



SUSTAINABILITY COMMISSION - REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

Tuesday, November 19, 2019 Palm Springs City Hall, Large Conference Room

CALL TO ORDER: Chair Clark called the meeting to order at **5:00** p.m.

Chair Clark announced Commissioner Santora submitted his resignation to the Commission.

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

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

		Present	FY 2019/2020	FY 2019/2020
	This Meeting	to Date	Excused Absences	Unexcused Absences
Roy Clark, Chair	X	39		
Robert McCann, Vice Chair	X	37		
David Freedman	X	49		
Jennifer Futterman	X	35	1	
Greg Gauthier	X	29	1	
John Goins	X	25	1	
Carl Baker	X	17		
Jim Flanagan	X	8	1	
Lani Miller	X	8		
Sandra Garratt	X	4		

X = Present

E = Excused (notified Chair and Staff of absence)

L = Late

U = did not notify of absence

CITY STAFF PRESENT: Patrick Tallarico, Manager, Office of Sustainability;
Daniel DeGarmo, Program Coordinator
Gary Calhoun, Recycling Coordinator

CITY MANAGER / STAFF COMMENTS – Manager Tallarico reported on the following:

- At the October 23, 2019 Council meeting, Manager Tallarico provided a brief presentation of the SB1383 to provide Council with insights into the regulation under development. There was a second reading of the “No Dogs Allowed on Trails” ordinance that passed, and there was a request for the City to identify or create a trail in the City for dogs, which is being investigated.
- At the November 6, 2019 Council meeting, the Solar Zoning Ordinance was adopted. The only request was for the City to work on some guidelines for discretionary reviews. The Office of Sustainability is working with Planning to develop guidelines.
- At the upcoming December 4, 2019 Council meeting there may be some discussion of the Tribal Arena. Manager Tallarico stated that the Tribal Arena report was issued and posted on the City’s website, and the City still has not received the appendices to that report, which included the Greenhouse Gas Emissions Inventory and the detailed Water Report. The Tribal Arena report essentially says that there is no environmental impact despite the large building being developed, and all of the traffic that will incur. Manager Tallarico encouraged members to participate in the special Council meeting on December 5th that would be focused exclusively on the Tribal Arena.
- Manager Tallarico also reported that the DCE launch will be in April of 2020. The City is moving forward with offering the 100% carbon-free power option as its default rate option. Residents will have the ability to opt down or opt out.

PUBLIC COMMENTS – None.

A. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

B. MEETING MINUTES

October 15, 2019 Regular Meeting minutes approval: Motion by Commissioner Baker, second by Commissioner Miller. Motion passed 9-0-1 with Commissioner Futterman abstaining.

C. RECYCLING REPORT, Recycling Coordinator Gary Calhoun reported on the following:

- The City held it's shredding and e-waste event on October 18, 2019 in conjunction with the Palm Springs Disposal fall cleanup. There were 262 vehicles that came through the event.
- Desert Arc picked up two loads of e-waste from the the Public Works yard that had been accumulating over the summer. They now have enough staff to make regular monthly pickups.
- Mr. Calhoun reported he and some members of staff and the Commission had made visits to 54 businesses that are not currently complying with recycling and organic waste reuquirements.
- Public Works have identified 5 vendors that have been putting left-over materials at the end of the day in the street trash cans rather than in the appropriate containers located at the rear of their buildings. This has resulted in a Public Works employee getting injured and was off of work for a week. This will continue to be monitored.
- There were no numbers from SA Recycling or Desert Recycling this month.
- Commissioner Miller inquired if the non-compliant businesses have green waste. Mr. Calhoun replied that a small portion of the businesses meet the organic waste requirments.
- Commissioner Freedman inquired if there is any possibility of citing noncompliant violations, and whether there has been any recent outreach to the Main Street group to let them know of the issues. Mr. Calhoun noted that we do not yet have a local ordinance that would allow for the City to issue citations. This sill change with SB1383. Main Street had been informed that the non-compliance visits were happening, and Manager Tallarico stated that he had reached out to Joy Meredith at the Main Street group in late summer offering to hold a waste and recycling brown bag.

D. OLD BUSINESS

Commissioners discussed the following items.

1. Climate Action Plan Roadmap:

Manager Tallarico reviewed the draft roadmap memo, which included an acknowledgement of the climate crisis, some background on current goals, past activities, current efforts, and planned future efforts. Commissioner Freedment emphasized two of the future efforts, including the proposal presented at last month's Sustainability Commission meeting for all commercial buildings or certain categories of commercial buildings to use 100% renewable resources. He also noted that at the California Energy Commssion's recent discussions about the 2022 Building Code, they have a goal of 80% reduction of GHG emissions below 1990 levels by 2045. This may result in requiring all new buildings to be carbon free.

Commissioner Miller mentioned that DWA is working with the state to get a per capita kind of metric that can be used in water consumption and suggested that something like this could be done for greenhouse gas emisions.

