

MINUTES
NATURAL RESOURCES AND ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION
May 26, 2015

Roll Call - The meeting was called to order at 7:09 p.m. Present were Commissioners Scott Kuhn, Kay Findley, Nancy Wilms, Al Benzoni, Stephen Leider, and Chair Kim Hughes. Commissioner Noah Puni and Student Commissioner Maddie Magee were absent. Council Liaison Michael Cacciotti was present. Staff Liaison Debby Figoni was present.

Minutes – Minutes from March, 2015 were postponed until the June meeting.

Public Comments and Suggestions – n/a

1. City's Urban Forest Update – Public Works Operations Manager Gabe Nevarez stated that in April 693 trees were trimmed and 25 trees were planted. For the year, 446 trees have been planted. Nevarez stated that WCA waters all trees under their two year contract. The Commission requested proof that they are since some of the new trees look stressed. It was shared that around one-third of the new trees that get planted need to be replaced. Public Works Director Paul Toor said the City's Arborist Gonzalo Maravilla would provide the Commissioners with a detailed list of the addresses of each of the trees that are watered.

The Commissioners asked about the trees on Chelton and why more of them were not removed since they are diseased and show to be a liability. Toor stated the three most diseased trees were removed and more will be in the future. He stated that staff needs to be cautious about removing too many trees because of the interpretation it could be providing to other residents. He noted that if trees are unsafe, Public Works will remove them.

2. City's Tree Planting Plan – The Commission requested a list of where new trees have been planted, if they replaced old trees or if they were planted in empty wells. They believe the planting plan is important, due to past issues of wrong tree, wrong place and/or poor maintenance. Toor stated that funds may not be approved by City Council for next year due to the drought. He said the initial plan was to plant trees around schools, then parks and then other priority locations. From here forward, the Commissioners would like to put a hold on planting more trees until they know what is being planted and where. Furthermore, they are not sure if more trees should be planted or if the funds from this year and next should go towards watering and maintaining our older, stressed trees. They would like an inventory of the existing stressed and diseased trees due to the drought (Benzoni, Leider 6-0).

3. West Coast Arborists' Contract – Public Works Director Paul Toor stated that the West Coast Arborist Contract is on a month to month basis. It is a unique and very well done contract because staff oversees what needs to be done and West Coast only does those specific items. In the past, WCA did what they thought to be necessary and billed accordingly. The Commission asked how the contract dealt with maintenance, accountability and follow up on specific trees. Toor stated that Council Member Mahmud was also reviewing the contract.

4. **Brown Act** – Figoni updated the Commission on email communication. Brown Act information will be sent by the City Clerk’s Office to the Commissioners.

5. **Water Conservation and Drought Actions** – The Commissioners discussed more action against water wasters. They would like to know the water use for May 2015, and would like to be updated on a regular basis. They would also like a chart showing water use for the past year. There was discussion about Panda Express and Arco as repeat water wasters. What could be done to save water at the YMCA was also discussed again.

6. **Water Conservation Programs** – Figoni and her intern, Amber Duran, are working on the rebate programs which are busier than ever. They are contacting the higher water users and working directly with them and they are contacting local restaurants. Commissioner Leider discussed a campaign to kill all parkway turf which was suggested by South Pasadena Beautiful at their last monthly meeting.

7. **Educational Outreach on Watering** - The Commission recommended hosting a watering workshop, like “What is Up and What Can you do?” They also suggested a video contest with the schools and/or all local groups with the videos running on the Time Warner Cable Channel.

8. **Greywater** – A subcommittee consisting of Commissioner Benzoni and Chair Hughes to work on a greywater ordinance (Benzoni and Kuhn, 6-0).

9. **Charging Stations** – Public Works is working on installing it at the Hope and Mound Parking Lot. Council Member Cacciotti wants it installed before the funds are gone. Council Member Cacciotti and the Commissioners would like to motion for grant funding in support for additional Mobile Source Air Pollution Committee funds for more charging stations (Hughes, Kuhn 6-0).

10. **Upcoming Events** - Figoni is working on the Green Living Expo for July 19, 2015. The Household Hazardous Waste Event is August 29, 2015.

11. **Renewable Energy Council** – Four applications have been received to date. Figoni to advertise more before finalizing it. Chair Hughes would like to be on the Council.

Chair Communications – Chair Hughes provided articles on water conservation ads, tree watering, groundwater, synthetic turf and cities buying water for medians.

Commissioner Communications – n/a.

Council Liaison Communications – Council Member Cacciotti stated that he just came from a meeting in Santa Clarita and took public transportation the entire way, as he does to all of his AQMD meetings. The Gold Line Foothill Operations campus opened this month. It will be turned over to Metro in September.

Staff Liaison Communications – n/a

Adjournment - The meeting adjourned at 10:15 p.m. (Benzoni, Wilms 6-0).

NEXT MEETING - The next regular meeting of the Natural Resources and Environmental Commission will be held on Tuesday, June ay 26, 2015 at 7:00 p.m. in City Council Chambers.

Kim Hughes 6/23/15
Kimberley Hughes, Chair