **MS. O'NEILL:** Thank you.

5 **THE COURT:** Easier way to become the CEO of
6 something, but --

7 **MS. O'NEILL:** Interim CEO, yes, thank you, Your
8 Honor.

9 **THE COURT:** Yeah, I recognize that, but yeah.

10 **MS. O'NEILL:** Sorry, it's a tough job.

11 **THE COURT:** Welcome to the whirlwind, right?

12 **MS. O'NEILL:** Thank you, I know.

13 **THE COURT:** No, but your efforts are being recognized
14 and I want you to hear that. Would you extend that back to
15 your staff, I really appreciate the promptness of this. I have
16 other questions, but I don't want to ask them now.

17 **MS. O'NEILL:** Okay. We really appreciate that and I
18 will pass that to our staff who under immense pressure and
19 anxiety, they will appreciate it, thank you.

20 **THE COURT:** Justice Goethals is going to continue to
21 get together with you. I want to make certain that there's a
22 smooth transition in June, that the County's picking this up
23 because I'm going to come right back to this recoupment of the
24 \$50.8 million. Okay?

25 **MS. O'NEILL:** Absolutely.

1 **THE COURT:** Okay. Well, thank you. The last time I
2 was impolite, I kept you at the very end and you were politely
3 sitting here --

4 **MS. O'NEILL:** That's okay.

5 **THE COURT:** -- let's get you out of here. You've got
6 better things to do.

7 **MS. O'NEILL:** It was great testimony to watch. I
8 appreciate it.

9 **THE COURT:** Okay. Thank you very much.

10 **MS. O'NEILL:** Thank you, Your Honor.

11 **UNIDENTIFIED:** Thank you, Your Honor.

12 **THE COURT:** Okay. Let me turn to the City and LA
13 Alliance. Why don't I turn the lectern to each of you as well
14 as the intervenors. Tell me what you choose to tell me to
15 begin with, because I may have absolutely no questions except
16 what I call wisdom questions, and that is, what do we do in
17 light of what you may know without disclosing necessarily to me
18 where you're at --

19 **MS. KUMAR:** Yep.

20 **THE COURT:** -- just in terms of that May 8th date,
21 because right now that's the date in place.

22 **MS. KUMAR:** So, Your Honor, I think I can speak on
23 behalf of all three, but obviously my colleagues will correct
24 me if I get anything wrong, but we did discuss this before this
25 moment.

1 The City and the Alliance and the intervenors have
2 been discussing frequently with Judge Birotte. I think I spoke
3 to Ms. Mitchell every day this week so far. We've been making
4 substantial progress.

5 We do, as we advised the Court, have an agreement on
6 7.1, 7.2, data monitor issues and we are still talking about a
7 broader scope agreement. All of that is subject, as the Court
8 observed, to the approval of City Council and we -- our
9 intention is to present one deal to the Council. So the goal
10 was to get, if we can come to an agreement on the broader deal,
11 to present the entire package to Council as soon as Wednesday,
12 the 29th of April.

13 That is the current plan, Your Honor. We have made
14 substantial progress. There are still some issues we're
15 talking about, but we are actively discussing those issues and
16 hope to resolve them.

17 To your second question about the scope of the
18 hearing scheduled for May 8th, we are -- I would like to say
19 optimistic that regardless of how these last few issues come
20 where they land, that there won't be a need for further
21 testimony.

22 I can't guarantee that to the Court right now --

23 **THE COURT:** That's fine.

24 **MS. KUMAR:** But we are optimistic that there won't be
25 a need for further testimony.

1 So unless my colleagues disagree, I would recommend
2 that we -- you can either hold it abeyance or we can revisit
3 once we go to counsel or take it down whatever the Court
4 prefers, but I don't anticipate we will be hearing witness
5 testimony on the 8th.

6 **THE COURT:** I'm going to suggest a couple of things,
7 that we simply keep the May 8th date in case.

8 **MS. KUMAR:** Sure.

9 **THE COURT:** Number two, if you don't have a universal
10 resolution, do you have a partial resolution with 7.1 and 7.2?

