

March 2, 2006

**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 7:04 p.m. on Thursday, March 2, 2006, in the West Annex Meeting Room at Torrance City Hall.

**2. ROLL CALL:**

Present: Commissioners Basile, Chim, Griffiths, Minter, Reilly, and Chairperson McCabe.

Absent: Commissioner Watson.

Also Present: Environmental Services Administrator Cessna and Building Inspector Sheldon.

**MOTION:** Commissioner Chim moved to grant an excused absence to Commissioner Watson for the March 2, 2006 Environmental Quality and Energy Conservation Commission meeting. Commissioner Minter seconded the motion; a voice vote reflected unanimous approval.

**3. SALUTE TO THE FLAG**

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Chairperson McCabe.

**4. POSTING OF THE AGENDA**

**MOTION:** Commissioner Basile, seconded by Commissioner Reilly, 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 (absent Commissioner Watson).

**5. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Commissioner Griffiths noted the following correction to the February 2, 2006 meeting minutes:

Page 1, Item 5: APPROVAL OF MINUTES, **MOTION:** Commissioner Minter seconded the motion; a voice vote reflected unanimous approval (with Commissioners Chim and Griffiths abstaining).

**MOTION:** Commissioner Griffiths moved for the approval of the February 2, 2006 Environmental Quality and Energy Conservation Commission meeting minutes as corrected. Commissioner Reilly seconded the motion; a voice vote reflected unanimous approval (absent Commissioner Watson).

## 6. ENVIRONMENTAL MATTERS

### 6A. DISCUSSION OF WORK PLANS

Environmental Services Administrator Cessna led Commissioners in a brainstorming session to select and prioritize topics for the Environmental Quality and Energy Conservation Commission Work Plan. She advised that the Commission's first priority were those issues that needed decisions, specifically sign hearings and oil cases. She asked Commissioners to suggest ideas and areas to focus on that reflect the direction the Commission wants to go in. She stated that she was hoping to have Len Wood facilitate a session but, if unable to attend, Commissioners and staff could work together to reach a consensus on focus areas.

At Chairperson McCabe's request, Environmental Services Administrator Cessna offered to provide an organizational chart of the Department. She announced that she would be also be working with General Plan Redevelopment for the next four or five months.

Building Inspector Sheldon recorded suggestions from Commissioners as follows:

- *Public outreach for communication / educate youth (Commissioner Reilly)*
- *Endorse events at South Bay Energy Savings Center (Commissioner Chim)*
- *Science Fair school programs (Commissioner Reilly)*
- *Building code flexibility for efficient methods (Commissioner Minter)*
- *"Green" building (Commissioner Minter)*
- *Incentives? City sponsorship recognition program (Commissioner Griffiths)*
- *Raise awareness re: "green" materials (Commissioner Basile)*
- *Daily Breeze column / "Green Corner" / showcase businesses / CitiCable or Torrance Seasons*
- *Update Energy website (with links)*
- *Meeting – Commission – outreach, guest speaker, Council Chambers, "mini green expo"*

A brief discussion centered on implementation of a recycling program for apartment buildings.

Chairperson McCabe distributed his outline of discussion points that include the following short and long term focus areas: mission of the Commission, signage, energy, environmental, promotion, and other. He also distributed a 2004 subcommittee report that was previously submitted to City Council.

When Environmental Services Administrator Cessna suggested that "green building" be the primary focus area, Chairperson McCabe asserted that energy conservation and environmental issues should be examined at every meeting, at least consolidating what the State has put out that residents and City Council may not be aware of.

Environmental Services Administrator Cessna announced that there would be a green building conference at the Gas Center in the City of Downey in April 2006. She

initiated discussion on the possibility of having a traveling presentation for community outreach.

Commissioner Minter suggested representing the Commission by attending the City Yard Open House, homeowner association meetings, and Boy and Girl Scout meetings.

Environmental Services Administrator Cessna suggested drafting a letter to homeowner associations expressing Commissioners' interest in attending meetings.

Chairperson McCabe initiated a discussion centered on endorsement of Leeds certification or other green building programs.

Environmental Services Administrator Cessna mentioned that Honda had a proposal for a Leeds certified 49,000 square foot building. She discussed the local consortium that is in the process of preparing a draft on green building guidelines and suggesting condensing it into a brochure that could be handed out.

