



SUSTAINABILITY COMMISSION - REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

Tuesday, March 16, 2021

Pursuant to Executive Order N-29-20, by Governor Newsom, this meeting was conducted by teleconference and there was no in-person public access to the meeting location.

CALL TO ORDER: Chair Clark called the meeting to order at **5:34** p.m.

ROLL CALL: A quorum was present for this Regular Meeting of the City of Palm Springs Sustainability Commission.

WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

AGENDA APPROVAL: The agenda was presented by Chair Clark. A motion to approve as posted was made by Commissioner Flanagan and seconded by Commissioner Garratt and carried unanimously on an open vote.

	This Meeting	Present to Date	FY 2020/2021 Excused Absences	FY 2020/2021 Unexcused Absences
Roy Clark, Chair	X	50		
Robert McCann, Vice Chair	X	48		
David Freedman	X	60		
Jennifer Futterman	E	42	2	
Greg Gauthier	X	39	1	
Carl Baker	X	26		
Jim Flanagan	X	19		
Lani Miller	U	17		1
Sandra Garratt	X	14	1	

X = Present
L = Late

E = Excused (notified Chair and Staff of absence)
U = Unexcused (did not notify of absence)

CITY STAFF PRESENT: Tracy Sheldon, Program Coordinator, Office of Sustainability, and Flinn Fagg, Director, Development Services

GUESTS PRESENT: Tamara Diamond, Kim Floyd, Palm Desert Sierra Club, and Deborah McGarry, Southern California Gas Company

STAFF COMMENTS – Manager Tallarico submitted a written report (which was included in the meeting materials) on the following:

- Manager Tallarico was unable to attend this meeting and updates were provided by Program Coordinator Sheldon. Program Coordinator Sheldon confirmed ongoing meetings occurred this week with the contractor for the Demo Garden and Turf Conversion at the Airport. Additionally, Program Coordinator Sheldon encouraged Commissioners to participate in the Pedestrian Safety and Safe Routes School Master Plan Virtual Walk Audits which begin this week.

PUBLIC COMMENTS – None

A. PRESENTATIONS –

Commissioner Baker reported

1. Connect IE (<https://connectie.org>) for free or low cost personal services – Commissioner Baker reported
 - Commissioner Baker provided a presentation on Connect IE which was formerly created by the Health Consortium as an informational website which has been taken over by Riverside County and Inland Empire Health Plan (IEHP). The website provides information on several personal services which are beneficial to community members by entering their zip code. A search was done on Community Gardens to determine if the Michele Mician Community Garden could be found. It was not found. Chair Clark requested that Program Coordinator Sheldon add a link to Connect IE and information about the Michele Mician Community Garden to the Sustainability website.

B. MEETING MINUTES

- February 16, 2021 Regular Meeting minutes approval: Motion by Commissioner Baker to accept, second by Commissioner Garratt. Motion passed unanimously on an open vote.

C. OLD BUSINESS

1. Night Sky Subcommittee Report – Vice Chair McCann reported
 - Vice Chair McCann shared the highlights from the “Findings and Recommendation to City Council Concerning Outdoor Lighting” report and brought forward a motion, which was seconded by Commissioner Baker, to provide this recommendation to City Council.
 - Commissioner Freedman asked for clarification as to whether the ordinance would apply to only new construction or to all existing outdoor lighting and if this recommendation would replace the existing zoning code.
 - Commissioner Garratt requested a provision be included for compensation to community members for replacement of existing outdoor lighting fixtures.
 - Commissioner Flanagan discussed updating the existing lighting codes with enforcement from Code Enforcement.
 - Commissioner Baker suggested enhanced educational outreach with coordination with local news media to include Night Sky as well as composting, turf replacement and other sustainable topics.
 - Development Services Director Fagg suggested Sustainability and Planning staff coordinate efforts to bring this item forward under the direction of City Council. Director Fagg also confirmed the conformance with lighting standards would be followed by staff review and the Architectural Advisory Committee when necessary.
 - **AMENDED MOTION:** The Sustainability Commission should approve the “Findings and Recommendation to City Council Concerning Outdoor Lighting” report with the following conditions:
 - i. The Zoning Code for outdoor lighting standards be amended to cover new construction and retrofits. Sustainability staff will coordinate with Planning staff on wording for the amendment.
 - ii. Impose lighting curfew in Municipal Code requiring that landscape lighting be turned off after 11:00 pm. Sustainability staff will coordinate with Planning staff on wording.
 - iii. Education and outreach programs be developed by the Office of Sustainability and the Sustainability Commission.
 - iv. Funding for eligible lighting retrofits be provided through the Sustainability Scholarship Program.
 - The amended motion was put forward by Vice Chair McCann, seconded by Commissioner Flanagan. It passed unanimously with seven (7) “yes” votes.
2. Sustainability Scholarship & Home Energy Assessment Audit Status and Feedback – Program Coordinator Sheldon reported
 - Program Coordinator Sheldon summarized the current payment and reserved amounts in the Sustainability and Recycling accounts and shared that the outreach plan for the month of April is to target restaurants with the options of recycling and organics management containers, purchase of reusable food ware or other products that replace disposables and replacement of single-use polystyrene containers with environmentally preferable alternatives.
 - Chair Clark inquired if there were any applications with requests for items not clearly outlined in the eligibility list and Program Coordinator Sheldon confirmed there were none.
 - Commissioner Freedman inquired if any applications had been received for the Home Energy Audit and Program Coordinator Sheldon confirmed none have been received.
3. Shredding and E-waste Event Volunteer Opportunity – Program Coordinator Sheldon reported
 - Program Coordinator Sheldon asked the Commission to volunteer one (1) hour for the Shredding, E-waste and Recycling Event on April 17, 2021 during the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 12:00 p.m.

