

**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 7:05 p.m. on Thursday, June 4, 2009 in the West Annex meeting room at Torrance City Hall.

**2. ROLL CALL:**

Present: Commissioners Chim, Decker, Gobble, Griffiths, Reilly, Watson, and Chairperson McCabe.

Absent: Commissioner Decker.

Also Present: Deputy Community Development Director Cessna and Senior Environmental Quality Officer Jones.

Deputy Director Cessna regrettfully announced the resignation of Commissioner Decker due to health reasons.

**3. SALUTE TO THE FLAG**

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Commissioner Reilly.

**4. POSTING OF THE AGENDA**

**MOTION:** Commissioner Griffiths, seconded by Commissioner Gobble, moved to accept and file the report of the secretary on the posting of the agenda for this meeting; a voice vote reflected unanimous approval.

**7A. GREEN PRIDE IN TORRANCE AWARD TO TORRANCE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL FOR THEIR TREE PLANTING PROJECT "OASIS OF GREEN"**

This item was taken out of order.

Senior Environmental Quality Officer Jones introduced the item and welcomed students, parents, community members, Torrance Elementary School Principal Gerardo Yopez, and Torrance Elementary School teacher Karen Jackson.

Mr. Yopez commended Ms. Jackson for her efforts in obtaining grants that resulted in a native garden and tree planting project that is being enjoyed by students and utilized in fourth grade curriculum.

Ms. Jackson described the two grants that she successfully wrote, the native garden that was put in two years ago, and the planting of 42 trees this year. She acknowledged the students, parents, and community members who volunteered their time and hard work on these projects that have allowed children to connect with nature in a way that they do not in their real lives. She introduced Junior Rangers in the audience and invited Commissioners to participate in a volunteer day at Torrance Elementary School on June 6, 2009.

Staff distributed gifts of appreciation and the Commission was in a brief recess for a photo opportunity.

**5. ORAL COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE PUBLIC**

Debra Corwin, Purrfect Partners, West Bulova Street, urged the City to adopt a mandatory spay/neuter ordinance, distributed and entered into record e-mails that she recently received, and introduced two veterinarians.

Dr. Lisa Pierson, Lomita, described her ongoing efforts to trap, neuter, and return (TNR) approximately 68 feral cats in the last three weeks from a local trailer park. She mentioned that there is a huge flea problem at the park and that many kittens die from flea anemia. She expressed frustration that mandatory spay/neuter has not been legislated, that Animal Control officers are powerless, and that it is a “no brainer.” She stated that a cat can become pregnant at five months of age and recommended spay/neuter at 16 weeks.

When Commissioner Gobble asked who is feeding the cats at the trailer park, Dr. Pierson responded that there are bowls of food left out for them all over the park.

Dr. Stacy Fuchino, Palos Verdes Boulevard, stated that he has seen an increase in litters and voiced support for a mandatory spay/neuter ordinance.

Deputy Director Cessna advised that the mandatory spay/neuter item would be brought back at the July 2, 2009 Commission meeting.

**6. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – APRIL 2, 2009**

Commissioner Chim moved for the approval of the April 2, 2009 meeting minutes as submitted. Commissioner Gobble seconded the motion; a voice vote reflected unanimous approval.

**7. ENVIRONMENTAL MATTERS**

**7B. PRESENTATION BY IVAN KAN OF TECH GO GREEN – GREEN BUSINESS CERTIFICATION PROGRAM**

Executive Director Ivan Kan introduced his associate Heather and provided a power point presentation on Tech Go Green’s Green Business Certification Program for the City to consider adopting. He stated that the goal of the program is to assist, recognize, and promote businesses for implementing green practices. He presented an overview of the program that is voluntary, non-enforcement based, offers an easy to use checklist for improving environmental performance, and provides outreach, education and technical assistance. He stated that participating businesses would need to conduct a self audit using the checklist and, following on site verification, would receive a decal to display. He noted that the target for this program is small to medium sized consumer-oriented businesses and noted that approximately 1,700 businesses in the Bay area have been certified since the program originated there in 1995.

He noted that there are over 20 industries participating in the California Green Business Network but that Torrance would begin its pilot program with Office/Retail and Restaurants/Cafes. He stated that certification lasts for two years or when a business moves or changes ownership and that a Torrance Certified Green Business would conserve resources in the following categories: Solid Waste and Recycling, Pollution

Prevention, Eco Friendly Purchasing, Energy Efficiency, Water Efficiency, and Air Emissions. He stated that Tech Go Green is a non-profit organization based in Torrance and would serve as program coordinator. Some of its tasks would include recruiting businesses, assisting them through the process, managing recognition and marketing, organizing participation of partner agencies and utilities, and verifying that businesses are compliant.

