

**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, October 7, 2010 in the West Annex meeting room at Torrance City Hall.

2. ROLL CALL:

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

Absent: Commissioners Cunningham and Watson.

Also Present: Senior Environmental Quality Officer Jones and Senior Environmental Quality Officer Duncan.

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

MOTION: Commissioner Chim moved to grant Commissioners Cunningham and Watson excused absences for the October 7, 2010 Commission meeting. Commissioner Griffiths seconded the motion; a voice vote reflected unanimous approval.

3. SALUTE TO THE FLAG

Chairperson Reilly led the Pledge of Allegiance.

4. POSTING OF THE AGENDA

MOTION: Commissioner Chim, seconded by Commissioner Griffiths, 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 SEPTEMBER 2, 2010

MOTION: Commissioner McCabe moved for the approval of the September 2, 2010 meeting minutes as submitted. Commissioner Griffiths seconded the motion; a voice vote reflected unanimous approval (absent Commissioners Cunningham and Watson).

7. ENVIRONMENTAL MATTERS

7A. DISCUSSION OF GARAGE/YARD SALES

Senior Environmental Quality Officer Jones reported that there is currently nothing in the Torrance Municipal Code that deals with regulating garage and yard sales. She stated that staff feels that Torrance would benefit from having some regulation in the Code to allow them to take action against egregious offenders, such as those who hold weekly garage sales or operate a retail business out of their residence. She explained that it is difficult to prove or enforce that a resident is using a garage/yard sale to operate a business, that there has been an increase in complaints, and that garage/yard sales can generate traffic, noise, and congestion.

She reviewed sample ordinances from the Cities of Lomita, Bellflower, and Burbank included in agenda materials. She stated that they could “borrow” from these ordinances to create a Torrance ordinance that addresses frequency, permits, and requirements. She noted that staff is exploring areas that include limiting the number of sales allowed per year, a permit system with fee or no fee, multi-tenant residences, days/hours of operation, restrictions on placement of signs and merchandise, and prohibition of sales on non-residential properties.

In response to Commissioner McCabe’s inquiry, Senior Environmental Quality Officer Duncan explained that requiring a business license is not enough because they have to be able to prove that it is a commercial business constantly being run out of a home.

Commissioner McCabe questioned why this item was brought before the Commission and Senior Environmental Quality Officer Jones responded that the Environmental Quality and Energy Conservation Commission is one of the City Commissions that is a decision and policy making body.

Commissioner Griffiths stated that there should not be a fee for permits, that residents should be able to phone in for permits, that two or three weekends per year would be reasonable, and that the ordinance should include a requirement to remove signs within 24 hours.

Commissioner Chim received clarification from staff that sometimes the garage/yard sales are advertised, that court-ordered estate sales could be exempt, and that the number of garage/yard sales in Torrance is not any higher than in surrounding cities.

Commissioner Gobble stated that Torrance should not be in the business of regulating garage/yard sales but if necessary residents should be allowed to have six or eight sales per year. He offered a suggestion that neighbors should call City Hall and report violators.

Chairperson Reilly expressed concern that the City would be taking on additional costs if a permit system were implemented and asked staff to bring back a cost analysis. She stated that she does not like it when people fail to remove their signs and that a limit of six or eight sales per year would allow staff to regulate abusers.

8. INFORMATION ITEMS

Senior Environmental Quality Officer Jones reported that Marilyn Lyons, South Bay Environmental Services Center, has expressed interest in working with them to host a lawn mower exchange program in or near the City. She noted that KMart would meet the requirement for a secured lot with easy access and large enough to conduct the event. She stated that staff would check on other potential locations and discuss the proposal with City Council before moving forward with the South Coast Air Quality Management District.

9. ORAL COMMUNICATION

9A. Commissioner Gobble discussed the free Lamp Exchange sponsored by Southern California Edison on September 18-19, 2010 at Kmart. He stated that 5,400 lamps were given away on September 18 and 3,000 on September 19 and agreed that Kmart would be an excellent location for a lawn mower exchange.

9B. Commissioner Gobble distributed a sample of a recyclable, biodegradable product that soaks up oil and raised the possibility of using the product in City storm drains.

9C. Commissioner Griffiths discussed his two-week trip to China and mentioned that seeing the burning of trash in the countryside was disheartening.

9D. Commissioner McCabe related his observation that there were no environmental issues on the agenda, such as recycling, bicycle paths, Cool Cities inventory, green building, and questioned why these have been sidetracked and why it takes so long. He expressed interest in placing these topics on future agendas with the hope of making recommendations to City Council.

Senior Environmental Officer Jones responded that Recycling Coordinator Allison Sherman did not have anything new to share at this time and that the Green Team is working with the Building and Safety Manager to learn about how to implement new State green building codes.

Chairperson Reilly suggested inviting Allison Sherman to come to a future Commission meeting to provide an update on business and multi-tenant recycling.

Commissioner Gobble stated that the City should avoid having “trash wars” and recommended expanding the City’s trash service by providing recycling center points for recycling drop off.

9E. Commissioner Chim shared information about her trip to the Grand Canyon and Sedona. She stated that she enjoyed attending the grand opening of Landi Renzo and the AQMD’s Annual Clean Air Awards. She announced a Climate Change Forum on October 14, 2010.

9F. Commissioner Gobble discussed his attendance at a net zero carbon home ground breaking in the City of Hermosa Beach and mentioned that Hermosa Beach is now allowing wind turbines.

9G. Chairperson Reilly stated that she received two lamps on September 18, 2010 at the Lamp Exchange and that the event was well organized and efficient.

9H. Chairperson Reilly stated that she and Commissioner Watson attended the Chair and Vice-Chair training last week. She asked that an item be placed on next month's agenda for them to discuss key highlights from the session.

10. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: At 7:58 p.m., Commissioner Gobble moved to adjourn the meeting to November 4, 2010 at 7:00 p.m. in the West Annex meeting room. Commissioner McCabe seconded the motion and, hearing no objection, Chairperson Reilly so ordered.

Approved a Submitted December 2, 2010 s/ Sue Herbers, City Clerk
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