D. NEW BUSINESS

1. Palm Springs Library request for funding for Summer Reading Program – Program Coordinator Sheldon reported
 - Program Coordinator Sheldon provided a summary of the request from the Palm Springs Library

for the Summer Reading Program to purchase four (4) bicycles and helmets in the amount of \$500.

- MOTION: The Sustainability Commission should approve the request for \$500 to the Palm Springs Library for the Summer Reading Program.
 - The Motion was put forward by Commissioner Gauthier, seconded by Commissioner Baker. The Motion passed unanimously with seven (7) “yes” votes.
2. Earth Day Events, including tree dedication in new Downtown Park – Program Coordinator Sheldon reported
- Program Coordinator Sheldon provided an update from the Engineering Department that the Downtown Park opening would not be until July, therefore it was not possible to coordinate an Earth Day event with the plaque unveiling at the Downtown Park on or near April 22 for Earth Day 2021.
 - Commissioner Baker shared he would like to have Earth Day promoted to the Desert Sun and local news channels as an educational opportunity.
 - The Commission requested that staff contact the Desert Sun, local news channels, Agua Caliente Band of Cahuilla Indians and Cultural Center for any possible opportunities and/or partnerships of in person or virtual Earth Day events.
3. Discussion of Cycle Tracks Proposal – Commissioner Flanagan reported
- Commissioner Flanagan provided an overview of the “2021 Palm Canyon Cycle Track Project Proposal” sharing the historical background of its genesis coming from the bicycle committee to have bike lanes on Indian Canyon.
 - Commissioner Flanagan reported that there are four (4) southbound lanes and two (2) northbound lanes through the Downtown business corridor and that it could be possible to dedicate one (1) lane to a two-way bike path.
 - Commissioner Freedman asked for the following clarifications to be brought back to the April Commission meeting:
 1. Provide a cost estimate for each phase.
 2. Research available Caltrans funding.
 3. Provide information on bike lane in Downtown corridor with Covid outdoor dining measures for restaurants.
 4. Clarify distance of bike path on S. Palm Canyon.
 - Chair Clark requested that Sustainability staff assist with coordination with the Engineering Department to facilitate the review of the Cycle Track Project Proposal and obtain feedback on feasibility of implementation prior to a Commission vote.

E. SUBCOMMITTEE AND COMMISSIONER REPORTS

1. Standing Subcommittee on Solar and Green Building - Commissioner Freedman reported
- Commissioner Freedman reported on updates from the California Energy Commission and Public Utilities Commission Proceedings that a draft code has been posted for the 2022 Energy Code which will become effective on January 1, 2023.
 - Commissioner Freedman reported heat pump water heaters will be required for new single-family residences in Climate Zone 15, where Palm Springs is located. Prewiring will also be required in new single-family residences for battery storage, space heaters (if not installed), combined cooktop/ovens and clothes dryers. Solar panels and battery storage will be required for many commercial buildings.
 - Commissioner Freedman reported that CVAG, Western Riverside Council of Governments, and San Bernardino Council of Governments are applying to the CPUC to create a new joint Regional Energy Network for the Inland Empire (IREN). IREN would focus on public sector energy efficiency, improving Energy Code compliance and workforce education and training.
 - Commissioner Freedman reported that a GRID Alternative IE letter regarding Single-Family Affordable Solar Homes was signed by Mayor Holstege and that GRID Alternative would be handling the mailing of the letters.
 - Commissioner Freedman reported the ordinance implementing AB 1236 on streamlined EV charger is now in effect. The updated checklist and permit application have now been posted on the City’s website. The 2017 policy statement was superseded by the new ordinance and updated checklist and was deleted to avoid confusion, upon follow-up by Program Coordinator Sheldon with the Building Division.
 - Commissioner Freedman reported he has reviewed the draft of the Palm Springs Wind Energy Success Story for The American Wind Energy Association and will coordinate next steps with staff.