Vice Chair McCann stated that another source of greenhouse gas emissions from the City's GHG inventory was the wastewater treatment plant (WWTP). Since 2010, they have their own solar farm, which should be helping quite a bit. Manger Tallarico noted that these emissions are from the processes not from the energy usage. WWTP emissions are on the list of potential future issues to address include in the Climate Action Roadmap.

Commissioner Goins inquired about the scope of the green house gas inventory. Manger Tallarico stated that the greenhouse gas emissions inventory includes all GHG emissions within the City limits including residential, the City operations, and business operations. The new inventory that is done will include everything, as well as the calculations for all the waste that is sent off-site.

Commissioner Gauthier inquired about including a pie chart to have an overall idea of where items fall such as jet fuel for Palm Springs airport, truck stop within the City limits, and windmill farms also

within the City limits. Manager Tallarico responded that he was unsure why those types of items may not have been included.

Commissioner Goins suggested including references to implementation of new organics requirements in the Climate Action Roadmap if it was not already included.

2. Potential Changes to the Plastic Ordinance:

Manager Tallarico reported on two presentations he had made on the draft ordinance. One was at the CVAG Technical Working Group meeting and the other was to the Energy & Environment Committee of CVAG. Although other cities were interested in the ordinance, they did not plan to implement on themselves.

Manager Tallarico also presented that the initial results of the restaurant surveys indicated that about two thirds already use reusable food service ware for on-site use. About a third still use polystyrene.

Manager Tallarico also presented some proposed changes to the ordinance for feedback from the Commission. These changes included a suggestion to adopt a phased approach which requires reusable products for on-site use, unless not possible; reduces disposables through on request only food service ware accessories, and prohibiting polystyrene in the first phase. The second phase would be focused on acceptable alternatives to plastics and other forms of plastics. The group

Commissioner Goins suggested clarifying the reuse on site requirement to ensure that there is some sort of mechanism to ensure that restaurants actually reuse the food ware on site if the ordinance specifically calls that out.

The Commission agreed that the City should move forward with developing the ordinance as presented noting the clarification mentioned.

3. Student Representative

Manager Tallarico reported that only one Commission is currently allowed to have a student representative. The new Council may take this up as an agenda item at a future Council meeting.

4. Fountain Grass

Manager Tallarico met with Maintenance staff, and they confirmed that the City does not plant fountain grass on City property. There may have been an exception for the median on Tahquitz based on input from the Tribe. The Commission discussed potential future removal and education efforts, but nothing specific was decided or recommended except to have a fact sheet at future tabling events. The Commission suggested potentially working with Master Gardeners or the Horticultural Society to identify resources for residents.

5. Community Garden Naming Plan and Plaque Text

Manager Tallarico reviewed the draft text for the plaque that will be unveiled at the naming event at the Demuth Community Center on December 19th, 2019, at 11:30 AM. There were no comments. Invitations will be sent through a variety of channels.

The group also discussed planting a tree. This would take place during the naming ceremony. Commissioner Garratt will provide suggestions for specific trees.

6. Leaf Blower Ban Enforcement Enhancements

Manager Tallarico presented three potential enhancements to the leaf blower enforcement ban. They included increasing citations to \$500 for a first offense, expanding enforcement to include fines for home owners that are knowledgeable about the use of gas-powered blowers on their property, and adding some sort of supplemental enforcement staff to help monitor, document, and report gas blower use. Commission members had questions about what constitutes knowledge on

the part of the home owner. Manager Tallarico agreed to look into clarifying that concept. He also mentioned that the State will be increasing incentives in the new year. The Commission unanimously expressed support for moving forward with these enhancements.

E. NEW BUSINESS

1. Options for Interfacing with City Council

The Commission discussed how they would like to enhance its interaction with City Council. There were two presented – creating a Sustainability Subcommittee of the Council or increasing the level of engagement with Council liaisons. If a Subcommittee was formed, it would not have requirements to meet on a regular basis, but it would be subject to notice requirements. A majority of the members (seven) supported the idea of forming a formal Council Subcommittee.

2. Process for Acting on New Requests

The Commission discussed how to handle suggestions for new topics that may emerge from City Council or members of the public. The group discussed the process for addressing topics and supported the idea of bringing ideas to the Commission and determining whether a topic should be assigned to an existing Subcommittee, form an ad hoc committee to explore, and identify an advocate if someone wants to take on the issue to better understand it and provide more information back to the Commission to determine any next steps. The group then discussed the following substantive topics:

