



SUSTAINABILITY COMMISSION - REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

Tuesday, September 17, 2019 Palm Springs City Hall, Large Conference Room

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

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 as posted by Commissioner Gauthier and seconded by Commissioner Santora and unanimously carried by an open vote.

| | <u>This Meeting</u> | <u>Present to Date</u> | <u>FY 2019/2020 Excused Absences</u> | <u>FY 2019/2020 Unexcused Absences</u> |
|---------------------------|---------------------|------------------------|--------------------------------------|--|
| Roy Clark, Chair | X | 37 | | |
| Robert McCann, Vice Chair | X | 35 | | |
| David Freedman | X | 47 | | |
| Jennifer Futterman | E | 33 | 1 | |
| Greg Gauthier | X | 28 | | |
| John Goins | X | 23 | 1 | |
| T Santora | X | 13 | 1 | |
| Carl Baker | L | 15 | | |
| Jim Flanagan | X | 6 | 1 | |
| Lani Miller | X | 6 | | |
| Sandra Garratt | X | 2 | | |

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:

- July 24, 2019 City Council Meeting: The Solar Zoning Ordinance was discussed and was returned to the Sustainability Commission for further clarification. This item was discussed in more detail during Old Business.
- At the September 18, 2019 Council meeting the Downtown trash containers will be on the agenda for a vote to approve the purchase of the containers.
- Also, on the September 18, 2019 Council agenda is a “No Dogs Allowed on Trails” ordinance (first reading). One of the “No Dogs on Trails” signs has already been vandalized.
- Sample Business Card and Letterhead for Commissioners was included in the agenda packet. Any feedback is welcome. Commissioners were asked to contact Manager Tallarico with comments.
- Manager Tallarico reported on the anticipated PSDS rate increase that may be issued next month.
- At the Learning Sessions held by Councilmembers Roberts and Kors, the topic of the scarcity of Helium was mentioned along with questions about the anti-smoking ordinance.
- A second community meeting was held for the Business community, and one business owner noted that there have been delays in the issuance of solar permits.

PUBLIC COMMENTS –

Kim Floyd – Palm Desert. Mr. Floyd stated that as Conservation Chair for the Riverside and San Bernardino Counties Sierra Club Chapter that he is working on support of the California Desert Protection Act sponsored by Senator Feinstein. Concerns have been expressed about the pressure being put on public lands and the need to bring more attention to the value of public lands. He would like to ask that all of the desert cities pass a resolution in support of the 25th anniversary of the Desert Protection Act.

Paul Hinrichsen - Palm Springs. Mr. Hinrichsen briefly mentioned the issue of helium and the declining

amounts currently available in the US. He also brought up the subject of SF6 (Sulphur Hexafluoride) and its negative environmental effects. He would like to see the City of Palm Springs impose a restriction on the use of these chemicals. Mr. Hinrichsen also would like to see reflective technologies explored as part of the Commission agenda.

A. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS –

B. MEETING MINUTES

July 16, 2019 Regular Meeting minutes approval: Motion by Commissioner Santora to approve as presented, second by Commissioner Miller. Motion passed 7-0-2 with Commissioners Flanagan and Goins abstaining. (Commissioner Baker arrived after this vote).

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

1. Support of the franchise waste hauler (PSDS) – No reportable actions.
2. Special events – The City holds three e-waste and shredding events throughout the year and the next shredding and e-waste event will be October 19, 2019.
3. Annual Report – The report was submitted on time by August 1, 2019. Waiting to receive comments back from the State.
4. Legislation – No new information this month. SB1383 Organics recycling bill has had no new information posted.
5. Attend meetings with City Staff – Met with City Staff and subcommittee members.
6. Other duties as requested – no report.
7. Recyclable materials taken to approved recycling facilities – Mr. Calhoun reported that for the months of July and August, the City collected 33,660 tons of recyclable materials.
8. Current Legislation – The City has sent out compliance letters to businesses, and this mailing has been more successful than the previous mailings in generating a response. This may have been due to language being added referencing a new ordinance that could result in fines.

D. OLD BUSINESS

Commissioners discussed the following items. Key points are highlighted.