11 **MS. KUMAR:** We are hopeful that we do. It does -- I
12 mean, obviously it has to go to Council and Council --

13 **THE COURT:** Right.

14 **MS. KUMAR:** -- has to approve and there are some
15 issues, you know, inherent in that, but I think we are --
16 hopeful that that will -- that partial resolution will move
17 several issues pending before the Court.

18 **THE COURT:** I'd like to take just a couple of moments
19 with both Justice Goethals for a moment and Michelle. But do
20 you have anything that you'd like to add on behalf of LA
21 Alliance?

22 **MS. MITCHELL:** No, Your Honor. I think -- I do think
23 that keeping the May 8th hearing on calendar for now is the
24 right call. I am also hopeful, as counsel stated, that we will
25 reach at minimum a -- what we're calling the skinny deal, but

1 we're also I think hopeful and all signs are pointing to a
2 broader deal that will be presented to Council on the 29th.

3 As far as timing issues, I did just want to notify
4 the Court I am in trial in front of Judge Bernal starting on
5 May 12th. So to the extent, you know, .01 presents --

6 **THE COURT:** No, you'll be there on May 12th --

7 **MS. MITCHELL:** -- JS (phonetic), we do continue --

8 **THE COURT:** -- right?

9 **MS. MITCHELL:** What's that?

10 **THE COURT:** You're in trial on May 12th.

11 **MS. MITCHELL:** Correct, starting May 12th.

12 **THE COURT:** You'll be there, period.

13 **MS. MITCHELL:** So May 8th, no problem at all, I just
14 wanted to give the Court notification in case we were looking
15 at subsequent dates.

16 **THE COURT:** I'll work with Judge Bernal, I'll make
17 sure his trial goes forward. He won't -- there won't be
18 interference.

19 **MS. MITCHELL:** Thank you, Your Honor.

20 **MS. KUMAR:** I'm sorry, Your Honor, one note that I
21 should make for the record on May 8th is if -- to the degree
22 Mr. Szabo is needed, that will be a challenging date for him.

23 **THE COURT:** Okay.

24 **MS. KUMAR:** I think as everyone knows, the budget
25 process and the Council is ongoing, and there's a chance it

1 will bleed into May 8th. And so is he asking to advise the
2 Court that that would be challenging. And so we can talk about
3 it if we get closer to that date --

4 **THE COURT:** Okay.

5 **MS. KUMAR:** -- Your Honor, but I did want to flag
6 that.

7 **THE COURT:** Let's not raise a problem unless it
8 occurs. If so, I've got a morning calendar also, so I'd start
9 in the afternoon and I can go late and not interfere with the
10 Council.

11 Shayla, on behalf of the intervenors, do you have any
12 thoughts?

13 **MS. MYERS:** Nothing more to add. Nothing more to
14 add, Your Honor.

15 **THE COURT:** Could I have -- then if you don't, could
16 I have just a few moments just to talk to the Special Masters
17 for both the County. Does the County have any input?

18 **MS. BRODY:** No, Your Honor, thank you.

19 **THE COURT:** Okay. Give us a few moments. Why don't
20 you go get a cup of coffee and why don't we see you in 20
21 minutes, okay? Thank you very much.

22 **(Recessed at 1:46 p.m.; reconvened at 2:22 p.m.)**

23 **THE COURT:** Go on the record. Counsel, have a seat.
24 By the way, any time that you need to talk to each other, I'm
25 at your disposal. In other words, ten minutes doesn't mean ten

1 minutes. So if you're having a conversation that's
2 substantive, please.

3 I want to make sure I avoid any public embarrassment
4 or potential embarrassment and there's no surprises, because
5 eventually whatever you're agreeing upon if you finally reach
6 agreement, it's coming to the Court.

7 And Judge Birotte's available, he may not be in the
8 best of mood this afternoon, he had some teeth pulled this
9 morning but he's upstairs and if you need to talk to him. And
10 I really want to make certain that counsel and the Court are on
11 the same page, because it caused a little bit of tension
12 amongst the parties I think on the last occasion concerning the
13 scope.

