

**MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING OF
THE ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY AND
ENERGY CONSERVATION COMMISSION**

1. CALL TO ORDER

The Torrance Environmental Quality and Energy Conservation Commission convened in a regular session at 7:02 p.m. on Thursday, February 6, 2014 in the West Annex meeting room at Torrance City Hall.

2. ROLL CALL:

Present: Commissioners Chim*, Deemer, DeWitt, Martin,
Montgomery, Robbins, and Acting Chairperson Gobble.

Absent: None.

Also Present: Deputy Community Development Director Cessna,
Senior Environmental Quality Officer Duncan, and
Environmental Quality Officer Travers.

*Commissioner Chim arrived at 7:08 p.m.

3. SALUTE TO THE FLAG

Commissioner DeWitt led the Pledge of Allegiance.

4. POSTING OF THE AGENDA

MOTION: Commissioner Robbins, seconded by Commissioner DeWitt, moved to accept and file the report of the secretary on the posting of the agenda for this meeting; a roll call vote reflected unanimous approval.

5. ORAL COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE PUBLIC

Commissioners welcomed new Environmental Quality and Energy Conservation Commissioner Jim Montgomery.

6. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

6A. MINUTES OF NOVEMBER 7, 2013 COMMISSION MEETING

MOTION: Commissioner DeWitt moved to approve the November 7, 2013 Commission meeting minutes as presented. Commissioner Robbins seconded the motion; a roll call vote reflected unanimous approval (Commissioner Gobble abstaining).

6B. MINUTES OF DECEMBER 5, 2013 COMMISSION MEETING

MOTION: Commissioner Martin moved to approve the December 5, 2013 Commission meeting minutes as presented. Commissioner Robbins seconded the motion; a roll call vote reflected unanimous approval (Commissioner Gobble abstaining).

7. ENVIRONMENTAL MATTERS

7A. ALYSON SCHILL, FOOD FORWARD PROGRAM

Alyson Schill, Volunteer Manager, provided a presentation on the Food Forward program, a non-profit organization founded in 2009, whose mission is to take the waste of food and donate it to the hungry. She reported that Food Forward has 11 staff members and over 7,000 volunteers who pick and donate unused backyard fruit, primarily in Ventura County and San Fernando Valley. She discussed the new Farmers' Market Recovery program and interest in expanding into the South Bay, starting with the Torrance Farmers' Market on February 11. She stated that at Farmers' Markets volunteers hand out boxes to farmers and then collect fruit and vegetable donations at the end of the day. She noted that donations are given to receiving agencies that are non-profit groups that feed people. She stated that the backyard harvesting program is harder to start and develop because it requires many volunteers, appropriate vehicles, and storage locations for equipment.

In response to Commissioner DeWitt's inquiry, she stated that they have identified one receiving agency in Torrance, other locations in the South Bay, after-school programs, and a food distribution day in the City of Venice. She offered to e-mail a list of receiving agencies that Food Forward will be working with in Torrance and surrounding areas.

Responding to Environmental Quality Officer Travers' inquiry regarding the policy and procedure for picking fruit on private property, Ms. Schill stated that homeowners need to be present, homeowners sign a formal agreement on-line, and that Food Forward carries liability insurance.

Commissioners received clarification that homeowners can pick their own fruit and deliver it to a receiving agency.

Staff and Commissioners suggested contacts to generate interest in the program that include having a booth at the June 7 Environmental Fair, Southern California Rare Fruit Growers, Presbyterian Church near South Coast Botanical Gardens, Salvation Army, homeowner's associations, Girl Scout and Boy Scout groups, Community Gardens at Columbia and Lago Seco Parks, urban farming groups, Earth Day events, Madrona Marsh, Riviera Garden Club, Unitarian Church, and fruit tree donators.

8. NEW BUSINESS

8A. ELECTION OF CHAIRPERSON AND VICE-CHAIRPERSON

MOTION: Commissioner Chim moved to elect Commissioner Gobble for Chairperson of the Environmental Quality and Energy Conservation Commission. Commissioner Robbins seconded the motion; a roll call vote reflected unanimous approval.

MOTION: Commissioner Chim moved to elect Commissioner Robbins for Vice-Chairperson of the Environmental Quality and Energy Conservation Commission. Commissioner Gobble seconded the motion; a roll call vote reflected unanimous approval.

9. ORAL COMMUNICATION

9A. Deputy Director Cessna informed the Commission that the H.E.R.O. property assessed financing program is launching on February 10, 2014. She stated that they will have staff at the Environmental Services Center and plan to participate in the Environmental Fair.

9B. Deputy Director Cessna stated that City Council approved the Commission's recommendations regarding electric vehicle charging stations. She mentioned that staff has applied for a grant for DC fast chargers.

9C. Deputy Director Cessna stated that staff plans to attend the March 2014 Old Torrance homeowner's association to discuss the beekeeping and chicken keeping proposals. She noted that they hope to get public feedback at the Environmental Fair and will bring back an item at the July or August Commission meeting.

Commissioner Gobble suggested that staff contact Torrance Unified School District about the proposals.

9D. Commissioner Martin suggested that Lago Seco Park would be a better location for fast chargers than Walteria Park because there is more parking.

9E. Commissioner DeWitt raised the possibility of having the Environmental Fair at Wilson Park during Farmers' Market and staff and Commissioners explained why it was decided to have it in conjunction with the City Yard Open House.

9F. Commissioner DeWitt mentioned that there are two different connectors for DC chargers.

9G. Commissioner DeWitt announced that the City of Los Angeles has banned the use of plastic bags as of January 1.

9H. A brief discussion centered on the water shortage in California.

10. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: At 8:19 p.m., Commissioner Deemer moved to adjourn the meeting to March 6, 2014 at 7:00 p.m. in the West Annex meeting room. Commissioner Robbins seconded the motion and, hearing no objection, Acting Chairperson Gobble so ordered.

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Approved as submitted August 7, 2014 s/ Rebecca Poirier, City Clerk