2. Standing Subcommittee on Waste Reduction – Program Coordinator Sheldon reported
 - Program Coordinator Sheldon provided a summary of the report provided.
 - Program Coordinator Sheldon reported that the community meeting on composting held earlier in the day was well attended and that Commissioner Baker was also in attendance. Based on the support by the community a future meeting will be scheduled on a date to be determined.
3. Standing Subcommittee on World Environment Day – Commissioner Garratt reported
 - Commissioner Garratt reported there are no events currently planned other than the Environmental Education Collaborative Art Contest which is co-sponsored by the Commission with the announcement of the winner on May 15, World Environment Day.
 - Commissioner Garratt requested staff support in promoting the Art Contest to local media.
 - Program Coordinator Sheldon reported that staff had drafted a press release which was reviewed and approved by Commissioner Futterman to be distributed and shared on social media.
 - Chair Clark recommended that staff contact Eye on the Desert to promote World Environment Day.
4. Ad Hoc Subcommittee on Walkability & Pedestrian Planning – Program Coordinator Sheldon reported
 - Program Coordinator Sheldon reported a webpage has been added to the City's website under Sustainability, titled Pedestrian Safety which features all of the information on the Virtual Walk Audits which will be held on March 17, 24, 29, 30 and 31.
5. Ad Hoc Subcommittee on Bicycle Routes and Cycling
 - No report.
6. Ad Hoc Subcommittee on Night Sky – Vice Chair McCann reported
 - Vice Chair McCann added that he has reached out to neighboring desert cities for feedback and partnerships.
 - Vice Chair McCann reported the City of Rancho Mirage has begun working on a citywide lighting ordinance.
7. Ad Hoc Subcommittee on Strategic Planning and General Plan Update
 - Manager Tallarico will provide an update at the April Commission meeting.
8. Water Conservation – Commissioner Freedman reported
 - Commissioner Freedman reported that he attended the water academy last week and encouraged Commissioners to attend since it is offered virtually and highlights the complicated water issues facing the valley.
 - Commissioner Freedman reported the 2021 Mayor's Challenge for Water Conservation occurs during the month of April. Residents are encouraged to take an online four-step conservation pledge through the Wyland Foundation website. City and DWA staff are working together on a public service announcement for this challenge.
 - Commissioner Freedman reported DWA is extending its Covid fee waivers for another two months.
 - Commissioner Freedman reported that there is a 17% reduction of potable water in February 2021 vs. February 2013 data.
9. Wellness – Commissioner Baker reported
 - Commissioner Baker reported that the smoking ordinance was not discussed at the March Human Rights Commission meeting and that it was moved to the April meeting.
10. Desert Community Energy, Community Advisory Committee – Commissioners Freedman reported
 - Commissioner Freedman reported that the DCE Board approved a 20-year power purchase agreement at the February meeting.
 - Commissioner Freedman reported the primary topic of the March DCE meeting was the financial challenges it is facing due to the spike in energy prices.
 - Commissioner Freedman reported the DCE Board approved a \$70,000 assistance program for DCE customers impacted by Covid.
 - Commissioner Freedman reported that Commissioner Miler has stepped down from the Community Advisory Committee to focus on other sustainability challenges and thanks her for her service.
 - Commissioner Freedman reported there are two vacancies on the committee for District 1 and District 4.

F. COMMISSIONER COMMENTS AND UPCOMING AGENDA

- Commissioner Garratt reported she had submitted information on the developments at the Salton Sea prior to this meeting but after the agenda posting date.
- Chair Clark stated that the information will be forward to the Commissioners and after review may be placed on a future agenda.

G. ADJOURNMENT - The meeting of the Sustainability Commission adjourned at **7:12** p.m. by a motion from Vice Chair McCann and seconded by Commissioner Garratt and approved by a unanimous vote. They adjourned to the Regular Meeting of the Sustainability Commission to be held at 5:30 p.m. on Tuesday, April 20, 2021, location to be determined. There is a possibility that the next meeting will be via telecommunication also. The Sustainability Commission's regular meeting schedule is at 5:30 p.m. the third Tuesday each month except August unless otherwise noted or amended.

Respectfully Submitted,

Patrick Tallarico, Manager, Office of Sustainability