

**MINUTES**  
**NATURAL RESOURCES AND ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION**  
**March 25, 2014**

**1. ROLL CALL**

The meeting was called to order at 7:05 p.m. Present were Commissioners Scott Kuhn, Kay Findley, Nancy Wilms, Al Benzoni, John Silverthorn and Chair Kim Hughes. Commissioner Noah Puni and Student Commissioner Thomas Kutzer were absent. Council Liaison Richard D. Schneider, M.D. was present. Staff Liaison Debby Figoni was present.

**2. MINUTES**

Minutes from the February 25, 2014 meeting were approved by Commissioner Findley and Wilms; with all members in favor, 6-0.

**3. PUBLIC COMMENTS AND SUGGESTIONS**

None.

**4. COMMUNITY GARDEN**

Richard Tom of the South Pasadena Community Garden group discussed the new proposed Caltrans owned property at 1028 Magnolia and the support of the neighborhood. Michelle Hammond discussed her role as one of the many community garden board members and supporters and stated that she is also part of South Pasadena's Homegrown Exchange group. In response to commissioner's questions, Mr. Tom stated that the site is approximately 90' by 180', insurance will be provided by the Los Angeles County Community Garden Council, the Garden Board, Master Gardeners, and possibly others will manage the garden plots, plots to be given on a first come first serve basis, water costs and details are not yet worked out, and the garden will be open from dawn to dusk. If they secure the CalTrans property, they will work out the final details with the City and start fundraising. The Community Garden is interested in getting the high school students involved in the garden as an educational tool and for projects.

**5. CITY'S URBAN FOREST UPDATE**

Tim Crothers, Area Manager for West Coast Arborist (WCA) presented. WCA is under contract and works with the City to trim and maintain trees using a grid system. To improve the future of the City's urban forest Crothers suggested greater tree diversity and a greater percentage of newly planted trees to replace the diseased and declining trees. Established trees are stressed from the drought, but it is more important to water the newer, younger trees. The tree health along the Arroyo was discussed. WCA and the City follow the International Society of Arboriculture's (ISA) standard of only allowing 25% trimming allowance per trim.

Ben Wong from Southern California Edison (SCE) presented. He explained about safe and mandated tree trimming requirements 18" of clearance between radio conductors. Due to the amount of trees they trim and the time table, it is too challenging for SCE to notify residents ahead of time. Issues of residential complaints regarding unnecessary or poor tree trimming standards were discussed. Wong stated SCE's contractors use ISA tree trimming policy around utility lines. Wong stated SCE's main concern is not aesthetics but safety and if residents want to use their own arborist, they must be certified to work around live wires. The City's new Tree List states that "trees under SCE lines should be no taller than 25' at maturity" and lists which trees are good under utility lines.

More education needs to be done to the public about trees, including "right tree – right place", proper watering, maintenance and trimming.

## **6. CITY TREE REMOVALS**

City Arborist Gonzalo Maravilla informed that the City and WCA is trimming Palms on Oak Street and from Monterey to Mission toward Romona and has already trimmed 170 Palm trees this year. No tree removals in March but there will be some removals and replacements in the near future, especially in the North section of the City.

## **7. CITY'S TREE TRIMMING & REMOVAL REQUIREMENTS**

After the presentations by WCA and SCE, the commission discussed digesting the information just provided and revisiting this issue in the future.

## **8. CHARGING STATIONS**

Water Conservation Analyst Figoni stated that there is no new information on this item. Grants Analyst Tracy Perkosky has applied for matching grant funds from the Air Quality Management District. Benzoni will talk to the property management company at the Bristol Farms shopping center to encourage them to install a charger.

## **9. WATER CONSERVATION PROGRAMS & BUDGET REVIEW**

Figoni discussed the popularity of the \$2 per square foot turf rebate program and the upcoming \$100 high efficiency toilet program which is coming soon. Figoni will be offering 1.75 gallon per minute low flow showerheads to residents which were provided by Upper District.

