



SUSTAINABILITY COMMISSION - REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

Wednesday, April 26, 2023

Pursuant to Assembly Bill 361, by Governor Newsom, this meeting was conducted by teleconference and there was no in-person public access to the meeting location.

CALL TO ORDER: Interim Chair Freedman called the meeting to order at 5:33 p.m.

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

	<u>This Meeting</u>	<u>Present to Date</u>	<u>FY 2022/2023 Excused Absences</u>	<u>FY 2022/2023 Unexcused Absences</u>
Don Barrett	X	20		
Carl Baker, Interim Vice Chair	X	48		
David Freedman, Interim Chair	X	83		
Jake Torrens	X	17	1	

X = Present

E = Excused (notified Chair and Staff of absence)

L = Late

U = Unexcused (did not notify of absence)

REPORT OF POSTING OF AGENDA: The Agenda was available for public access at the City Hall exterior bulletin board (west side of the Council Chambers) by 5:30 PM Wednesday, April 19, 2023, and posted on the City's website as required by established policies and procedures.

CITY STAFF PRESENT: Lindsey-Paige McCloy, Director, Office of Sustainability and Anita Fields, Office of Sustainability

WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

ACCEPTANCE OF THE AGENDA: Interim Chair Freedman asked if there were any objections to the agenda for the April 26, 2023, meeting. There were no objections, and the agenda was declared accepted.

GUESTS PRESENT: Alex D, Christian "Otto" Bilson, Paul Hendrickson, and Haley Preston (Desert Compost)

PUBLIC COMMENTS

- Paul Hendrickson: would like the Smoke Free Palm Springs initiative revisited by the new Human Rights Commission leadership and Commissioner; and he supports pursuing additional funding for the Turf Conversion program.
- Alex D: noted transportation difficulties and the need for bike lanes, around Dinah Shore Drive and Ramon Road, near Walmart; would like to see a ban on plastic bags from grocery stores; reported trash and rowdy behavior around the new Raising Cane's restaurant on Ramon Road; and he is against the Smoke Free Palm Springs initiative.
- Christian "Otto" Bilson: Request that anticipated funding from the Inflation Reduction Act be used to assist low-income residents reduce their impact on the environment with funding for new energy efficient appliances, etc., and that should be the primary focus of this Commission.

PRESENTATION BY DESERT COMPOST – Haley Preston, Director, Desert Compost

- Hailey Preston, Director, Desert Compost, provided an overview of their non-profit organization, which is staffed largely with volunteers
 - They recently opened a new composting location at the United Methodist Church in Palm Springs
 - 150 lbs. of food scraps have been diverted this week

- They will educate the public on the simplicity of composting
- Volunteers receive training on composting at College of the Desert
- Desert Compost expressed their gratitude for the grant/ provided by the City of Palm Springs
 - Desert Compost is leading a training for the public at United Methodist Church on May 3, 2023

CHAIR'S REPORT – Nothing specific to report

STAFF COMMENTS

1. Lindsey-Paige McCloy, Director
 - a. Status of Commissioner Appointments – Interviews of prospective Commission members have been conducted by the City Council, with an anticipated July 2023 start for new Commission members; the Sustainability Commission should have a total of 11 Commission members.
 - i. Commissioner Barrett is the only current Commission member that is anticipated to continue next year
 - ii. City Council expects the Sustainability Commission to be a working commission, with Commission members engaged and involved in the community; and that new Commissioners will come in with their own projects and priorities
 - b. Update on hiring of additional staff – A new Specialist – Christian Wheeler – starts at the end of May 2023. He will be introduced to the Commission during the June meeting.
 - i. Recruitment for two additional positions – Sustainability Specialist and Sustainability Coordinator – continues and those positions will be reposted in May 2023.
 - c. Status of teleconferencing of Commission meetings – Unchanged: approximately half of the Commissions have returned to in-person meetings. Note that Commissions do not hold meetings in August: the Commission will meet in June, July, and resume in September.
 - d. Earth Day – Summary of events attended, and community members engagement
 - i. PS Library – Family Fun Day, with passport stamped at each booth
 - ii. The Art in the Park Event highlighted the benefits in developing an alliance with the Parks & Recreation department for events and community engagement.
 - iii. Shredding event on April 29, 2023
 - iv. Learnings: the need to begin planning earlier and hosting our own events; better press outreach, which is driven in part by policy launches and need to leverage Council Members.
 - e. Ride of Silence, in Ruth Hardy Park on May 12, 2023 –led by our local cycling community, an international observance of those who are killed on their bikes due to traffic, violence. Sustainability is sponsoring this event and the Commissioners are invited.
 - f. CalAPP and SB 379 implementation – The City has been provisionally granted funding of \$40,000 from the California Energy Commission under its CalAPP program for implementing SB 379. The SolarAPP+ facilitates online permitting for solar and related needs. Guidelines for the funding will be sent to us, and tracking is required.
 - i. After the new software –EnerGov - is launched in our Building and Planning permitting system (est. 05/15/2023), we will work with their team on next steps. Palm Springs is a pilot city, and Indio is also implementing this program and can be used as a resource.
 - g. Future presenters to the Commission
 - i. Resident to make a presentation re composting in May
 - ii. Harry Barrett, the Executive Director of Palm Springs International Airport, will make a presentation, about the new franchises and concessions and their Master Plan, in June

A. MEETING MINUTES

1. There were no objections to the March 21, 2023, meeting minutes. The meeting minutes were accepted and approved.

B. OLD BUSINESS

1. Update on the Environmentally Preferable Purchasing Plan (“EPPP”), Staff Report, and project plan
 - i. The EPPP was presented to department heads on April 10, 2023, during a staff meeting. Training materials for key purchasers has been created and training will be scheduled. Completion of the rollout of this program is anticipated in July 2023 (next fiscal year).

