

**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 7:00 p.m. on Thursday, July 7, 2011 in the West Annex meeting room at Torrance City Hall.

2. ROLL CALL:

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

Absent: Commissioner Gobble.

Also Present: Senior Environmental Quality Officer Duncan, Environmental Quality Officer Sheldon, and Waste Management Coordinator Sherman.

MOTION: Commissioner Chim moved to grant Commissioner Gobble an excused absence for the July 7, 2011 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 Robbins, 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

None.

6. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

6A. MINUTES OF MAY 5, 2011

MOTION: Commissioner Watson moved for the approval of the May 5, 2011 meeting minutes as submitted. Commissioner Chim seconded the motion; a voice vote reflected unanimous approval (Commissioner Gobble absent, Commissioner Cunningham abstaining).

6B. MINUTES OF JUNE 2, 2011

Commissioner Cunningham requested that paragraph 7 on page 2 be amended to include the following: “Commissioner Cunningham recommended that staff explore Tree City U.S.A. as well as qualification for national or international certification. He requested that the City consider recognizing businesses that have ISO 14,001 certification. He asked for clarification if the City is a member of Clean Cities Coalition and Senior Planning Associate Santana offered to look into it. He initiated a brief discussion regarding...”

MOTION: Commissioner Griffiths moved for the approval of the June 2, 2011 meeting minutes as amended. Commissioner Cunningham seconded the motion; a voice vote reflected unanimous approval (Commissioner Gobble absent, Commissioners Watson and Chim abstaining).

7. ENVIRONMENTAL MATTERS

None.

8. INFORMATION ITEMS

8A. ALISON SHERMAN – PRESENTATION ON RECYCLING PROGRAM

Waste Management Coordinator Sherman reported that the City is in compliance with the California Integrated Waste Management Act of 1989 that requires cities to reduce waste by 50%, in large part because of the economic downturn. She provided information on future programs that will help the City maintain or exceed the 50% reduction in the future. One program, the curbside Green Waste residential collection program, has been a successful four-year pilot program in 9,000 homes and may be implemented Citywide this fall. She described the modified Proposition 218 notification process that is required before increasing utility fees. She discussed AB32 and mandatory commercial recycling, noting that the State is still putting together regulations. She advised that on-going programs include modification of the construction and demolition ordinance, outreach and education, school recycling equipment and materials grant, updating the website, oil recycling grant, and support of extended producer responsibility.

In response to Commissioner Watson’s inquiry, she stated that Waste Management is trying to replace the 300-gallon alley container service with individual 96-gallon containers.

Responding to Commissioner Griffith’s inquiry regarding school grants, Waste Management Coordinator Sherman stated that beverage containers are provided but that schools maintain their own recycling programs through private contractors. She added that the State does not require follow-up reports because they are cooperative, not competitive, grants that are given to cities based on population.

Commissioner Cunningham received clarification that school grants are provided by Cal Recycle and that schools are required to submit annual waste reduction reports. He raised the possibility of offering residents composters instead of green waste containers.

Waste Management Coordinator Sherman offered to look into conducting a cost comparison but noted that an urban environment is lucky to have 10% of the population compost. She added that the City has been selling one cubic yard composting bins at a reduced rate for 15 years and that approximately 30 are purchased each year.

In response to Commissioner Griffiths' inquiry, she stated that in the past the City's green waste was used for alternative daily cover at the landfill but now most goes toward composting or sold to producers of compost.

Chairperson Reilly suggested providing residents with composting bins at no charge as opposed to the cost of green waste containers and pick-up.

Commissioner Cunningham inquired if the City has considered setting up its own composting facility and Waste Management Coordinator Sherman responded that it is not feasible due to space limitations and insufficient volume.

Commissioners and staff thanked Waste Management Coordinator Sherman for her informative presentation.

9. NEW BUSINESS

9A. ELECTION OF CHAIRPERSON & VICE-CHAIRPERSON

Commissioner Cunningham, seconded by Commissioner Robbins, nominated Commissioner Griffiths for Chairperson of the Commission; Commissioner Griffiths accepted the nomination.

Commissioner Watson, with a second by Commissioner Chim, nominated Chairperson Reilly for Chairperson of the Commission; Chairperson Reilly declined the nomination.

MOTION: Commissioner Chim moved to close the nominations and elect Commissioner Griffiths as Chairperson of the Environmental Quality and Energy Conservation Commission. Commissioner Robbins seconded the motion; a voice vote reflected unanimous approval (absent Commissioner Gobble).

Commissioner Chim nominated Commissioner Watson and Commissioner Griffiths nominated Commissioner Cunningham for Vice-Chairperson of the Commission. Commissioners Watson and Cunningham accepted the nominations.

Commissioner Watson was elected Vice-Chairperson of the Environmental Quality and Energy Conservation Commission based on a 4-2 roll call vote.

9B. Senior Environmental Quality Officer Duncan stated that consideration of the bird feeding ordinance was coming back to the Commission in the near future.

Commissioner Watson related her observation that the bird feeding problem at Columbia Park is increasing.

9C. Environmental Quality Officer Sheldon pointed out possible health issues involved with residential composting.

Commissioner Watson stated that some cities such as Altadena provide guidelines and have the right to inspect composting bins.

9D. Commissioner Chim requested an excused absence for the August 4, 2011 Commission meeting.

MOTION: Commissioner Griffiths moved to grant Commissioner Chim an excused absence for the August 4, 2011 Commission meeting. Commissioner Watson seconded the motion; a voice vote reflected unanimous approval (absent Commissioner Gobble).

9E. Commissioner Robbins requested an excused absence for the August 4, 2011 Commission meeting.

MOTION: Commissioner Watson moved to grant Commissioner Robbins an excused absence for the August 4, 2011 Commission meeting. Commissioner Griffiths seconded the motion; a voice vote reflected unanimous approval (absent Commissioner Gobble).

9F. Commissioner Watson inquired about the status of the joint meeting with City Council and service awards for the students who worked at the Environmental Fair; staff offered to bring back information.

9G. Commissioner Watson stated that she and other Commissioners attended the South Bay Energy Efficiency partner workshop on June 30, 2011 and that she was impressed with participation levels.

9H. Commissioner Watson relayed Commissioner Gobble's reminder of a lamp exchange at the Forum and to look into rebates offered by Southern California Edison and Southern California Gas.

10. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: At 8:02 p.m., Commissioner Watson moved to adjourn the meeting to August 4, 2011 at 7:00 p.m. in the West Annex meeting room. Commissioner Cunningham seconded the motion and, hearing no objection, Chairperson Reilly so ordered.

Approved as Amended August 4, 2011 s/ Sue Herbers, City Clerk
