

MINUTES
NATURAL RESOURCES AND ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION
December 22, 2015

Roll Call - The meeting was called to order at 7:06 p.m. Present were Commissioners Al Benzoni, Kay Findley, Scott Kuhn, Stephen Leider, Noah Puni, Nancy Wilms and Chair Kim Hughes. Present were Council Liaison Michael Cacciotti, Student Commissioner Emily Ng and Staff Liaison Debby Figoni.

Minutes – Minutes from November 17, 2015 were approved (Findley, Kuhn, 7-0).

Public Comments and Suggestions – n/a

1. City's Urban Forest Update – City Arborist Gonzalo Maravilla provided an update noting that between October and December, 23 dead or dying trees were removed due to age, drought and/or heat. NREC requested Maravilla provide a monthly sheet detailing the number of trees removed, planted and trimmed. The Stone Pine by the War Memorial Building will be removed. No trimming was done in November or December. The Commission asked for a Spring 2016 tree planting plan which will detail tree types and where they will be planted. They requested a copy of the City's priority planting list, which includes areas near schools and business districts. For each of the priority areas, they requested a list of the open tree wells and the tree to be planted there. They would like a map printout of each area. The Commission asked Maravilla for the definition of a "Heritage Tree" since it is unclear in the ordinance. A tree trimming ordinance subcommittee will be established in January to work on the ordinance. Commissioners Benzoni and Findley volunteered to work on this subcommittee. The group discussed adequate funding and support for the tree planting and maintenance plan.

2. West Coast Arborists' Contract – The status of WCA's contract is still under discussion. A WCA contract subcommittee will be established in January. Commissioners Wilms and Puni volunteered to meet with City staff, the City Manager, and others to finalize the contract. The Commissioners still want to see a copy of a WCA invoice to know how things are being billed.

3. Styrofoam Ban – Senior Management Analyst Debby Figoni forwarded the City of Pasadena's Ordinance and information on a compostable product container company to the Commissioners. She recommended waiting to review Pasadena's final Ordinance before finalizing South Pasadena's so there is consistency between the neighboring cities.

4. Water Conservation and Drought Actions – Figoni stated the water conservation for October was 31% and the City's average is 32%. Metropolitan Water District has modified their rebates for conservation devices. The City is adjusting their rebates accordingly.

5. Water Conservation Programs – Figoni reported the continued progress of the turf rebate program. Rebates for toilets are busier than ever. Figoni obtained grant funds to supplement the cost of the upcoming residential water audit program. The Commission is concerned that programs will be dropped due to Figoni's leaving the City in January.

6. Model Water Efficient Landscape Ordinance (MWELo) – The City has defaulted to the State's MWELo. The NREC recommends the City formally adopt the State's MWELo. Planning will be taking the lead on the reporting.

7. Graywater – Commissioner Benzoni provided a draft graywater stubouts ordinance based on the City of Encinitas’ ordinance. NREC suggested edits which Benzoni will make resend it to Figoni for distribution. An issue was raised about why graywater requirements wouldn’t apply to larger than duplex developments. The NREC would like this item to move forward before the City updates their Building Codes in 2016.

8. Golf Course Sub-Committee Update – Commissioner Kuhn provided an update on the recent tour of the golf course. The Commission discussed the possibility of using water use efficiency funds to build an additional water storage tank on the property.

9. Upcoming Events – The City partnered with San Gabriel Valley Council of Governments on the Holiday LED light exchange event on December 12th. The City is promoting the CoolCalifornia Cities Challenge with a contest to win Rose Bowl game tickets.

10. Renewable Energy Council – REC has formed three subcommittees: Finance, Technical and Public Affairs. They are looking at where the City spends the most money on energy, where they can install alternative energy structures and how it can be funded. Their next meeting is January 30, 2016.

11. Goals for 2016 – Figoni will email the 2015 goals to the Commissioners.

Chair Communications – Chair Hughes discussed the first goal being trees with a detailed plan of planting, budget and cost, the second being water conservation looking at appropriate and efficient use of water conservation fees, and third an overall Climate Plan was discussed. Chair Hughes brought articles on roof top gardens, honey bees, and water.

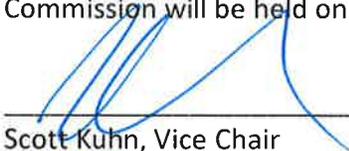
Commissioner Communications – The Commissioners expressed their appreciation to Figoni for her dedication and accomplishments during her time with the City.

Council Liaison Communications – Council Member Cacciotti talked about the various Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy meeting and projects.

Staff Liaison Communications – Figoni stated that she will be leaving the City in January, 2016 for a water conservation position in Beverly Hills. She shared that CalRecycle funds have been secured for recycled-content plastic benches at the Dog Park and that she was using other CalRecycle grant funds to create ads to promote the recycling of used motor oil and filters.

Adjournment – The meeting adjourned at 9:07 p.m. (Kuhn, Leider 7-0).

NEXT MEETING – The next regular meeting of the Natural Resources and Environmental Commission will be held on Tuesday, January 26, 2016 at 7:00 p.m.



Scott Kuhn, Vice Chair