14 So I want to understand what motion the City Council
15 will hear and for approval on April 29th regarding the monitor.
16 To be clear, the scope of the monitor's work must be consistent
17 with what the parties agree to in their settlement agreement
18 and what the Court has previously required of the monitor.

19 So I'm really asking for your input, so we don't get
20 in a situation where if the Council approved it, there was a
21 concern later on about the scope. And so take your time with
22 that, talk to each other. But we got into an issue last time
23 over that and I'd like to head that off if possible.

24 **MS. KUMAR:** Your Honor, you're asking about the scope
25 of work of the 7.2, Your Honor?

1 **THE COURT:** Yes.

2 **MS. KUMAR:** I believe and obviously all counsel
3 should correct me if I'm wrong, I think it tracks pretty
4 closely what the Court outlined the last time we had --

5 **THE COURT:** Okay.

6 **MS. KUMAR:** -- this issue. And so -- and the parties
7 have extensively discussed it. But do you --

8 **THE COURT:** Why don't you two, talk amongst
9 yourselves for a moment, don't -- have that conversation.
10 Shayla, why don't you join in this also just to be certain.

11 And you understand, folks, I don't want this going to
12 the Council and then coming back if we don't have a pretty
13 clear understanding of the settlement and what the Court had
14 previously ordered.

15 **(Pause)**

16 **MS. KUMAR:** Your Honor, I do believe it tracks what
17 the Court said, but let us continue to think about ways that we
18 can head this issue off at the pass and continue to talk
19 amongst ourselves about how we're able to resolve the Court's
20 concern, which we understand. I think we appreciate it, that
21 there isn't a conflict --

22 **THE COURT:** Okay.

23 **MS. KUMAR:** -- if the Council approves something and
24 the Court sees it differently. Let us see what we can do.

25 **THE COURT:** What I've been careful about, I don't

1 know if you've actually drafted this versus with Judge Birotte

2 --

3 **MS. KUMAR:** Yeah.

4 **THE COURT:** -- I don't know if it's in a concrete
5 form some place --

6 **MS. KUMAR:** It is, Your Honor. And I think what
7 we're thinking about is whether or not there's a way to get it
8 before the Court so that the Court can see it before the
9 Council.

10 **THE COURT:** That's what I'm wondering also.

11 **MS. KUMAR:** Yeah, we just need to run that down and
12 make sure, and see if we can sequence it appropriately.
13 Totally understood, Your Honor.

14 **THE COURT:** It's really courtesy, I don't want any
15 surprises --

16 **MS. KUMAR:** Nor do we, Your Honor.

17 **THE COURT:** -- if we've got an agreement I don't want
18 that to be a public embarrassment where the Court might come
19 back and start questioning certain portions. And last time we
20 ran into some tension concerning that.

21 **MS. KUMAR:** Absolutely, Your Honor. I think we can
22 obviate this concern.

23 **THE COURT:** So give me -- so why don't all of you
24 talk and tell me when I would be looking at -- first of all,
25 here's what I'm absorbing and then correct me.

1 I'm absorbing that you've reached an agreement on the
2 monitor which is 7.2. I'm absorbing that you've reached
3 agreements on 7.1. I'm only raising the scope of the monitor
4 pursuant to your settlement agreement and the Court's ruling in
5 7.2.

6 And in doing that, I don't want this to go to the
7 Council if there's a disagreement or a concern or we haven't
8 asked a couple of questions that there is, and then have the
9 Court start asking those questions after, in good faith that
10 counsel considers it. And then there's the surprise of the
11 Court coming back on the back side, I'd like to head off that
12 tension.

13 **MS. KUMAR:** I think there's a way we can get it to
14 the Court so that the scope of work, Your Honor, so that Your
15 Honor can observe with the others to be able to make sure that
16 those questions are fully considered and thought through. So I
17 think we'll be able to work through that. I'm confident we'll
18 be able to do that.

19 **THE COURT:** And you go to the Council on April 29th.

20 **MS. KUMAR:** That's the current plan, Your Honor.