1. Status of the Downtown Trash/Recycling Receptacles. Manager Tallarico reported that this issue is on the City Council agenda for approval for the Council meeting on September 18, 2019 for approval to purchase at a price of about \$375,000. Of that, about \$100,000 will be paid out of the Recycling fund for the purchase of the recycling containers.
2. Status of the Solar Zoning Ordinance. The draft solar zoning ordinance was presented at the July 24, 2019 City Council Meeting. Council members requested that Planning simplify the ordinance and minimize barriers to solar panel installation. Commissioner Freedman presented the revised draft ordinance to the Sustainability Commission. The following motion was made by Chair Clark and seconded by Commissioner Freedman:
“**MOTION:** The Sustainability Commission approves the Solar Zoning Ordinance to encourage the use and development of solar energy systems and solar energy facilities and recommends that the City forward the draft ordinance to the Planning Commission for adoption.” It passed unanimously by all ten members present. There was one excused absence. During discussion, Commissioner Goins requested that the Sustainability staff work with Planning staff or the Planning Commission to follow up on the following items:
 - Determine whether the following statement in Section 93.16.05 Height, Visibility and Setback Requirements, paragraph A. 2 was necessary. “All solar energy systems on single-family dwellings not conforming to the roof profile are subject to the approval of the director.” The feeling was that this may not be an issue that needs to be called specifically given that it may happen infrequently. If it does, it was suggested that it may be helpful to address the requirement directly instead of leaving it to the discretion of the Director.
 - Consider whether the following statement in Section 93.16.05 paragraph C is too ambiguous: “The review and determination of effectiveness of solar collectors shall be made by the Manager of the Office of Sustainability.” Commissioner Goins suggested that

Planning may want to consider reverting back to some of the earlier language that clearly gives parameters for determining the effectiveness.

Commissioner Freedman agreed to work with Manager Tallarico to pass along the results of the discussion and address the two concerns with Planning following the meeting.

E. NEW BUSINESS

1. Election of Commission Chairperson and Vice Chairperson.
 - Commissioner Baker nominated Chair Clark for another term.
 - Commissioner Gauthier nominated Vice Chair McCann for another term.
 - No further nominations were made and both were elected unanimously to fill the 2019-20 respective terms.
2. Student rep from Palm Springs High School or Desert Learning Academy.
 - No contact has been made with either Palm Springs High School or the Desert Learning Academy in regards to interest in providing a student rep. Staff will draft a letter to the schools to see if there is any interest in providing a student rep.
 - Manager Tallarico will look into how other commissions and committees regard student reps.
3. Fountain grass eradication.
 - Chair Clark reported that at the last meeting a presentation was made on fountain grass eradication. A strong case was presented, but it was unclear how the City could proceed with a program. One thought would be to contact Staci Schafer, Director of Maintenance and Facilities, to see if the City contracted landscapers would be able to work on pulling out the plants. Other options could also be discussed.
 - Commissioner Flanagan proposed that the group explore a way to minimize the use of the plant in Palm Springs through an education awareness program.
 - Commissioner Miller stated that this education program could be combined with other sustainability education efforts.
 - Commissioner Gauthier stated that there are multiple items that the Commission is working on that could all be a part of an outreach plan.
4. Community garden naming plan.
 - Chair Clark reported that discussions have progressed on the re-naming of the Community Garden and that a date of the week of December 9th has been suggested as the time for the ceremony. The Arbor Day trees that were voted on at a previous meeting will be planted. Commissioner Futterman worked with Staci Schafer to identify the type of trees that will be planted.
5. 2020 Earth Day, Wed, April 22, form ad hoc subcommittee.
 - Chair Clark asked if anyone would like to work on an Ad Hoc Subcommittee on the 50th Anniversary of Earth Day. Commissioner Baker volunteered.
6. Resolution on California Desert Protection Act.
 - Chair Clark reported that Councilmember Kors approached him stating that the City Council will be considering action on this item sometime in October and that Councilmember Kors thought it would be a good idea if the Sustainability Commission reviewed and voted on it as well. Background information was provided to the Commissioners and the following motion was made by Commissioner Gauthier and seconded by Commissioner Santora:
MOTION: "The Sustainability Commission supports a resolution recognizing the 25 years since the signing of the 1994 California Desert Protection Act (CDPA) which recognized the world class uniqueness of the California deserts and provided destination points by creating the Mojave National Preserve, Joshua Tree National Park and Death Valley National Park, as well as 69 new desert wilderness areas in the California desert region."
The motion passed unanimously on an open vote 10-0.

F. COMMITTEE AND COMMISSIONER REPORTS

Commissioners discussed the following items. Key points are highlighted.

1. Standing Subcommittee on Solar and Green Building - Commissioners Freedman, Goins and Flanagan
Commissioner Freedman reported that there was no meeting last month but that the following subjects will be discussed at the upcoming meeting:

