

**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, July 1, 2010 in the West Annex meeting room at Torrance City Hall.

2. ROLL CALL:

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

Absent: None.

Also Present: Deputy Community Development Director Cessna.

3. SALUTE TO THE FLAG

Chairperson Reilly led the Pledge of Allegiance.

4. POSTING OF THE AGENDA

MOTION: Commissioner Gobble, seconded by Commissioner Cunningham, 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

Al Shadbourne, West 235th Street, discussed the permitting process for installation of a photo voltaic (PV) system on his roof. He stated that he received permits on April 6, 2010 and total fees were \$724.25. He related his understanding that fees were supposed to be waived and relayed Councilmember Numark's clarification that the no fee policy went into effect a week or two later. He discussed his negative experience with the Fire Department's inspection. He distributed a list of environmental features on his home, including a permeable driveway and rain barrels, and extended an open invitation for Commissioners to visit.

At Commissioner Cunningham's request, he described how an inverter changes DC to AC.

6. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

6A. MINUTES OF MAY 6, 2010

Minutes were not available.

7. ENVIRONMENTAL MATTERS

7A. RECAP OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL FAIR

Deputy Director Cessna distributed results of information gathered from the Environmental Fair, North High School Earth Day, and City Yard Open House regarding green initiatives that citizens are interested in seeing the City pursue. She noted that they were able to garner the most information by way of the post-it-note board, with the two most desired items being green waste and multi-family recycling. She stated that results of the survey would be used in developing an action plan and has been forwarded to City Council.

Commissioner Griffiths suggested that placement and an overwhelming amount of information affected the response level on the Green Meter interest boards.

Commissioner Watson suggested utilizing a gradient scale to measure public interest in specific topics.

Commissioner Gobble initiated a brief discussion about developing a bicycle rental and drop off system in Torrance as they have in Europe.

Commissioner Cunningham suggested placing an interest survey on the City's website and shared information regarding companies that have car share programs.

In response to Commissioner McCabe's inquiry, Deputy Director Cessna stated that the Transit Center is still in early planning stages.

Commissioners Gobble and Cunningham discussed opportunities for the Commission to provide input to the MTA regarding amenities and parking at the new Transit Center.

7B. LOS ANGELES COUNTY ENERGY PROGRAM – AB 811

Deputy Director Cessna presented the Los Angeles County Energy Program Report implementing AB 811 that allows residents to make certain energy upgrades to their homes and finance them through an assessment on their property taxes. She stated that the assessment stays on the property tax bill if a resident moves and that homes need to meet certain standards to qualify. She advised that the County is doing the entire program through the South Bay Environmental Services Center (SBESC) and that Torrance will only need to provide outreach to the public. She stated that the Program will help the City with home value appreciation, energy conservation, and meeting Kyoto Protocol goals. She encouraged Commissioners to attend the July 13, 2010 City Council meeting for the recommendation to adopt a Resolution authorizing participation in the Program.

Commissioner Gobble stated that he is encouraged that Los Angeles County is taking the lead, stated that improvements will increase the desirability of homes, and received clarification that water efficiencies are also included in the Program.

In response to Commissioner Watson's inquiry, Deputy Director Cessna advised that SBESC expects to begin implementing the Program in September 2010.

Responding to Chairperson Reilly's inquiries, Deputy Director Cessna stated that loans are for 20 years, that new homebuyers would probably not ask for a lower price because of the energy savings they would receive, and that SBESC will probably provide feedback on response to participation in the Program.

In response to an inquiry by Commissioner Gobble, Deputy Director Cessna stated that the Program would be promoted through Seasons, CitiCABLE, utility billing inserts, website, the one-stop building center, and homeowners associations.

Commissioners suggested also promoting the Program through readerboards, Torrance Unified School District, and City buses.

Commissioner Watson pointed out that it is not cost effective to install solar panels if a resident does not spend more than \$150 per month for electricity.

Commissioner Gobble shared information about the new Smart Meters and real time pricing for electricity that will go into effect in two to four years.

Commissioner Cunningham stated that there are numerous incentive programs at the Federal and State level and received clarification that the City website has a link to SBESC that has information about these incentives.

MOTION: Commissioner Gobble moved to recommend support of the Los Angeles County Energy Program implementing AB 811. Commissioner Watson seconded the motion; a voice vote reflected unanimous approval.

8. NEW BUSINESS

8A. Deputy Director Cessna stated that the RV habitation item would be considered at the August 5, 2010 Commission meeting and that notification has been sent out.

8B. Deputy Director Cessna stated that the Environmental Fair is tentatively scheduled for the last Saturday in March 2011. She advised that Recycling is going to backfill the \$6,500 budget that was cut so the event can be put on.

9. ORAL COMMUNICATION

9A. Commissioner Cunningham commented that there is information about how a resident can request a larger recycling bin in the current Seasons guide.

9B. Commissioner Griffiths discussed the presence of goats at the future Transit Center and stated that he had a positive experience taking a bus from the Artesia Transit Center to downtown Los Angeles.

9C. Chairperson Reilly stated that she is pleased with the electric lawn mower she received from the AQMD lawnmower exchange program, adding that it even has an attachment for an adjustable edger.

9D. Commissioner Watson distributed the City of Santa Monica's environmental resources directory as well as handouts from restaurants about the ban of plastic foam and other non-recyclable plastics.

9E. Commissioner Watson expressed an interest in including presenters from Surfrider Foundation, REI, and South Bay Wheelman at the next Environmental Fair.

9F. Commissioner Watson stated that she killed her grass and rocked her backyard.

9G. Commissioner McCabe requested that staff provide an update on completion of the bike path and the Cool Cities report.

9H. Commissioner McCabe asked that an item be placed on the next agenda regarding Torrance sponsoring a lawnmower exchange program.

9I. Commissioner Gobble stated that SBESC has a new staff employee Greg who works on audits and suggested that the City utilize his expertise.

10. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: At 8:27 p.m., Commission Gobble moved to adjourn the meeting to August 5, 2010 at 7:00 p.m. in the West Annex meeting room. Commissioner Griffiths seconded the motion and, hearing no objection, Chairperson Reilly so ordered.

Approved as Amended August 5, 2010 Sue Herbers, City Clerk
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