- Street Coatings, black versus gray – This is a topic that will be researched further by the Solar and Green Building Subcommittee as a potential approach for reducing heat island effect. This topic could be moved to the Walkability Subcommittee if it the Solar and Green Building Subcommittee is unable to take it on.
- Fireworks – Commissioner Freedman noted that fireworks are prohibited by code except for City or community events. The Commission decided not to advocate for expanding any fireworks prohibitions at this time largely because of the limited use and limited impacts on the environment. The group also noted that it would likely be difficult to get broader support for such a ban.
- Helium – Commisioner Miller suggested that this be removed from consideration as it did not rise to the level of priority as other topics that the Commission is currently working on.
- Banning wood burning fireplaces – The Commission agreed that this topic was not a priority given the City's climate and the limited number of wood burning fireplaces that may be in use in the City. Wood burning fireplaces are not permitted under new building codes. It also poses an enforcement challenge.
- Ban Sulfur Hexafluoride (SF6) – The Commission discussed the fact that the chemical does present hazards but appears to be in limited use or poses little exposure risk. In addition, there would need to be a substitute if there was a ban. The Commission agreed to not take this topic on at this time.
- Tree Inventory – There was an inventory done several years ago. Commisioner Freedman suggested that the Commission prioritize an update to the Tree Inventory and include that effort in its GHG reduction measures. The Commission decided to assign this to the Walkability Subcommittee for further action as the topic may come up as part of the Walkability Master Plan.
- 3-4-50 Campaign – The Commission assigned this to Commisioner Baker to explore under the Wellness topic.

F. COMMITTEE AND COMMISSIONER REPORTS

1. Standing Subcommittee on Solar and Green Building – Commissioner Freedman reported that the energy code training was held on November 6th. Forty people attended, and it was well received. The Solar Zoning Ordinance was passed unanimously at the November 6th Council meeting. The Building codes will be before Council on December 18th and Manager Tallarico will be working with Commissioner Freedman on describing the solar requirements in the new code in response to some of the previous questions raised by Council.

2. Standing Subcommittee on Waste Reduction. Manager Tallarico reported that the website has been updated to help make information about recycling clearer. Downtown Trash Cans will be installed in December as the Subcommittee continues to work on signage.
3. Standing Subcommittee on World Environment Day – No report. The first meeting will be on December 2nd.
4. Standing Subcommittee on Water Conservation – The group is discussing potential turf conversion efforts on City property and exploring the elimination of weed barrier on these projects. At the DWA Board meeting, they approved a new water agreement to define water access to the Colorado River. There was an 11.5% water reduction in October from the 2013 baseline, with 19.4% cumulative savings for the year and 17.4% since June 2016 when targets were established.
5. Ad Hoc Subcommittee on Earth Day – Commissioner Baker reported that he and Manager Tallarico have been reaching out to schools to determine what they may already be doing.
6. Ad Hoc Subcommittee on Walkability & Pedestrian Planning – Manager Tallarico announced that interviews were conducted to select the Consultant that will develop the plan. There was agreement on a selection, and SCAG will follow up and finalize that selection process.
7. Ad Hoc Subcommittee on Crosswalks and Pedestrian Safety – The project request for Ramon Road was received by the City and is being evaluated. The Subcommittee will focus on this project and then determine how to move forward. City staff provided information about the process that the City uses to evaluate projects. The Ramon project could also be integrated into the Walkability study when that is underway. Commissioner Flanagan also noted that “push to walk” buttons present a safety issue and they should be eliminated. Manager Tallarico indicated that this is the kind of thing that would be addressed in the Walkability Master Plan.
8. Ad Hoc Subcommittee on Bicycle Routes and Cycling – Commissioner Flanagan noted that most of the necessary content was already included on the brochure. It just needs to be improved in terms of its presentation.
9. Ad Hoc Subcommittee on Night Sky – Manager Tallarico suggested that the Commissioners research the current City night sky ordinance.
10. Big Horn Sheep Habitat Protection – Manager Tallarico will follow up on replacement of the missing “no dogs allowed signs.” He will also coordinate with the Convention and Visitor’s Bureau on the placement of trail directional signs. Commissioner Flanagan also suggested that the Araby Wash would be a good place to have a dog trail. This may be a liability issue related to hiking in an area that could be flooded quickly.
11. Wellness – No report.
12. Desert Community Energy, Community Advisory Committee – DCE will launch in April. The Community Advisory Committee will meet on Thursday November 21. CAC members identified a list of potential organizations that could be contacted to support outreach related to the CARE/FERA program.

G. COMMISSIONER COMMENTS AND UPCOMING AGENDA DEVELOPMENT –

- Commissioner Miller requested that the Commission should include the topic of “flushable wipes” to its next meeting. She also noted that the Palm Springs Surf Club project was approved without any environmental review. She suggested that this project and other major projects be brought to the attention of Sustainability and DWA in the future.
- Commissioner McCann provided an update on progress to raise funds for Oswit Canyon.
- Commissioner Goins suggested that the Commission continue to get updates on the Co-gen plant.
- Commissioner Garratt updated the group on her efforts to collect alternatives to plastic food ware.

H. ADJOURNMENT - The meeting of the Sustainability Commission adjourned at 7:31 PM by a motion from Commissioner McCann and seconded by Commissioner Baker and approved by a unanimous vote. They adjourned to the Regular Meeting of the Sustainability Commission to be held at 5:00 p.m. on Tuesday, December 17, 2019, in the Large Conference Room at the Palm Springs City Hall. The Sustainability Commission’s regular meeting schedule is at 5:00 p.m. the third Tuesday each month except August unless otherwise noted or amended.

Respectfully Submitted,

Patrick Tallarico, Manager, Office of Sustainability