- Home Energy Audit program.
 - EV Charging standards.
 - A discussion on a potential solar policy for commercial buildings.
 - A discussion on the relationship between the Sustainability Commission and the Historic Site Preservation Board (HSPB).
 - The Energy Code Training Program will be held on Wednesday, November 6, 2019.
 - Commissioner Freedman requested that the date of the next subcommittee meeting be held on Wednesday, October 02, 2019. The date was agreed on.
2. Standing Subcommittee on Waste Reduction – Vice Chair McCann, Chair Clark, Commissioner Miller
- Manager Tallarico reported on the following:
 - California Resource Recovery Association (CRRRA) Conference.
 - The stakeholder meeting on single use plastic ordinance. Letters were sent to food service businesses and hotels. Only five businesses attended.
 - The single use plastic ordinance is being drafted.
 - The Committee is working with the Cultural Center pilot program on recycling.
 - PSDS is developing a Newsletter message on what and what not to put in your recycling bin.
 - The Committee will be reviewing the Recycling website at the next meeting.
 - A trip to a landfill, transfer station and Materials Recovery Facility is being planned. Five commission members indicated their interest in attending.
 - Commissioner McCann reported on the following:
 - Signage for recycling and trash containers is being developed for the new Downtown trash and recycling containers.
 - Signs for what does go into the appropriate containers and labels to put on the containers showing what not to put in the appropriate container.
 - A graphic designer has been engaged to help with the graphics.
3. Standing Subcommittee on World Environment Day – Commissioners Futterman, Gauthier, Santora
- No meeting this month, no report.
4. Ad Hoc Subcommittee on Walkability & Pedestrian Planning - Commissioners Wilson, Gauthier, Futterman
Manager Tallarico stated that he has heard back from SCAG and they have our scope of work and are putting it in their format. An RFP should be forthcoming soon and a consultant will be assigned.
Chair Clark reported on the area of crosswalks and the need to improve some areas of town with better options for crosswalks. An Ad Hoc Committee on Crosswalks was created by Chair Clark with Commissioners Goins and Flanagan being the members. Christine Hammond of the ONE-PS Code Enforcement and Public Works Committee will participate. The Ad Hoc committee will have an end date of June 30, 2020.
5. Ad Hoc Subcommittee on Bicycle Routes and Cycling – Commissioner Flanagan –
- No meeting this month. Commissioner Flanagan and Mr. DeGarmo will be working on the Bicycle Friendly Community designation application with the assistance of Vic Yepello.
6. Ad Hoc Subcommittee on Night Sky – Vice Chair McCann and Commissioner Flanagan -
- No Report
7. Big Horn Sheep Habitat Protection – Commissioner Flanagan
- Manager Tallarico stated that signs have been installed and one of the signs has already been torn down. The ordinance will go before the City Council on Wednesday, September 18, 2019 for approval.
 - Commissioner Flanagan reported that there has been some confrontation at the trail heads about the no dogs ordinance and that a meeting has been scheduled with Parks and Rec to do some education and awareness at the trailheads in the future. Education materials are being developed.
8. Wellness – Commissioner Baker – No report.
9. Water - Commissioner Freedman reported on:
- DWA has many rebate programs for residents and businesses: turf removal, smart controller and irrigation nozzles, residential professional design, high-efficiency washing machines, and high-efficiency toilets (10 or more for businesses only).
 - DWA is working on a grant to do a turf removal project at the airport.

- The City has budgeted \$150,000 for turf removal projects.
 - There was a 21% reduction in potable water production compared with 2013 and cumulative savings over the last 12-month period of 18.8% and cumulative savings in the last three years is 17.8%.
 - Commissioner Miller plans to join Commissioner Freedman in the Water Conservation committee. Commissioner Freedman requested that the Water Conservation Standing Subcommittee be re-established.
 - Chair Clark re-established the Standing Subcommittee on Water Conservation with Commissioners Freedman and Miller as members. A meeting schedule will be established.
10. Desert Community Energy, Community Advisory Committee – Commissioners Baker, Freedman, Miller. Commissioner Miller introduced Noel Loughrin who is also a member of the DCE Community Advisory Committee. She is a market specialist for GIS at ESRI. She gave a short biography of herself and explained the DCE charter goals. Commissioner Miller also reported that the committee is also reaching out to low income residents of the Coachella Valley. A group called “Lift to Rise” was selected to help with the outreach efforts.

G. COMMISSIONER COMMENTS AND UPCOMING AGENDA DEVELOPMENT -

Commissioner Garratt – Would like to see a composting program in the City with two types of composting, food and packaging. Maybe get a list of companies who provide compostable packaging.

Commissioner Garratt also mentioned that she attempted to prevent the Mardi Gras-type beads from being used at Pride this year, but was not successful. However the Pride committee is committed to being more “Green” this year.

Commissioner Miller stated that on Friday, September 20, 2019 at 3:30 pm a rally on Climate Strike will be held at Congressman Ruiz’ office in Palm Desert.

Vice Chair McCann reported on the Save Oswit Canyon settlement and that about \$1 million is still needed to purchase the land.

H. ADJOURNMENT - The meeting of the Sustainability Commission adjourned at 7:30 PM by a motion from Commissioner Santora and seconded by Commissioner Gauthier 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, October 15, 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