Commissioner Minter discussed difficulties meeting requirements to build a Leeds certified library in the City of Long Beach. Environmental Services Administrator Cessna noted that in the future there would be more competitive bidding for green building.

Chairperson McCabe shared copies of a report that mathematically quantifies the benefits of green building.

Building Inspector Sheldon suggested that the Toyota building be highlighted on Huell Howser's California green program as an incentive for local business to "go green."

Environmental Services Administrator Cessna initiated a brief discussion on proposed changes in the City of Hawthorne's sign ordinance that would require English first on all signs.

Chairperson McCabe suggested that a revised Code Enforcement: Sign Review Objectives be placed on the website and be available to Commissioners to refer to. He requested that staff provide a running tally of sign hearings that have been approved or denied by the Commission.

Environmental Services Administrator Cessna advised that most of their enforcement efforts were focused on temporary signs on telephone poles and in right of ways, adding that there were less than there used to be. She mentioned that the Fire Department was trying to implement an administrative citation program by this summer, noting that citations would be paid directly to the City and be more cost effective and less labor intensive.

When Chairperson McCabe expressed an interest in helping the Department with violations in problematic areas, she suggested that Commissioners bring one sign violation to staff's attention at each Commission meeting. She proposed doing a mass mailing to all furniture stores in the City reminding them that only one-fourth of window space is allowed for painted signage.

Chairperson McCabe initiated a brief discussion on the 2001 energy task force, an additional energy audit, and links to the energy website. He suggested that the website should not only provide information to residents but also make recommendations on how the City can conserve energy.

Environmental Services Administrator Cessna stated that one area of focus at one time might be more effective.

Commissioner Minter initiated a discussion centered on the possibility of hosting a mini green expo at a future Commission meeting.

Environmental Services Administrator Cessna offered to check with Recycling Coordinator Allison Sherman to see if the Commission would be able to sponsor the South Bay Energy Saving Center at the City Yard Open House.

Chairperson McCabe requested input from each Commissioner on ideas that were suggested at tonight's meeting.

Commissioner Basile stated that she liked the idea of sponsoring an energy conservation booth at the City Yard Open House and that she would prefer focusing on one idea that could incorporate many different facets.

Commissioner Griffiths expressed an interest in participating in community education, starting with homeowner association meetings and the City Yard Open House. He stated that he thought the Commission could focus on more than one area at a time.

Commissioners Minter and Chim concurred that a mini green expo could be a realistic goal for the future.

Commissioner Reilly expressed support for participation at the Open House as well as exploring ways to communicate effectively with residents. She stressed the importance of targeting and recognizing young people.

Chairperson McCabe suggested that the Commission postpone prioritizing the ideas for the Commission Work Plan to next month's meeting. He recommended coming up with a calendar and stressed the importance for the Commission to produce a recommendation regarding green building.

7. **NEW BUSINESS**
8. **INFORMATION ITEMS**
9. **ORAL COMMUNICATIONS**

Items 7, 8 and 9 were combined as one item.

Commissioner Basile informed Commissioners that Assemblyman Lieu would be at Farmers Market on March 11, 2006 from 10:00 to 12:00 and that there would be a series of residential landscaping classes at the Madrona Marsh beginning March 4, 2006. She announced a Torrance Historical Society presentation celebrating Women's History Month on March 12, 2006 at 2:00 p.m.

Commissioner Griffiths shared "Focus on Recycling" from the February 18, 2006 issue of the Daily Breeze. He discussed information about leaf blowers and an energy saving device for vending machines from the February 23, 2006 South Bay Cities Council of Government conference on South Bay's digital future.

Chairperson McCabe stated that he was fortunate to work with such talented co-Commissioners and thanked them for their suggestions for the Work Plan.

**10. ADJOURNMENT**

**MOTION:** At 9:28 p.m. Commissioner Minter, seconded by Commissioner Griffiths, moved to adjourn the meeting to Thursday, April 6, 2006 at 7:00 p.m.; a voice vote reflected unanimous approval.

Approved as Amended March 6, 2006 s/ Sue Herbers, City Clerk
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