

April 4, 2013

**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 7:01 p.m. on Thursday, April 4, 2013 in the West Annex meeting room at Torrance City Hall.

2. ROLL CALL:

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

Absent: None.

Also Present: Deputy Community Development Director Cessna, Environmental Quality Officer Colclasure, Senior Planning Associate Santana, and Planning Assistant Lang.

*Commissioner Chim arrived at 7:06 p.m.

3. SALUTE TO THE FLAG

Commissioner Deemer led the Pledge of Allegiance.

4. POSTING OF THE AGENDA

MOTION: Commissioner Robbins, 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.

5. ORAL COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE PUBLIC

None.

6. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

6A. MINUTES OF MARCH 7, 2013

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

7. ENVIRONMENTAL MATTERS

7A. UPDATE ON SBCCOG/SBESC ENERGY AND CLIMATE ACTION PLANNING PROGRAMS

Deputy Director Cessna introduced staff members and welcomed guests from the South Bay Environmental Services Center (SBESC).

Marilyn Lyon, Environmental Services Analyst and Public Affairs, SBESC, introduced the item and provided information about the Beacon Awards Program. She

Environmental Quality and Energy
Conservation Commission
April 4, 2013

encouraged participation in the Program, noting that it works closely with what the City is already accomplishing in energy efficiency. She reported that it is a statewide organization that all utilities belong to and is headed by the Institute for Local Government, an arm of California League of Cities. She stated that the organization highlights accomplishments that cities like Torrance are doing and helps them along the way by providing press releases and a website with valuable resources. She noted that Deputy Director Cessna has been appointed the City's contact person and requirements include providing the status of Greenhouse Gas Inventories & Climate Action Plans as well as being in compliance with AB 939. She offered to provide a sample resolution for the City as well as a staff report to assist the City in enrolling.

Sabrina Bornstein, Environmental Programs Specialist, South Bay Cities Council of Governments (SBCCOG), provided a powerpoint presentation on "Status Update on Energy and Climate Action Planning Programs." She stated that part of participating in the Beacon Awards Program is to commit to developing a Climate Action Plan in Best Practices in ten areas: energy efficiency and conservation, green building, water and wastewater systems, waste reduction and recycling, climate friendly purchasing, renewable energy and low carbon fuels, efficient transportation, land use and community design, open space and offsetting carbon emissions, and promoting individual and community action. She noted that SBCCOG is identifying Torrance's existing and potential best practices based on this framework and is developing a matrix for all South Bay cities to use to identify best practices and share resources.

She explained how best practices are incorporated into Climate Action Plans through Phase 1) Foundation for the Climate Action Plans and Beacon Awards Program, and Phase 2) Analyze strategies by looking at existing and potential strategies and calculating the estimated greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions reductions. She provided potential additional resources that include Southern California Edison Local Governments Strategic Plan Strategies Phase 3 as well as the proposed scope of work to customize Climate Action Plans with energy efficiency language and data.

In response to Commissioner Chim's inquiry, Ms. Bornstein stated that emissions for the 2005 baseline for municipal inventory was just under 20,000 metric tons of CO2 equivalent, electricity was approximately 33%, and natural gas was 8%. She offered to provide the Commission with an update on municipal energy use for 2010 and 2011, with data on 2012 expected to be available in a few weeks.

Greg Stevens, Energy Engineer, SBCCOG, reported that he works with cities to implement energy efficiency projects. He presented "City of Torrance Energy Savings At A Glance" that provides the City Manager with a quarterly update. He stated that 2010 was chosen as the baseline year to determine total annual energy use for all municipal facilities. He explained columns for Electric Savings Annual kWh, Natural Gas Savings Annual Therms, Incentive Cash to General Fund, Energy Cost Savings Annual, and Annual GHG Emissions Reduction for energy savings projects that have been completed, are in progress, planned, or identified. He stated that the second half of the document shows the Completed Project Detail and Opportunities for Reducing Operating Costs in City facilities.

Responding to Commissioner Gobble's inquiry, he stated that street lighting is an important area because it comprises 42% of the City's energy costs.

At Commissioner Deemer's request, Mr. Stevens explained the citywide Multi-Facility 4-foot T12 Fluorescent Lighting Replacement project that has been completed.

In response to Commissioner DeWitt's inquiry, he stated that municipal energy is 1% of Torrance usage, adding that education outreach is being provided to businesses in the community.

Mr. Stevens explained to Commissioner Chim that solar opportunities and on-site generation could be considered once energy use management and demand reduction is made as efficient as possible.

Responding to an inquiry by Chairperson Griffiths, he stated that SBESC is providing similar audit services to school districts.