## **10. UPDATE ON ORDINANCES**

Water Conservation Analyst Figoni updated the commission on the first reading and introduction of the Water Conservation and Water Shortage Plan ordinance which was presented to Council on March 19, 2014 meeting. The ordinance will go to City Council for second and final reading in May or June. Figoni brought the Plastic Bag Ban ordinance to Council for direction on March 19, 2014. Council requested the ordinance

be brought back for first reading and introduction at the April 23, 2014 meeting. Figoni will also bring the Low Impact Development resolution soon.

**11. UPCOMING EVENTS**

The Mulch and Compost Giveaway Event will be Saturday, May 31<sup>st</sup>. The first Water Wise workshop was a huge success. There are five more to go from March through May. Figoni will have a booth at the Doggie Day event and the South Pasadena Beautiful Garden Tour on April 27<sup>th</sup>. She will also be presenting at the Senior Citizen Center on April 9<sup>th</sup>.

**12. CONCERT SERIES/CLEAN CAR SHOW**

The Living Green Expo and Concert will be on Sunday, July 20<sup>th</sup>. Figoni will be working with Community Services on this event. The NREC will be sharing an outreach booth with Figoni.

**13. LANDSCAPE REQUIREMENTS FOR FRONT YARDS**

No update, but this item will remain on the Agenda as NREC continues to follow the status of the draft Parkway ordinance.

**14. WATER USE AT THE CITY'S GOLF COURSE**

Figoni informed the commission that the audit has been completed. The commission suggested hiring a consultant to remodel the amount of turf on the golf course and/or to install a second reservoir at the golf course. If a second reservoir was installed, that water could also be used to water city trees.

**15. CITY'S ACTIONS TO CALIFORNIA DROUGHT**

The City is being proactive about the drought. To date, the City has performed water audits and retrofits at all city parks upgrading sprinkler heads, installed weather based irrigation timers, retrofitted overhead to drip in a few locations, reduced watering time and added mulch to certain locations.

**16. ELECTRONIC CIGARETTES**

Councilmember Schneider believes that Los Angeles County is going to treat them like traditional cigarettes. Some e-cigarettes are vapor and some have nicotine. Figoni to forward information from City Clerk Evelyn Zneimer regarding L.A. County's direction to the commissioners.

**16. LOW EMISSION VEHICLES**

Councilmember Schneider updated the NREC Councilmember Cacciotti City's purchasing policy for vehicles. The present 10% less is restrictive, but if we analyze the lifetime cost of the vehicle. Look at other cities and what other things they add to their policy.

**17. CHAIR COMMUNICATIONS**

Chair Hughes asked Commissioner Kuhn if he could look into the rubberized pavement. Figoni will try to obtain information from other cities. Hughes stated that Metropolitan Water District was implementing a \$5.5 million campaign for indoor and outdoor water conservation.

**18. COUNCIL LIAISON COMMUNICATIONS**

In addition to a tree a day, Councilmember Schneider wants to get additional funds for more trees.

**19. COMMISSIONER COMMUNICATIONS**

Commissioners wanted to make sure the right trees including variety are planted in the right place.

**20. STAFF LIAISON COMMUNICATIONS**

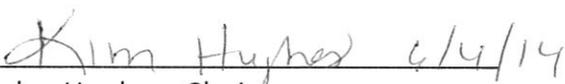
Figoni informed the commission on the City of Long Beach’s Laundry to Landscape program. The not so successful gray water program did not save water. Figoni will forward the PowerPoint to the commissioners.

**ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting adjourned at 10:34 p.m. approved by Commissioners Kuhn and Benzoni, with all members in favor, 6-0.

**NEXT MEETING**

The next regular meeting of the Natural Resources and Environmental Commission will be held on Tuesday, April 22, 2014 at 7:00 p.m. in City Council Chambers.

  
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Kimberley Hughes, Chair