

MINUTES OF THE NATURAL RESOURCES AND ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION

May 27, 2014 at 7:00 p.m.

South Pasadena Council Chambers - 1424 Mission Street

ROLL CALL

The meeting was called to order at 7:06 p.m. Present were Commissioners Scott Kuhn, Kay Findley, Nancy Wilms, Al Benzoni, Noah Puni, John Silverthorn and Chair Kim Hughes. Student Commissioner Thomas Kutzer was absent. Council Liaison Richard D. Schneider, M.D. and Council Member Cacciotti were present. Staff Liaison Debby Fioni was present. The Commission would like to acknowledge Student Commissioner Kutzer for his dedication at the June meeting.

MINUTES

Minutes from the March 25, 2014 and April 22, 2014 meetings were approved by Commissioner Findley and Wilms; with all members in favor, 7-0.

PUBLIC COMMENTS AND SUGGESTIONS

None.

1. URBAN HARVESTER PRESENTATION

Linda Hess, Founder of Urban Harvester, presented to the commission on the importance and benefits of food waste recovery and donation. She explained how her organization worked as a liaison with the donators and the organizations that need the food, and how the Good Samaritan Food Act protected the food supplier. The Commission voted to support the reuse of food whenever possible to encourage repurposed and redistribution for consumption. A motioned was made by Commissioners Puni and Benzoni; with all in favor, 7-0. Ms. Hess stated their organization was hosting a fundraiser on June 27th at Al Fresco.

2. CITY TREE REMOVALS

City Arborist Gonzalo Maravilla and Project Manager Gabe Nevarez provided an update on West Coast Arborists (WCA) and the City's trees situation. The commission wanted clearer information on tree accountability as well as a planting plan. They also requested staff provide a copy of WCA's contract for them to review. Maravilla stated that no trees were removed in May and that 1,079 trees were trimmed in the past two months.

3. SYNTHETIC TURF

A sub-committee consisting of members from the Design Review Board, and the Natural Resources and Environmental, Cultural Heritage, Public Works and Planning Commissions will be created to discuss the issue of synthetic turf.

4. CHARGING STATIONS

Council Member Cacciotti stated that the Air Quality Management District had just

awarded the City of South Pasadena \$10,183 to install a public charging station. Commissioner Benzoni to talk to the property management company at the Bristol Farms shopping center and Figoni to talk with Adopt-a-Charger to see if they still have grant funds for a private station. The group again agreed the proposed location near the library and senior center would be a beneficial location for the charger.

5. WATER CONSERVATION PROGRAMS

Figoni discussed the continued popularity of the \$2 per square foot turf rebate program and stated that Metropolitan Water District (MWD) is now paying \$2, instead of \$1, which could allow the City to adjust their funding process. She said the May water wise landscaping workshop was the largest yet. The toilet rebate is popular, especially with senior citizens. Figoni just received the new chrome-colored 1.75 gallon per minute low flow showerheads which were preferred by residents over the white one. Commissioner Benzoni will contact his associates at the YMCA in an effort to help them conserve water. Council Member Cacciotti would like the Huntington Drive and Fair Oaks median landscape project to be brought to City Council at the next meeting for approval.

6. UPDATE ON ORDINANCES

Figoni stated the Water Conservation and Water Shortage Plan ordinance and Plastic Bag Ban ordinance were adopted. Outreach plans for both ordinances are underway. The proposed Parkway ordinance and Native and Drought Tolerant Tree resolution will be brought to Council in the next month or so.

7. UPCOMING EVENTS

The Mulch and Compost Giveaway Event is Saturday, May 31st. The South Pasadena Beautiful Garden Tour booth on April 27th was a huge hit. There will be a Household Hazardous Waste Round Up event on August 31st at the school district parking lot. Figoni is working with Barbara Eisenstein to hold a 10 year event at the Nature Park on October 18th and with Athens for the October 11th Dumpster and Donation Day.

8. CONCERT SERIES – Green Living Expo & Concert

The Living Green Expo and Concert will be on Sunday, July 20th from 2:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. The Greenest, Fastest Mile will be from 3:00 p.m. to 4:30 p.m. The concert will begin at 5:00 p.m. There will be a variety of vendors and green cars. Figoni continues to work closely with Community Services on this event. The NREC is also interested in supporting the other concert events planned for July 6, 13, 27 and August 3, 2014.

9. WATER USE AT THE CITY'S GOLF COURSE AND PARKS

Figoni is working with the City of Los Angeles' golf course group to see how South Pasadena can use some of Los Angeles' conservation programs, technologies and ideas. She will include Commissioner Silverthorn on potential meetings.

10. CITY'S ACTIONS TO CALIFORNIA DROUGHT

With the City's newly adopted ordinance, more outreach will be done. NREC would like more advertisements in local papers. There was also discussion about street banners.

11. PADLLA STATE SENTATE BILL 407

The Commission does not feel the City should require plumbing fixture replacements in buildings being sold due to SB407 already requiring similar upgrades over the next few years. No action to be taken.

12. ELECTRONIC CIGARETTES

Figoni to work with City Attorney Richard Adams.

13. SOLAR ENERGY COMMITTEE

The Commission suggested candidates for this committee, which would consider solar as well as other renewable energy sources. Chair Hughes to work with Figoni on this.

14. STYROFOAM POLICY

The Commission suggested looking at other cities that have banned the use of styrofoam in their community for everything but hot take-out food. The Commissioners would like to have a representative from the Chamber of Commerce attend the next NREC meeting for the Chamber’s take on this subject.

CHAIR COMMUNICATIONS

Chair Hughes talked about the MWD’s continued drought outreach. She also discussed an article discussing the challenges of California water rights, some of which date back to the early 1900’s.

COMMISSIONER COMMUNICATIONS

Commissioner Benzoni provided an updated on L.A. County’s permit fees on gray water, stating they are \$250, like South Pasadena’s \$250 plumbing permit.

COUNCIL LIAISON COMMUNICATION

No update.

STAFF LIAISON COMMUNICATIONS

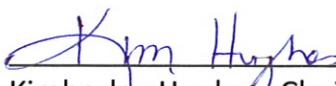
No update.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 10:23 p.m. with motions by Commissioners Kuhn and Findley; with all members in favor, 7-0.

NEXT MEETING

The next regular meeting of the Natural Resources and Environmental Commission will be held on Tuesday, June 24, 2014 at 7:00 p.m. in City Council Chambers.


Kimberley Hughes, Chair 7/22/14