Deputy Director Cessna stated that the Commission could continue discussion on enrollment in the Beacon Awards Program at the May 2 Commission meeting and upcoming joint meeting with City Council.

7B. TEQECC WORK PLAN

Deputy Director Cessna presented a list of potential work plan areas in recommended order of priority: climate action planning, leaf blower regulation, yard sale regulation, beekeeping and urban farming, and regulation of outdoor smoking. She requested that Commissioners assess the list and provide their input. She noted that the issues have been brought to the Commission as a result of City Council request, Strategic Plan implementation, public interest, or as part of ongoing environmental efforts by the City.

Commissioner Gobble suggested adding electric vehicle charging stations as a work plan item and it was determined that this issue is already being implemented. He also suggested adding the feeding feral animals and problems that evolve from it, indicating that he is not in favor of addressing beekeeping and urban farming.

Commissioner Robbins pointed out that beekeeping is one of the few items brought to the Commission by the public.

Commissioner Chim expressed concern that feeding feral animals would lead to the feral cat issue again and received clarification from staff that it cannot be enforced by the littering ordinance.

Commissioner Deemer stated that the City of Long Beach is studying the issue of bees, chickens, and goats and suggested that staff research what they have done.

Commissioner DeWitt stated that all suggested work plan items are citizen initiated at some level and recommended keeping urban beekeeping on the list.

In response to Commissioner Chim's inquiry, Deputy Director Cessna stated that City Council asked staff to look into the issue of yard sales. She stated that currently there is nothing in the Municipal Code and discussed consideration to develop an ordinance that allows a reasonable numbers of sales per year.

Commissioner Robbins suggested adding code enforcement for temporary signage and staff pointed out that there might be First Amendment issues.

Chairperson Griffiths received confirmation from Commissioners that none of the five items were being considered for deletion and he requested suggestions for additional topics.

Commissioner Gobble suggested adding energy efficiency and potential audits; staff recommended keeping it as a subset of Climate Action Planning.

MOTION: Commissioner Gobble moved to add the feeding of non-domesticated animals in public spaces to the list of potential work plan items; Commissioner Deemer seconded the motion. The motion passed on a 5-2 roll call vote (Commissioners Martin and Chairperson Griffiths voting nay).

MOTION: Commissioner Robbins moved to add code enforcement for temporary signage to the list of potential work plan items; Commissioner Gobble seconded the motion. The motion passed on a 6-1 roll call vote (Commissioner DeWitt voting nay).

When Chairperson Griffiths raised the possibility of combining as many items as possible when doing public outreach, staff cautioned against diluting the issues.

Following a brief discussion regarding prioritizing the list, it was decided to review the list at the next Commission meeting and to not prioritize the topics until City Council gives its feedback at the joint meeting.

MOTION: Commissioner Robbins moved to accept the list of seven work plan areas as amended. Commissioner DeWitt seconded the motion; a roll call vote reflected unanimous approval.

7C. DISCUSSION OF SCHEDULING JOINT MEETING WITH CITY COUNCIL

Deputy Director Cessna informed the Commission that City Council is unable to meet with them on May 14 due to the budget hearings and suggested June 11 or June 25 as possible dates for a joint meeting. Commissioners Robbins and Martin indicated that they were not available on June 25 and staff was directed to check on meeting room availability for June 11.

8. OLD BUSINESS

9. ORAL COMMUNICATION

Chairperson Griffiths combined items 8 and 9.

9A. Deputy Director Cessna informed Commissioners that the Car2Go proposal would be discussed at the April 9 City Council meeting.

9B. Commissioner DeWitt announced his appointment to the Exxon Mobil Community Advisory Panel.

Commissioner Chim congratulated Commissioner DeWitt on his appointment.

9C. Commissioner Gobble encouraged Commissioners to tour a zero carbon home on Prospect Avenue in the City of Hermosa Beach on April 6.

9D. Commissioner Gobble suggested that staff explore a proposal to install solar panels on the Public Works yard.

9E. Commissioner Gobble related his understanding that Palos Verdes releases trapped raccoons on the Palos Verdes trail near to Torrance.

9E. Commissioner Robbins stated that he was invited to be on the Exxon Mobil Community Advisory Panel but was unable to accept because of an ongoing commitment.

9F. Chairperson Griffiths offered to send staff information about a Chevron solar panel program.

10. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: At 8:53 p.m., Commissioner Chim moved to adjourn the meeting to May 2, 2013 at 7:00 p.m. in the West Annex meeting room. Commissioner Robbins seconded the motion and, hearing no objection, Chairperson Griffiths so ordered.

Approved as Submitted May 2, 2013 s/ Sue Herbers, City Clerk
--