21 **THE COURT:** And you minimally go with 7.1, 7.2 and
22 I've heard you're working -- and no representation --

23 **MS. KUMAR:** Potentially. Potentially broader.

24 **THE COURT:** -- but you're trying to work on a more
25 universal agreement, whether you get there or not. Could I

1 suggest to you and then you discuss this, because I'm looking
2 for your wisdom, a status report by May 4th at noon and that
3 way if we're back to Mr. Szabo, he's got some ability with his
4 Council, Daniel Garrie's up in northern California working with
5 two federal courts, I don't know what his scheduling is --

6 **MS. KUMAR:** That seems evidently reasonable, Your
7 Honor.

8 **THE COURT:** -- and I think as a courtesy, you know.

9 So how do we get -- why don't you talk amongst
10 yourselves how this gets to the Court so that there are no
11 surprises, there's no embarrassment to the Council.

12 **MS. KUMAR:** Yeah, absolutely, Your Honor. I think we
13 will -- the parties will talk and we'll find a way to get to
14 you the scope of work.

15 **THE COURT:** Why don't you talk now. I'm here. Yeah,
16 you know, discuss, go to the back, I'm going to go get a cup of
17 coffee.

18 **MS. KUMAR:** I think we won't need more than two
19 minutes, Your Honor.

20 **THE COURT:** And how do we get back to the Court so
21 that we don't have that tension. And by the way, folks, that
22 way the Council knows we're -- and, counsel, also that way the
23 Council knows we're working in good faith with that, and we're
24 not trying to --

25 **MS. KUMAR:** Your Honor, if it's okay with Your Honor,

1 I think our plan would be to judge -- Judge Birotte has it, but
2 authorize Judge Birotte to provide to you the scope of work
3 that the parties have agreed upon so that the Court can review
4 it and everyone can review and raise any questions and then we
5 can continue to talk about it if we need to. I think that's a
6 prudent way to proceed, if that's okay with the Court.

7 **THE COURT:** Would tomorrow be comfortable so I could
8 look at it over the weekend?

9 **MS. KUMAR:** Today. We can do it today, Your Honor.
10 We can send it to -- no later than tomorrow at noon, Your
11 Honor, just to give us time, but we have the written agreement,
12 but just so counsel can align, but if not earlier we'll get it
13 to Judge Birotte for his transmission and a May 4th noon status
14 report is fine with the parties, Your Honor.

15 **THE COURT:** First of all, thank you, that would give
16 me the weekend. You know what our calendars look like on a
17 Monday. So that would give me the weekend. And if we could
18 then schedule a status report by May 4th and at that time if we
19 reach a universal agreement, that resolves it, then we're going
20 to call of the May 8th date. If not, then we ought to be
21 courteous to Mr. Szabo, Garrie, Michelle, anybody else that we
22 have.

23 Okay. Listen, do you have any more input for me?
24 Let me start with LA Alliance.

25 **MS. MITCHELL:** Not at this time, Your Honor.

1 **THE COURT:** Huh?

2 **MS. MITCHELL:** No. Nothing further, thank you, Your
3 Honor.

4 **THE COURT:** No? Okay. Let me go to the City.

5 **MS. KUMAR:** No, Your Honor.

6 **THE COURT:** Okay. Thank you. Intervenors?

7 **MS. MYERS:** No, thank you.

8 **THE COURT:** The County?

9 **MS. BRODY:** No, thank you, Your Honor.

10 **THE COURT:** Why don't you go home and have a
11 wonderful day then. Thank you for your input, I really
12 appreciate it. And by the way, a compliment to all of you,
13 whether you finally reach the ultimate, the universal
14 agreement, you've gotten a long way with a partial agreement.
15 You need to hear the Court's really commending you for the
16 effort.

17 **UNIDENTIFIED:** Thank you, Your Honor.

18 **THE COURT:** Thank you very much.

19 **(Proceedings concluded at 2:30 p.m.)**

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CERTIFICATION

I certify that the foregoing is a correct transcript from the electronic sound recording of the proceedings in the above-entitled matter.



April 25, 2026

Signed

Dated

TONI HUDSON, TRANSCRIBER