2. Turf Conversion Update, presentation by Anita Fields
 - i. Data regarding number of conversions and savings presented.
 - ii. We have asked City Council for an additional \$1 million and an increase in the cap for Homeowner Associations for Fiscal Year 2023-24.
 - iii. The City Council will have a budget study session in May. Interim Chair Freedman would like to attend the City Council session with to emphasize that this is a program that residents want and are utilizing
 - iv. Desert Water Agency is moving toward a direct install method for low-income households. The City offers \$4 per sq ft in matching dollars for this demographic.
3. Implementation of SB 1383
 - i. Current focus is on multi-family units and waste audits

C. NEW BUSINESS

1. EECBG (Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant)
 - i. This is a formula grant run by the U.S. Department of Energy. We qualify for \$78,000; the tribe is eligible for \$10,000 and we've reached out to them about collaborating on a project
 - ii. Funding can be awarded as a:
 1. Voucher technical assistance
 2. Voucher for equipment rebates, or
 3. Grant for energy efficiency programs.
 - iii. Pre-award information sheet is due April 28, 2023, with initial selection for type of funding
 1. Need to further explore options for uses associated with funding vehicles
 - iv. Applications accepted on a rolling basis in 3 periods, we are eligible in two: Period 3, deadline 10/31/2023, or Period 4, deadline 01/31/2024. EECBG Blueprints provide a streamlined application process, but we should check to make sure they are not too restrictive.
 - v. Voucher would be a good fit, but care must be taken not to overlap with IREN activities
 1. Interim Chair Freedman would like to be involved, post July 2023, in discussions for leveraging things like heat pumps
 2. Best option would be to use funds to expand existing programs, something more advisory, or to use in the implementation of EPPP.
 - a. Possibly use to add solar to park operations, fleet electrification, or residential energy efficiency audits, community engagement

D. SUBCOMMITTEE AND COMMISSIONER REPORTS -

1. Standing Subcommittee on Waste Reduction, Commissioner Barrett – No updates
2. Ad Hoc Subcommittee on Strategic Planning and General Plan Update, Interim Vice Chair Baker– Plans are being circulated to reconvene General Plan Steering Committee meetings soon
3. Solar and Green Buildings, Interim Chair Freedman – Under rules adopted by the California Public Utilities Commission, effective as of April 15, 2023, the payoff for solar installation has increased from 5 years to 9 years. For green buildings, there are now incentives for heat pumps; Interim Chair Freedman will send us some information.
4. Routes and Cycling – No updates
 - a. Once new staff is onboard, the survey can be released and coordinated. Commissioner Torrens and Director McCloy to regroup and provide an update at the May Commission meeting.
5. Water conservation, Interim Chair Freedman
 - a. Department of Water Resources granted the State Water Project, which includes DWA, a 100% allocation. We don't get water from the State Water Project, we get it from the Colorado River via an exchange agreement with Metropolitan Water District.
 - b. The state-mandated water restrictions are set to expire in June. There is water in California, but we still need to conserve because the Colorado River remains in a chronic drought.
 - c. Desert Water Agency is completing a cost-of-service study. Workshops on potential future rate increases are scheduled for the coming weeks.
6. Wellness, Interim Vice Chair Baker – Working on outreach to community members regarding the Smoke Free Palm Springs initiative
7. Desert Community Energy ("DCE") / Inland Regional Energy Network ("IREN"), Interim Chair Freedman
 - a. An RFP was issued for renewable resources, and DCE and its consultants are conducting an initial screening

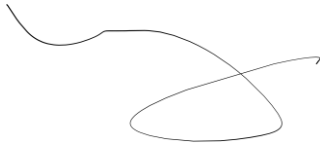
- b. CVAG staff will forward information regarding CivicSpark fellowships to support hiring needs
- c. Upcoming meeting with CVAG regarding I-REN programs for public building energy efficiency upgrades, workforce education and training and energy code training; a survey regarding energy code training needs
- d. Program Specialist recently hired to help Community Advisory Committee

E. COMMISSIONER COMMENTS AND UPCOMING AGENDA

- 1. Commissioner Barrett is interested in traffic light synchronization with pedestrians used in Northern California
- 2. Interim Chair Freedman notes that he is traveling on May 16, 2023, so the meeting must end at 7:30 p.m. PST.

F. ADJOURNMENT - The meeting of the Sustainability Commission adjourned at 7:24 p.m. They adjourned to the next Regular Meeting of the Sustainability Commission to be held online at 5:30 p.m. on May 16, 2023; 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,



Lindsey-Paige McCloy, Director, Office of Sustainability