Heather discussed benefits to participating businesses that include improved access to incentives and rebates, expedited permits, cost savings, healthier workplace, increased employee morale and productivity, attracting new customers, and increased ability for businesses to protect, preserve, and improve the environment. She pointed out that the City would not endorse any of the businesses that become certified green but only their green efforts. She presented a short video entitled "Contra Costa Green Business Program" and distributed binders on the Torrance Green Business Program, sample Torrance logo, and draft checklist for Office/Retail.

In response to Commissioner Gobble's inquiry, Heather stated that the program has not been adopted by any South Bay cities yet and that information about green business program budgets for start-up and operational costs are outlined at the back of the binder, adding that costs are often split among city departments.

Responding to Commissioner Griffiths' inquiry, Ivan stated that he hoped the City would endorse Tech Go Green and provide input on the checklist.

Commissioner Watson inquired how Tech Go Green would attract businesses and Heather responded that they have a consulting service that promotes cost savings, helping the environment, and incentives.

In response to Commissioner Chim's inquiries, Ivan advised that Tech Go Green received its non-profit status in March 2008 and that they have worked with the Environmental Services Center in the past.

Chairperson McCabe was informed that Tech Go Green will participate in the June 13, 2009 Environmental Fair and display an electric car. Deputy Director Cessna advised that staff will bring back additional information after speaking with Economic Development staff and Environmental Services Center to determine if there is interest in moving forward with the proposal.

Commissioners commended Ivan and Heather for an informative presentation and Commissioner Gobble encouraged them to keep talking with Environmental Services Center and City staff.

#### **7C. ENVIRONMENTAL FAIR UPDATE**

Deputy Director Cessna distributed a tentative schedule and list of exhibitors for the June 13, 2009 Environmental Fair at Madrona Marsh Preserve. She stated that the Fair is being promoted in the Daily Breeze and that participants include food vendors, Recycling and Water staff, on-going craft for youth provided by the Library, speakers in the Nature Center, battery recycling, ladybugs, and shopping bag exchange by the Green Action Team, and displays of tankless water heaters, bio-diesel and electric vehicles, solar tubes, and solar panels. She advised that Congresswoman Harman will not be at the event but will send a representative and that Councilmembers and

Assemblyman Lieu have been invited. She distributed T-shirts for Commissioners to wear and requested that they be in charge of a three level Citizen Green Pledge.

Chairperson McCabe noted that Virginia Hilker, Environmental Priorities Network, has been promoting the Fair at Farmers Market.

## **8. ORAL COMMUNICATION**

**8A.** Deputy Director Cessna encouraged Commissioners to attend the June 6, 2009 City Yard Open House and Chamber Expo on June 12, 2009.

**8B.** Commissioner Gobble distributed information regarding a Southern California Edison solar information session on June 25, 2009.

**8C.** Commissioner Gobble shared information about Crown Disposal that turns green waste into humus rather than just landfill topper.

**8D.** Commissioner Griffiths distributed a bill insert from County of San Bernardino and announced the Palos Verdes Street Fair on June 6-7, 2009.

**8E.** Commissioner Watson distributed fliers and provided an update on the June 27, 2009 presentation of "Are We Running Dry?" with Torrance Public Library.

**8F.** Chairperson McCabe and Commissioner Watson expressed appreciation to staff for their presentation at an Old Torrance Neighborhood Association meeting on May 20.

**8G.** Chairperson McCabe announced a Torrance Unified School District design meeting on June 11, 2009 regarding Hull School and a Metropolitan Water District Ocean Friendly event on June 6, 2009.

**8H.** Chairperson McCabe recommended that the Commission refocus and prioritize items that were discussed at the joint meeting with City Council.

**8I.** Commissioners Reilly and Gobble volunteered to be on a subcommittee to discuss the solar cooperative proposal.

## **11. ADJOURNMENT**

**MOTION:** At 9:10 p.m., Commissioner Gobble moved to adjourn the meeting to July 2, 2009 at 7:00 p.m. in the West Annex meeting room. Commissioner Griffiths seconded the motion and, hearing no objection, Chairperson McCabe so ordered.

Approved as Submitted September 3, 2009 s/ Sue Herbers, City Clerk
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